



RIGHT WAY TO LEVERAGE **CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING**

Bench Marking Study
March 2018

Text



youthforsevaTM
experience the joy of giving

Right way to leverage corporate volunteering

Youth for Seva (YFS)

March 2018

Message from Chairman / President – Youth for Seva (YFS)

Foreword:

“Seva hi Paramo Dharmah” is a value greatly revered and practiced among the people across the globe. ThForeword:

“Seva hi Paramo Dharmah” is a value greatly revered and practiced among the people across the globe. There is no higher calling than when a person gives his or her Knowledge, Skills, Time, Resources to someone in need of help or comfort. This is the basic essence of Volunteerism.

It is basic human nature to share; it is not about doing soonly when you have enough, but to cultivate it as a responsible practice.

Volunteeringpromotes trust and encourages good citizenship by providing an environment to the path of shared responsibility. Shifting socio-economic trends have changed the structure of Volunteering; it has moved from being only a family structure to the corporate structure. This transition is paving paths to different dimensions of Corporate Volunteer-ing Models in our country.

This study entitled “Right way to leverage Corporate Volunteering“ focuses on the existing models in practice today, and the way it is being leveraged to build committed workforce,engaging in the development of thecommunity. It also provides insights on the Social Valuethat Corporate Volunteers deliver, a great value-add to the economic support provided.

This study brings out the finer behavioural aspects of Corporate Volunteering,leading to the becoming of a Change Maker.

I am sure that after reading this report, you will join me in celebrating the very many achievements and life changing experiences of Corporate Volunteers.

This is a humble effort from Youth For Seva to enable corporates embrace and encourage best practices of Corporate Volunteering.

Kiran DM

President
Youth For Seva

About Youth for Seva¹

Youth for Seva (YFS), founded in April 2007, is a nation-wide volunteering movement that inspires youth to volunteer, and provides them with meaningful opportunities to serve the community. The goal of YFS is to support schools, destitute shelters, government hospitals and other organizations in the social sector through volunteers who can help them mitigate some of their shortcomings and challenges. Volunteering is made easy and customized to the individual's interests, time availability and skill sets.

YFS aims to create positive change agents in the society, through the culture of volunteering. Its vision and mission entails the following:

Vision:

- Self-reliant communities powered by selfless individuals.

Mission:

- To facilitate a movement of volunteering.
- To empower and enable individuals to become positive change agents.
- To enable institutions to effectively engage community to deliver services.
- To promote sustainable lifestyles.

¹ *About Us. (2018). Retrieved February 28, 2018, from <https://youthforseva.org/about-us/>*

List of acronyms

CECP	:	Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy
CSR	:	Corporate Social Responsibility
EV	:	Employee volunteering
FAQ	:	Frequently Asked Questions
HR	:	Human Resources
INR	:	Indian National Rupee
IT & ITeS	:	Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Services
MBA	:	Masters' of Business Administration
MCA	:	Ministry of Corporate Affairs
MNC	:	Multi-national Corporation
NGO	:	Non-government Organization
PR	:	Public Relations
ROI	:	Return on Investment
SBV	:	Skill Based Volunteering
SHG	:	Self Help Group
STEM	:	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
USD	:	United States Dollars
VLSI	:	Very Large Scale Integration

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1. Employee volunteering: why is it important

The Government of India made a landmark judgement by mandating companies to spend at least two percent of their net profits towards social causes. The CSR Rules that came into force in April 2014, covers almost every sphere of human welfare ranging from education and environment to health. The Act covers companies with net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or a net profit of rupees five crore or more in a financial year under its ambit. This called for a holistic participation involving every stakeholder including the companies, employees, the non-profit bodies and the community. Considering the scope that the Act entailed, the corporates were in a position to leverage every available resources to be involved in the overall *act of giving*. Particularly, a corporate's initiative to motivate and indulge employees help in a holistic involvement rather than making mere monetary contributions to not for profits.

“CSR volunteering activities help in shaping a brighter future for the society; it also helps in engaging, retaining employees and creates a higher public profile.”

Smita Gaikwad
Senior Vice President - Corporate Communication & CSR
Hinduja Global Solutions

Employee volunteering refers to the engagement and inclination of companies towards social commitments in an organised manner. Volunteering generally denotes a support extended to non-profit organisations or social causes by a public or a private sector enterprise. The support in many cases stretches to employee involvement rather than mere donations. Employee engagement can be well understood as

an organised effort of the companies coupled with willingness of the employees to think beyond just the required tasks and market needs. The type of engagement a company encourages ranges from a one-day standalone activity such as cleanliness / plantation drives, visits to old age homes / orphanages to more strategic inclination wherein a systematic approach allows employees to volunteer. These decisions are mostly driven by the corporate boards and are either directed to funnel and follow specific needs of the community (engaging in the company's CSR projects) or by motivating employees to choose their humanitarian interests.

