

CSR for Child Welfare: Partnerships, Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Nations

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Sivadarshan .A .T

I MSW

PSG College of Arts and Science

Teresa Sugirtha J

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work

PSG College of Arts and Science College, Coimbatore

Abstract

In poor countries, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has a big impact on increasing child welfare. This essay examines the collaborations of businesses, governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the difficulties they encounter, and the chances they have to improve children’s welfare. CSR activities support sustainable development by emphasizing healthcare, education, and protection. Unfortunately, problems like insufficient funding, bad leadership, and a lack of coordination frequently make these attempts more difficult.

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) denotes the discretionary measures that companies undertake to tackle social, environmental, and ethical issues. CSR programs in developing countries frequently center on child welfare, which is an important topic considering the pervasive poverty and restricted access to healthcare, education, and child protection services. This study looks at the prospects for improvement, the difficulties in putting successful programs into practice, and how CSR activities in these nations can promote child welfare.

Partnerships in CSR for Child Welfare Corporate and NGO Partnership

To ensure the effectiveness of CSR projects for child welfare, businesses, governments, NGOs, and communities must often work together. The following collaborations are vital: Partnerships between Companies and NGOs: Companies often collaborate with non-governmental organizations that focus on child welfare. Corporations provide infrastructure and financial resources, while NGOs supply expertise in fields like health, education, and protection. For instance, organizations such as the IKEA Foundation have collaborated with UNICEF to safeguard children’s rights and offer education throughout the world, particularly in poor nations.

Government and Corporate Partnerships

Developing country governments frequently lack the funding necessary to properly address child welfare. By making investments in sectors like healthcare and education infrastructure, CSR programs can support government initiatives. Example: To increase children’s access to high-quality education, the Indian government runs programs like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in conjunction with CSR projects.

Community and Business Involvement

Getting involved in the community around you guarantees that CSR projects are applicable and long-lasting. It assists companies in customizing their initiatives to fit the unique requirements of kids in various areas.

Challenges in CSR for Child Welfare in Developing Nations

Although corporate social responsibility (CSR) has the potential to improve child welfare, its efficacy in underdeveloped countries is hindered by a number of issues:

Inadequate Funding

Many underdeveloped countries do not have the financial means to properly handle child welfare issues. Even if CSR programs can help to some extent, the scope of the issue frequently surpasses what can be handled by one organization or program.

Corruption and Weak Governance

The effectiveness of CSR initiatives may be hampered by corrupt practices and weak governance frameworks. The usefulness of funds and resources intended for child welfare is occasionally diminished by theft or bad management.

Lack of Coordination

CSR initiatives may overlap or fall short of addressing children’s most urgent needs if businesses, governments, and non-governmental organizations do not effectively coordinate with one another. Inefficiency can also result from priorities and goals not being aligned.

Limited Monitoring and Evaluation

It might be challenging to determine the real impact of CSR programs on child welfare because many of them lack strong monitoring and evaluation systems. It’s hard to scale up or improve successful initiatives without solid data.

Country	CSR expenditure on child welfare(2023)	Key Areas of CSR Investment	Number of children benefited (2023)	Top companies involved in Child Welfare CSR
India	\$950 million	Education, nutrition and health care	10 million	TATA groups, Reliance industries, Infosys Foundation.
Brazil	\$620 million	Education, child labour prevention	6.8 million	Petrobras,Banco do Brasil, Vale.
South Africa	\$450 million	Health care, Education and nutrition	4.5 million	MTN group, Standard bank, Sasol

Indonesia	\$520 million	Child labour prevention, education.	7.2 million	PT Pertamina, Bank Mandiri, Telkom Indonesia
Nigeria	\$310 million	Health care, child rights protection.	3.4 million	Dangote group, Access bank, Nestle Nigeria.
Kenya	\$260 million	Education, child nutrition and child rights.	2.7 million	Safaricom, Equity bank and Kenya commercial bank.
Bangladesh	\$180 million	Child labour elimination, Health and Education.	3.2 million	Grameenphone, BRAC, Unilever Bangladesh.
Philippines	\$400 million	Education, child protection and health care	5.6 million	Ayala corporation, SM investments, Jollibee group
Vietnam	\$330 million	Education, child rights and Health care.	4.2 million	Vingroup, Viettel, Masan group
Egypt	\$150 million	Education, Health care, child rights.	2.1 million	Orascom group, CIB Egypt, EFG Hermes.

Opportunities for CSR to Enhance Child Welfare

Even though there are still difficulties, there are a number of ways to increase CSR's efficacy in child welfare:

Leveraging Technology

CSR projects can benefit from increased efficiency and reach thanks to technology. Digital platforms have the potential to facilitate the delivery of remote education, health monitoring, and child protection services to underprivileged areas.

NGOs and Communities

Businesses might make investments to help local NGOs and community organizations grow their capacities. This guarantees that child welfare initiatives are long-lasting and customized to the unique requirements of the area.

Inclusive CSR Strategies

Creating all-encompassing corporate social responsibility (CSR) plans that tackle several facets of child welfare, such as empowerment, healthcare, education, and protection, can offer children in poor countries greater all-encompassing assistance.

Sustainability and Long-term Engagement

CSR efforts that prioritize long-term involvement over one-time projects have the potential to benefit child welfare in a long-term way. To bring about long-lasting change, businesses should strive to establish enduring connections with local authorities, NGOs, and communities.

Case studies

India's Tata Group and Child Welfare

The Tata Group has participated in numerous projects centered on child nutrition, education, and health through its CSR division, Tata Trusts. The collaboration with NGOs and municipal governments has facilitated easier access to these crucial services.

Project Shakti, a CSR effort of Unilever in Africa, aims to empower women to market cleanliness and wellness goods. This raises household income and living standards, which affects children indirectly in addition to boosting family health.

Conclusion

CSR programs have the power to dramatically improve the wellbeing of children in poor countries, particularly when they are implemented in conjunction with communities, NGOs, and governments in strategic alliances. Even while problems with governance, lack of coordination, and resource constraints still exist, there are ways to improve the efficacy of these programs through technology, capacity building, and sustained dedication. CSR may help ensure that children in poor countries have better futures with careful planning and execution.

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