

Development Alternatives and ESquare Inc host Indo-Japan CSR Seminar



DA and ESquare Inc team

Development Alternatives (DA) in partnership with ESquare Inc., a Japanese consulting firm, organised a hybrid seminar, titled 'Indo-Japan Seminar on CSR in India' on 14 February, 2023 at DA Headquarters in New Delhi. The forum sought to address issues that Japanese companies face when it comes to implementing their CSR projects in India. The forum brought together stakeholders to foster an understanding of the ground realities and the prevalent CSR scenario in India. Insights were shared about sustainable measures and solutions, providing a way forward for Japanese companies in navigating the Indian CSR scenario.

The seminar started with a talk by Dr Ashok Khosla, Chairman, Development Alternatives Group, who touched upon the potential that CSR has for addressing social inequality and disparities. He discussed CSR can have a transformative effect as we shift from a subsistence to an aspirational economy with synthesis of a public-private-people partnership.

Further discussions showcased the viability of operating Japanese technologies with regards to the landscape in India. This was exemplified by Mr Sudhir Sah, Assistant Program Director, TARA, DA Group and Mr Stuart Conerly, Manager, Esquare Inc., in their respective presentations on the projects that their respective organisations had carried out with the support from Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The seminar also aimed at addressing the lack of clarity regarding the Companies Act, 2013, with Dr O. P. Goel, Advisor, National Skill Development Corporation & Bosch Ltd delineating and explaining the conditions of the Act and its applicability. Furthermore, Mr Farokh Madan, Director, Marketing & Strategy, Carrier presented on their CSR project - *United for Air*, whereby

a theme emerged on the importance of involving the community and the importance of having that element embedded in prospective programmes.

The open house discussion fostered a space for collaboration and the crucial takeaway was that community involvement is important for creating sustainable initiatives. It has to be leveraged with partners who have extensive experience in the Indian context and can design programmes that will satisfy the requirements of the Companies Act, to make an inclusive impact at scale. Dr Arun Kumar, President Emeritus, DA Group, summed up the session with a reminder that skill building is crucial for realising the CSR opportunities in India and for building collaborations and partnerships to scale impact that is environmentally and economically sound.



Panelists deliberated on the viability of operating Japanese technologies in the context of the CSR landscape in India