Engagement of a company towards social welfare spells for a long term brand building which is majorly intangible but has potential to adapt to changing conditions. With corporate social responsibility now in place, a lot of Indian corporates and MNCs have included volunteering in their business ethos. The current demeanour of the business has now changed to include employees in creating a social value rather than just directing efforts for their professional development. Employee time offs, payroll matching and creating an in-depth culture to promote volunteering are some of the many ways in which corporates are steering employee volunteering.

The concept of volunteering in India being still a relatively fresh intention, not many corporates have been successful in leveraging the underlying scope. However, there are few corporates having a full-fledged engagement of employees. A lot of shift still awaits in the space of volunteering wherein changes in the overall strategy will steer an organisation's growth as a socially responsible unit benefitting the business, its employees and the community.

Focussing on employee volunteering (EV)

The very notion to develop a strong company culture is to entice top notch talents and retain them for years. Creating a culture of volunteering to support community needs are beneficial for the employees and for the employers. Volunteerism helps in bridging gaps between the human resources and help them get involved in a common cause of welfare. EV helps employees in realising their commitments to the community and aid them in giving back in a systematic manner.

The systems to move the wagon of EV in some ways pauses the primary functions of the employees. This also depicts their willingness to get involved in community service. Also, EV results in employee satisfaction and a lot of employees take pride in speaking about the EV programmes. An employer that is socially responsible makes an employee satisfied and in turn increases their productivity. According to a study conducted by the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP) 32 million LinkedIn® members, indicated an interest in skilled volunteering and 97 percent of MBA graduates were willing to forego up to 14 percent of their expected income in order to work for a socially responsible organization.²

EV has had a proven effect on bettering the skills of the employees. The community activities enable the employees to learn new skills that range from developing interpersonal skills, soft skills and mentoring skills and communication skills. An organisation having strong approach to marketing and PR uses their proficiency to demonstrate their willingness and ability to work for the community involving employees. This enhances the reputation of a company and brands it as socially responsible. Transformative approach such as skill based volunteering helps in transfer of knowledge and skill from the employee to the beneficiary.

Employee volunteering in India

Indian culture is always inclined towards sharing and support since long without any compliance requirements in place. Volunteerism has seen diverse forms over the years that range from philanthropic activities to an arranged system for community welfare. Government and the people in general have been instrumental in understanding the values that are created through volunteering activities.

Corporate volunteering in general has come up a long way in delivering benefits for the community through planned activities and in a phased manner. Various corporates have been carrying out volunteering activities way before corporate volunteering was became popular in the Indian corporate culture. The scenario has drastically changed from being a one off activities to a more structured platform for conducting volunteering activities that include prolonged engagement causing impacts at community level.

The corporate culture now shifting to absorb the millennial base; the outlook of the fresh minds go beyond just professional growth and personal achievements. The current set of young employees are motivated by a workplace that also has provisions for community service as part of the development plan and are motivated by impact driven volunteering. This has made the corporates to think and move to a more innovative and impact driven employee volunteering space.

“Moving from just engaging employees to an approach that results in value transfer will be the key to success of employee volunteering. At Infosys, the ‘Platform for Purpose’ is an excellent engagement programme which allows employees to give back to the society in a manner that adds value to the overall process.”

Kiran N G
Principal – Education Training and Assessment
Infosys

CSR and employee volunteering

The CSR Rules, have paved a path for many of the HR and CSR heads to engage employees in social commitments. Many corporates have been vigorous in driving volunteerism to go beyond just engagement and creating a culture of change by investing in value based volunteerism. The current trend of the corporate volunteering has changed and calls for measurement of volunteering services to gauge the return on investment. Hence, there has been a drastic revolution with majority of the companies calling for pro-bono or skill based volunteering.

Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) states that employee involvement in CSR activities should be encouraged. As per the FAQs released by MCA on 12 Jan 2016, FAQ no. 23 states that “*Contribution and involvement of*

² *The changing face of employee volunteering. (2017, August 17). Retrieved February 28, 2018, from <http://indiacsr.in/the-changing-face-of-employee-volunteering/>*

employees in CSR activities of the Company will no doubt generate interest/ pride in CSR work and promote transformation from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an obligation to Socially Responsible Corporate (SRC) in all aspects of their functioning. Companies therefore, should be encouraged to involve their employees in CSR activities.” However, it also states that “.....monetization of pro bono services of employees would not be counted towards CSR expenditure”. For instance, in case an employee of the company devotes his one (1) working day towards volunteering activities, the salary cost of the said employee for one day cannot be deducted from the company’s prescribed CSR budget. This however has not deterred companies from using their CSR projects and NGO partner linkages to improve the engagement with their employees. This also supports in improving the companies’ presence and on-ground connect with the stakeholders including their potential customers, government officials, among others.

