

REPORT

Tata Institute of Social Sciences and UNICEF jointly organized two day capacity building workshop for North East Zone partners of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Guwahati

The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and UNICEF jointly organized the fourth regional capacity building workshop for North East partners of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. One of the main objectives of the workshop, was also to explore and strengthen academia-industry-civil society partnerships of the TISS Guwahati campus. Given the importance of expediting the socio-economic development in the North East and the crucial role that civil society organizations can play in this regard, TISS and UNICEF agreed to co-hos the fourth regional capacity building workshop for TISS and UNICEF partners in Guwahati. The previous TISS-UNICEF regional capacity building workshops for development partners were held in Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi. The Proposal Bank of the National CSR Hub, TISS was launched in the last TISS-UNICEF capacity building workshop in New Delhi in April 2016.

The Fourth Regional Capacity Building Workshop for Development Partners of TISS, titled *Preparing for CSR Partnerships* was held in Hotel Rajdhani Regency, Guwahati, on the 28th and 29th of November, 2016. The eighty participants, from over forty not for profit organisations, were not only from Assam but also from other North-East states. The participants were not just representatives of empanelled development partners of National CSR Hub, TISS but also partners of UNICEF and the Guwahati Campus of TISS. The Annual Report of the TISS Guwahati campus and the brochure of the National CSR Hub at TISS was presented to the dignitaries in the panel discussion and subsequently released by the distinguished panelists at the workshop.

The workshop commenced with a welcome address by Mr Rohan Sarma, Head, Empanelment Committee and Capacity Building, National CSR Hub, TISS, in which the objectives and context of the workshop were laid down. This was followed by a presentation by Prof D.K. Srivastava, Director, TISS Guwahati campus, in which he delineated the scope for partnership between NGOs of the North East region and the TISS Guwahati campus. The special address was given by the Chief Guest, Mr Sunder Singh, Global Head, Oracle Practice, Tata Consultancy Services, in which he highlighted how technology can be leveraged by NGOs in the internal and external aspects of their functioning to address the development needs of the North East region.

One of the fascinating and most eagerly awaited components of this workshop was the panel discussion titled *Why CSR? What CSR? How CSR?* , chaired by Mr Rohan Sarma, in which the panelists – Mr Sunder Singh, Prof D.K Srivastava, Mr S.N. Batliwalla, Financial Advisor, TISS and former Secretary and Chief Accountant of Tata Trusts, Ms Ruchira Gujral, Private Sector Engagement Specialist, UNICEF, Mr Sanjaya Pradhan, CSR Associate at National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Ms Bhaswati Goswami of the acclaimed Assam NGO C-NES – provided a variety of valuable perspectives on topics such as the scope of CSR, need for a distinct policy and strategy for the North East region, modalities of selection of implementing agencies, and the role of business in society and discussing models of CSR implementation.

Proposal writing is an important skill for attracting funding for NGOs. Therefore, presentations by Ms Ruchira Gujral of UNICEF and Dr Ananya Samajdar, Head, Proposal Bank, National CSR Hub, TISS provided tips on writing better project proposals and showcasing templates for proposals. Ms Gujral's presentation also provided insights on UNICEF's work and how NGOs can motivate businesses to

become more responsible. Dr Samajdar's presentations in the workshop also elucidated the legal framework of CSR and parameters for evaluating Project Proposals and guided participant organisations on the modalities of applying to the Proposal Bank at TISS.

Mr V Venkataramana, COO, Shantilal Muttha Foundation, Pune, made a presentation, well grounded in experiential insights and examples, on results-based programme development and management, in which NGOs were urged to develop clarity about the logic model of activity, outputs and outcomes, that can help structure programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The in-depth presentation by Mr S.N. Batliwalla, provided valuable insights on practices of sound governance and financial management that NGOs should follow for greater transparency and sustainability.

A presentation by Dr Tushar Rane, Chief, UNICEF Field Office, Assam, shed light on the socio-economic development situation in the North East, that set the context for the next session. The next session was one of group activity where all participants were divided into different thematic groups, to be mentored by domain experts– Ms Ruchira Gujral (, Dr Ananya Samajdar, Mr Venkataramana, Mr Batliwalla, and Ms. Bhaswati Goswami and Dr C.R. Hira. The mentors guided participants with inputs to improve their draft project proposals which they proposed to submit to the TISS Proposal Bank and/or to development sector funders in the future. This session was followed by presentations by the mentors and participant representatives to the Chair, Mr. Rohan Sarma, on the content, areas of concern and strengths of the proposals, a unique feature being the 'pitch' made by the participants promoting their proposals to hypothetical CSR funders.

Overall, the workshop not only included useful presentations by the resource persons, but also active participation from the attendees, especially in the group activity and group presentation sessions. The workshop concluded with the distribution of certificates to all participants in appreciation of their contribution in making the workshop a success.