CSR can be defined as the efforts of a company to improve the community in which it operates. The efforts, however, can range from donations to infrastructure creation and maintenance to skill transfers and support. The Indian context of CSR is different from what has been the practice in the west. The Companies Act 2013 along with the CSR Rules 2014, have bestowed the companies with an onus that goes beyond mere donations. With the CSR mandate now moving into its fourth year, there are numerous companies that have projects impacting a whole gamut of vulnerable and underprivileged community. The underlying assumption of the CSR Rules i.e. to benefit the underprivileged populace with facilities that empower them to be at par with the society at large; numerous projects have been successful in catering to need of such a population. A shift from mere philanthropy to efforts that inculcate sustainability in the approach has been the driving force in meeting the objectives of the companies.

Linking employees in addition to the members of the CSR team in the overall process of inputs is essential, especially from the standpoint of contributions as part of volunteering. This brings us to understand the relation between CSR and employee volunteering. Employee volunteering in many cases proves to be the key differentiator for an employee’s overall performance. An employee who is engaged in one or the other social welfare activities of the Company feels a personal linkage and bonding with his employer and hence exerts efforts for better performance.

A lot has been debated as EV being a part of CSR. In general context, integration of volunteering activities in CSR projects has evident benefits. Firstly, the employees are well-versed with the company’s vision of developing the community where it is operating. Secondly, EV increases employee engagement and improves relations among employees. Thirdly, volunteering serves the bottom line as effective integration of volunteering in CSR benefits the company in terms of Return on Investment (ROI) in the long run.

2. Current scenario: what is being done right now

In this chapter an effort is made to provide an analysis of the current trends in Employee Volunteering in India. Focus has been to identify and document different types of volunteering programmes that companies are undertaking, their overall strategies and roll out mechanisms. A key objective of the study was to identify the different trends in CSR based employee engagement strategies.

Approach and methodology followed

The methodology followed for the study included secondary research and focused primary interactions with key HR/CSR heads at select companies. During the secondary research publicly available information about the companies' employee volunteering programmes was referred to and collated for analysis which is presented in this report. For the secondary research 30 companies³ were selected taking into consideration different sectors and a mix of Indian as well as MNCs in India. Majority of companies were from sectors including IT & ITeS, Consumer goods and Services. Of the companies selected for the research, 15 were multinational companies and seven were private sector companies. Research also included PSUs and a few corporate foundations. The secondary sources used for the research included company websites and publically available reports. Of the 30 companies, five companies had limited or no information on public domain about their employee volunteering programmes and thus were not considered for the study.

For primary research phase, CSR/HR heads at 25 companies were contacted for a primary interaction. Of the 25, two companies declined to participate in the study and eleven companies did not respond⁴. Consultations were held with the remaining 12 companies using a comprehensive questionnaire with a mix of open and closed ended questions.

Key findings

From secondary research of the 25 companies, about 46 different employee volunteering programmes were identified and studied. About 56 percent companies had more than one programme focussing on employee volunteering / employee engagement through social programmes and about 30 percent companies had more than two such programmes. It was also noted that companies also do not limit their employee volunteering programmes to a specific thematic area/s, as more than 60 percent programmes did not have a pre-defined thematic focus. This allows for employees to be selective and focus on the area/s that most resonates with them. Similarly very few programmes had a pre-defined geographic focus allowing companies and employees to direct resources wherever they are required the most.

During the primary research of 12 companies, possible benefits of undertaking employee volunteering programmes were listed out. Companies were asked to select the benefits (one or multiple) that they have observed. The findings are highlighted in figure below:

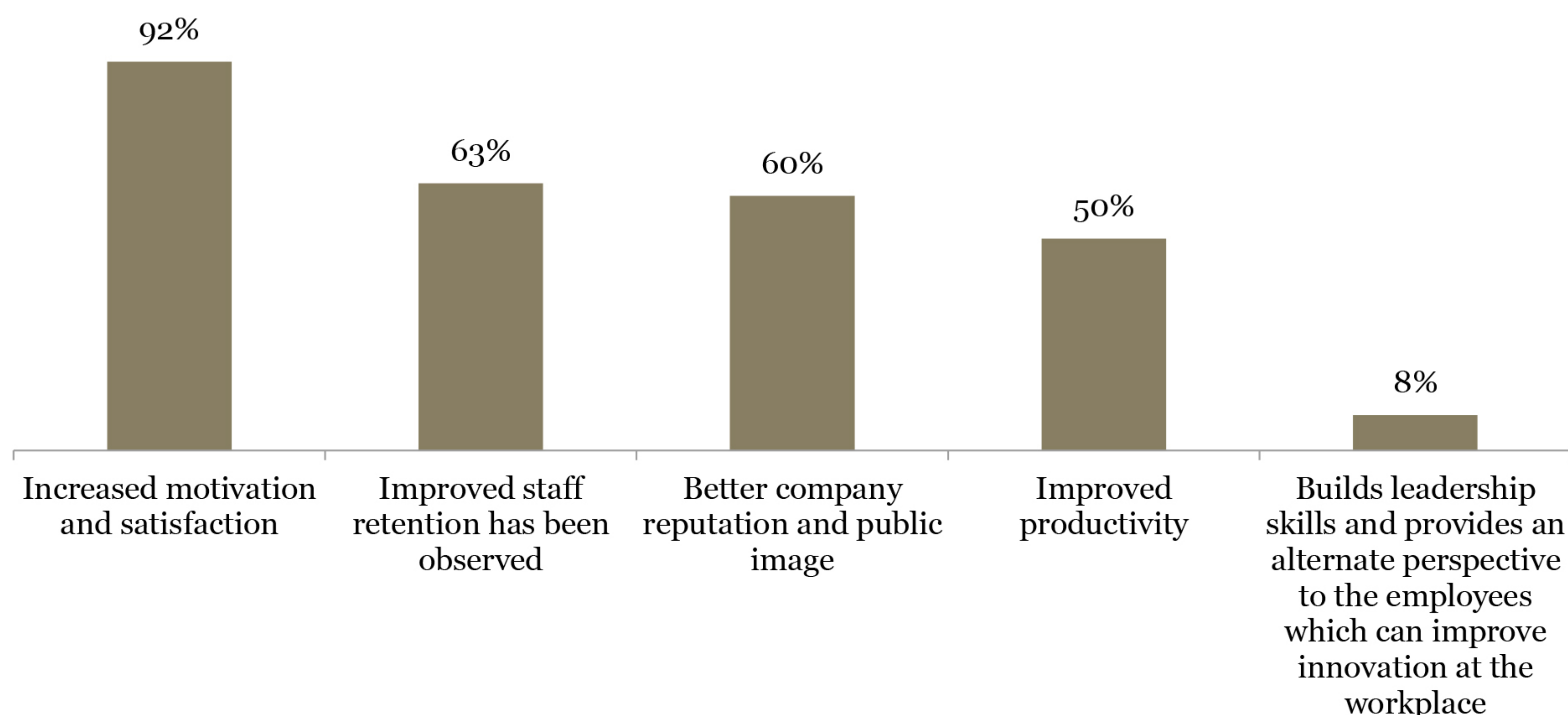
- Almost all companies interviewed shared that EV programmes lead to increased motivation and satisfaction
- About 63% companies interviewed shared that due to EV they have observed improved staff retention
- About 60% companies shared that EV leads to better company reputation and public image
- 50% companies shared that employee volunteering programmes leads to improved productivity

³ List of companies has been provided at the end of this document

⁴ Includes companies which did not respond on or before the deadline for the primary research phase

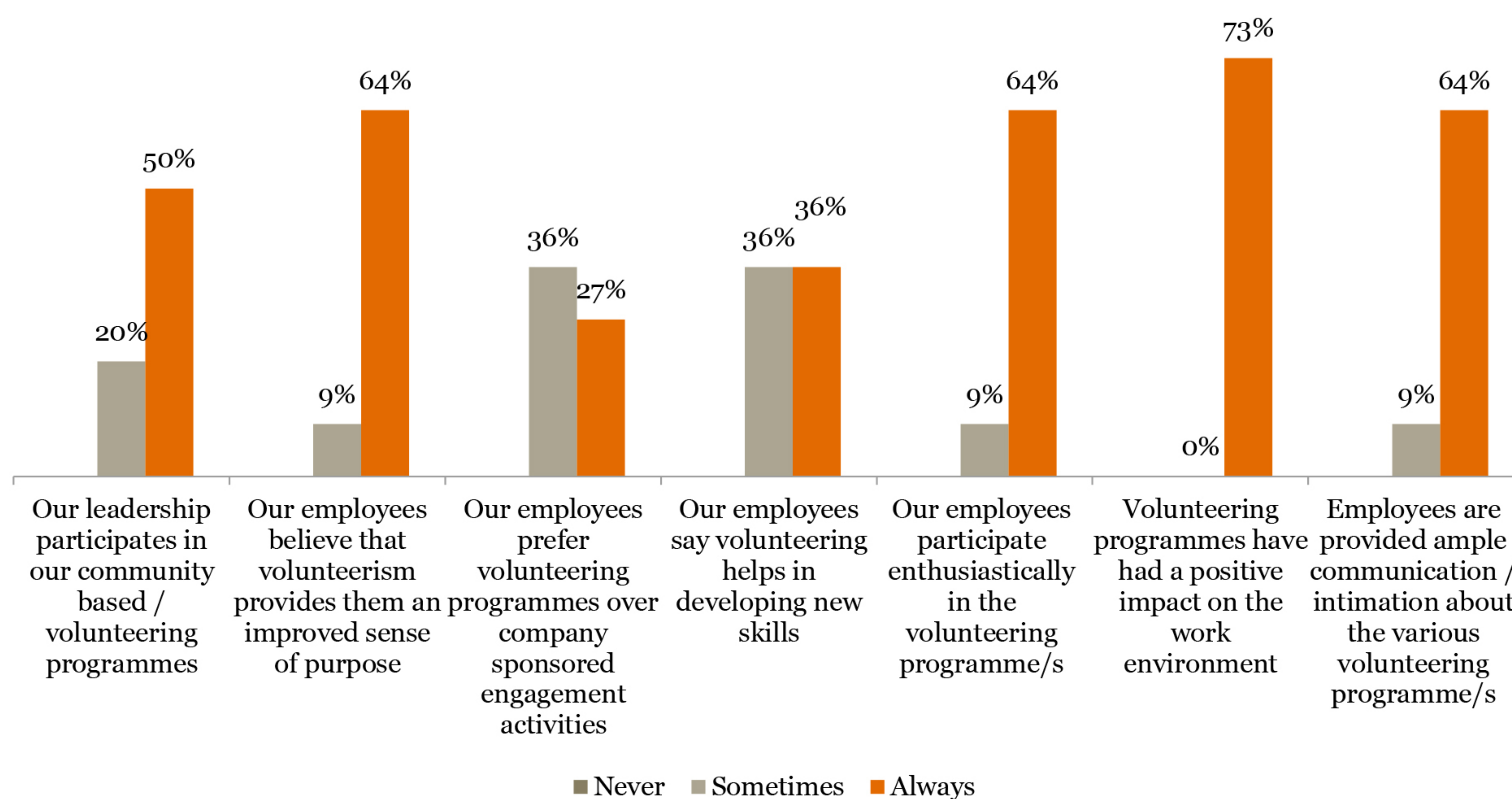
- Some companies also shared that EV related programmes build leadership skills and provides an alternate perspective to their employees which can also improve innovation at the workplace

Figure 1: Potential benefits generated for the organisation through employee volunteering programmes



Companies were requested to rate the likelihood of certain statements with regards to their EV programmes to understand their leadership and employees' response to the same.

Figure 2: Companies' view of EV programmes participation, reach and outcome



- More than 70% companies shared that their EV related programmes always have a positive impact on the work environment
- 50% companies shared that their leadership always participates in the community based / volunteering programmes

- 64% companies shared that their employees participate in the EV programmes enthusiastically and that the employees believe that volunteerism provides them a sense of purpose
- About 36% companies shared that sometimes employees prefer EV programmes over company sponsored engagement programmes (including off sites, parties, among others)
- About 36% companies shared that EV related programmes help in developing new skills in their employees

Categorization of different EV programmes

Once both secondary and primary phase of the study were concluded, the categorization parameters were identified based on the broader research findings. 46 percent of the programmes focussed on one-off activities including organizing camps and drives for different causes through their employees. Some programmes were more comprehensive in nature and aimed to engage their participants for a long term period and provide long term benefits. These included skill based volunteering, wherein employees would be encouraged to work for a social cause to find a solution or with a social organization to build their capacity using their skills. About 20 percent of the programmes studied were of this nature. Few programmes were identified wherein a company has ingrained employee volunteering into their overall company goals and have made it a part of their larger programmes.

The various EV programmes identified and studied have been categorized as – Connect, Continuous and Consistent. The *Connect* category focuses on understanding the various standalone volunteering activities that companies undertake. The *Continuous* category aims to identify and detail out the more comprehensive and long term volunteering based programmes undertaken by companies. The *Consistent* category provides details about how companies have embedded volunteering into their larger business goals/vision.

In the following section, programmes of different Companies with whom interactions were held during primary research phase have been detailed out. The same has also been segregated in to the three categories as mentioned above. It is important to note that the case studies mentioned in the document are not exhaustive for the respective company and there are more EV programmes conducted by the company.



Connect

Employee volunteering allows an employee to get connected to the community at large. EV also contains positive implications for not only the employees but also for the companies and the community. There are corporates who have been successful in knitting a framework that enables their employees to contribute to the community and in turn reap benefits like satisfaction and a feeling of empathy. EV that involves short term activities mostly provide the employees a sense of responsibility coupled with an opportunity to include themselves in the community.

For a company in particular, these kind of activities have motivated employees, create more avenues for the non-profit bodies and positively impact the community. Although not many significant studies have been

conducted to measure the impacts of EV, the current study captures the significance of the employee engagement. Almost every respondent organisation had conveyed that employees develop a sense of giving after the first interaction with the community. Employee giving in few instances also enable the employees to choose a philanthropic interest of their choice. Though not a widespread practice in Indian context of EV, letting the employees volunteer as per their interests boosts their ability and interest to contribute. Some corporates have a defined time in the calendar dedicated to employee giving whereas others have it in a continuous basis.

Event based volunteering activity ranges from plantation drives and school wall paintings to donations and visits to orphanages and old age homes. These activities enable the employees to contribute a significant time off their normal course of work which helps to break the monotony. These one off activities also enhances the team spirit within employees from different verticals coming together for a common cause. An evident benefit that springs up is that a lot many employees are ready to contribute at one point of time.

EV as part of CSR has been used to mitigate the effects the company has on its stakeholders. The community in particular develops a connection with the company and it helps them inculcate a sense of oneness. The engagement which involves community members and the employees work on the same activity strengthens the likely bond between the two resulting in a better image of a corporate which has its resources also inclined to social welfare.

The activity based volunteering in particular, enables the employer to motivate their employees to volunteer through time off or matching gifts. This also has a two-fold effect which has employee motivation and company reputation as an internal effect and welfare of communities as an external effect.

“Employee volunteering programmes are important for businesses in today's society. Not only do they offer significant benefits to society but they also allow employees to develop a sense of 'giving back', which in turn creates a positive impact on the wider organisation, including greater employee engagement and loyalty.”

Jaivir Singh
Vice Chairman
PwC India Foundation

Dollars for Doers

Thomson Reuters

Thomson Reuters has established well defined policies around employee volunteering wherein employees are encouraged to work with their communities on a cause / organization of their choice. Per the *Volunteering* policy, each employee gets two days or 16 hours off for volunteering work. Thomson Reuters also has a *Dollars for Doers* policy which allows an employee contribute their time and / or money to seek a matching contribution from the company. For every 40 hours (during one year) that an employee volunteers with a charity, s/he can apply for a grant of up to USD 1,000 to that charity. An employee may even split his/her time between multiple charities and apply for the grant in the proportion of the time contributed. This develops a sense of giving in the employee and gives them the satisfaction of raising funds for any organization / cause by contributing their time and skills. The *Matching gifts* policy at Thomson Reuters is for employees who only wish to contribute money to an organization, per the policy the employee can apply for a matching gift of up to USD 1,000 for the development organization of their choice.

Global Service Month

Cisco

Cisco's initiative – *Global Service Month* is a campaign to celebrate the spirit of volunteering where individuals and teams are encouraged to volunteer their time and talent to give back to society. From STEM mentoring to robotics workshops for school students, from learning and exposure visits for student beneficiaries to building community homes, employees can choose from varied options to volunteer. As part of the campaign in September 2017, over 500 employees volunteered with Children's LoveCastles Trust, an NGO partner in the space of STEM education to make science experiment models and learning aids benefitting over 1,500 students across nine rural schools.

Cisco's *volunteering and giving matching grants* policy serves as a key incentive for employees to actively participate in giving back efforts – as it doubles the impact of their work. Cisco matches all donations of USD 1 and above made by employees towards empanelled approved NGO partners. Cisco also matches volunteering hours at USD 10 per hour per employee. Employees can also nominate organizations that they work with to become beneficiaries of the matching gifts programme.

In addition to volunteering and giving matching gifts programme, Cisco employees can take up to five days per calendar year, with pay as part of *Time to Give*, to contribute their time and talent to a cause that matters to them. This employee benefit aims to provide an avenue for employees to explore their personal charitable giving inclination.

Community Outreach Programmes

Hinduja Global Solutions

HGS engaged 2,129 employees towards greater good of the community through activities which ranged from beach clean-up drives, community clean-up, clothes donation, and food distribution to underserved population and sanitation drive for women and adolescence girls providing them with sanitary pads. A total of 4,157 beneficiaries were impacted by the activities wherein more than 6,000 hours of voluntary service was rendered.

Employee volunteering

PwC India

PwC India through its dedicated not for profit arm-PwC India Foundation, provides a variety of platforms for its employees to work for social commitments. Every employee is encouraged to dedicate 16 hours annually towards causes such as tree plantations, blood donations and support towards humanitarian responses in times of crises. The foundation works with multiple NGOs on different social projects and most of these projects have an in-built employee involvement component. With Adhyapana Trust, over 150+ employees from the Bangalore office spent time painting school classrooms, conducting arts and crafts workshops and planting trees. Employees at Chennai office, worked with Rotary Club of Chennai to organize a blood donation drive in the office complex. Along with NGO SAFE, Kolkata office employees organized training courses on the importance of water and hygiene. Employees are also motivated to share their experience on PwC's internal communication channel to further highlight and promote the impact of volunteering.

Orange day

GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare

GSKCH's *Orange day* is a global community connect programme. The objective is to create spirit of volunteering among employees by giving them the opportunity to associate with a social cause. Under the programme, all employees get one paid day off each year to volunteer. Over the past years, employees across all locations have supported a wide range of social issues including work in local schools, work with differently abled, with abandoned elderly and with vulnerable children. The group volunteering opportunity is developed based on the interest of the employees and the need of the communities. In October 2017, GSKCH organized a company-wide Orange day wherein 464 employees including the leadership contributed 2,800 volunteering hours and impacted more than 10,000 lives. The focus was to drive sanitation and dengue awareness campaign by the employees. GSKCH employees worked with its NGO partners and curated the programme across its four locations. Key activities undertaken by the employees included cleanliness drives, dengue awareness drives, wall painting, and skits / role plays.

The Global Giving programme

Netapp India

The *Global Giving Programme* at Netapp encourages employees to participate in community activities that are aligned with the corporate initiatives of NetApp, Inc., while remaining responsive to the needs of the local Indian community. Employees at Netapp can take up to five business days (40 hours) of time off with pay per calendar year to volunteer for any community activity / cause / charity of their choice. Almost 33 percent of the workforce at Netapp is engaged in any one of the volunteering activities which signifies the company's commitment to serve the community. Netapp is looking to include Skill Based Volunteering in its employee engagement strategy and take it up on a larger scale with an aim of transfer of knowledge from the employees to the community members / organization.

Community Needs

Texas Instruments (TI)

TI employees are engaged in health initiatives wherein funds are raised through an annual event that supports the Bangalore Kidney Foundation. Employees have also involved themselves in environmental actions that include saplings plantations and maintenance support towards plants and trees. In 2017, TI employees planted over 1,500 saplings in and around Bangalore. TI has been instrumental in supporting disaster relief in Gujarat and north-eastern states through its payroll giving programme which raised INR 514,101.

Legacy of Good

Dell

Dell encourages its employees to do any volunteering work in their community either with a not for profit organization or otherwise (directly) and track the hours using the tool – “*Legacy of Good Community*”. An employee recording more than 10 hours of volunteering per quarter is rewarded USD 150 for donations to their preferred charity. Additionally, Dell also undertakes theme based volunteering programmes each quarter. In 2016-17, Dell India conducted theme based volunteering programme which included 'Earth Month' in March; 'Ignite Youth Learning' in May; 'Children Cancer Awareness' in September; '31 Days of Giving' in December to provide a platform for all employees to engage in volunteering activities.

Continuous

Corporates have been assigned an onus of community welfare within the CSR mandate that calls for efficient mechanisms to benefit a whole gamut of marginalised populace. Having the responsibility clearly stated, corporates now have become more sensible in routing their resources including employees to engage and deliver changes. Corporates have been instrumental in using their pool of human resources to help transfer skill sets that empower the community through employee volunteering that involves a continuous commitment.

For a corporate which has a diverse set of skills ranging from financial management, information technology and community service, a lot of avenues spring up in transferring skills to the community. For instance, a volunteering programme which involves an employee teaching the slum children the basics of English or Science has underlying assumptions to be effective and absorbent. Or consider the case of a rural SHG absorbing knowledge of book keeping and recording by an employee. These measures help the corporates and the employees in general and the community in particular. This kind of an approach helps in contributing professional expertise; often always directly supporting the non-profits resulting in strengthening the cognitive and behavioural capacities of the community.

The study captures some of the strategies of corporates involved in skill based volunteering (SBV) which means a definite time in regular intervals dedicated towards skill transfers to the community. Skill based volunteering,

in particular is a type of engagement wherein a corporate uses its diverse skills sets to serve the community for a relatively longer duration.

SBV can be of different types depending on the strategy devised by the company. Conducting pro-bono services within a short span of time, enabling transfer of knowledge to a number of non-profits on a continuous basis and granting employees a long term compensated leave to offer services within the community. This also includes cross transfer of knowledge between the employees and the community. For example, a prolonged approach to EV also helps the employees to absorb interpersonal skills as a result of interaction with the community.

The success of a SBV largely depends upon the framework a company adopts. A common mechanism involves:

1. Assessing one's own expertise,
2. Analysing the community need,
3. Developing a scope of the work to be accomplished,
4. Implementation of the work as per the standards and timeline,
5. Evaluating the results that happen due to the employees' engagement with the community and
6. Recognition of a volunteer's efforts confirmed against the project's results.

SBV, in general is beneficial for the non-profits given the limited resources they have for volunteering services. Not many non-profits are having a structured base for the activities and hence creating a systematic approach for volunteer administration and processes are vital for the success of any skill based volunteering through non-profits.

Samarpan and Sneham

Infosys

Infosys currently has 11 development centres (DC) in India, all of which have an established employee volunteering group. These groups like (Samarpan of Bangalore, Sneham of Chennai) are instrumental in playing a seminal role in engaging the employees by channelizing their social empathy to create an impact in the society through innovative social interventions in Education, Women Empowerment, Skill Development, Health and Safety. Over 2,500 employees are actively involved in community welfare programs through their DC's employee volunteering group. Here is a glimpse of activities of two of the clubs from Bangalore and Chennai. Similar activities are being done by other DC CSR clubs.

Samarpan's (the CSR club of Infosys Bangalore) flagship initiative is "Science Kit Donation drive", wherein 'Lab-in-a-box' science kits are donated to clusters of rural government schools to promote experimental scientific learning. Creative Computing connects the dots between creative imagination and technology, enabling young schoolchildren to write code using Raspberry Pi and Scratch. Samarpan works with youth at multiple levels providing scholarships to meritorious students, and also vocational training with guaranteed placements (in association with local NGOs). On the health front, Samarpan works with Dr. Ramana Rao at his village clinic, collaborates with NIMHANS, and along with Shankara Eye Hospital, conducts preliminary eye check-ups on rural schoolchildren. Samarpan also believes in timely intervention during crises and provides immediate relief during calamities like floods and droughts.

Volunteers from *Sneham* (CSR Club of Infosys Chennai), work in sectors of Healthcare, Education and Rural development. Additionally Shiksha, a volunteering programme of Infosys involves its employees to undertake extra classes in government schools on subjects like Computer, Mathematics and English. The 'I Citizen of Earth', is an activity that touches every aspect of human life be it education, healthcare or environment. Started in the year 2000, the initiative takes place in Chennai every month and had an involvement of 1,185 employees in FY 2016-17.

PULSE Volunteer Partnership

GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSKCH)

PULSE is GSKCH's global skills based volunteering initiative. Through the programme, interested and motivated employees are matched to a not for profit organization for three or six months, during this time they focus on contributing their skills to solve on ground challenges. Since its inception in 2009, more than 700 GSK employees have worked with about 100 organizations based in 65 countries. The application process for the *PULSE* programme starts in December every year wherein organizations share their

requirements and on the other hand employees submit their applications indicating their interest and skills that they have to offer. Employees with minimum three years of work experience with GSKCH are eligible to apply. Employee's application is carefully analysed by the In-country and Global PULSE team. This is followed by interview and only those candidates whose profile matches with the requirement of NGOs qualifies to be part of the programme. Not all applicants necessarily qualify to become PULSE volunteers. Selected employees undergo detailed orientation process to ensure that they can perform in the new and challenging environment. During this period the salary of the employee is paid by GSKCH and the expense incurred during the time the volunteer works with the organization are also reimbursed. In 2016, 72 employees globally (including Indian employees) were placed with not for profit organizations. GSK also undertakes an annual impact study of the programme, more than 90 percent PULSE volunteers agree that the volunteering experience help them develop their interpersonal skills. More than 90 percent volunteers also shared that they brought new ideas and fresh ways of working to GSK after PULSE.

Mentoring to social entrepreneurs

PwC India

One of the ways in which PwC India engages its employees in volunteering is through the mentorship programme at School for Social Entrepreneurs. Founded in India in February 2016 with support from PwCPL and the British Council, SSE's flagship programme "Social Start Up Fellowship" is a nine month programme aimed at converting the ideas of budding social entrepreneurs into successful social enterprises. For the past two years 33 mentors from PwC India have provided invaluable support and guidance to the fellows.

Additionally the employees are also engaged in Skilled Volunteering that include coaching sessions, career counselling, teaching digital literacy and running MS office workshops for underprivileged children.

Power of One

HCL Technologies

Power of One is HCL's employee volunteering and payroll giving programme focusses on urban transformation. The belief of the programme is that, all that is required to bring about a significant change is just one rupee per day and one hour / day / month / year of community service from every HCL employee. Through the Power of One programme, employees can enrol in daily payroll giving wherein each employee can contribute INR 1 every day. Money collected through the programme is over and above the CSR budget and is used towards HCL Foundation's My Scholar programme wherein long term scholarship support is provided to meritorious students from low-income families. Beneficiaries include children from HCL Foundation's project areas and HCL support staff (housekeeping, transport, security, among others). So far, the programme has reached 150+ deserving scholars. Under the Power of One programme, employees can also participate in community championship related projects such as My Worth. In this programme, a specialized NGO is engaged to train HCL employees about women empowerment and related topics and these employees in-turn impart the required life skills to young girls in HCL-F's project areas and schools. So far 145 volunteers have participated in this programme.

Back to School

Texas Instruments

TI through its education initiative, *Back To School* engages nearly 300 employees to support more than 10,000 children spread across 200 schools. The initiative engages approximately 4,800 hours of employees over a period of six weeks. The key activities in the initiative include providing basic school supplies to a child to help him/her take the first steps towards the school and strengthening the efforts of school authorities in their efforts to enrol more children into the school. Apart from supporting education of children, employees also make regular visits to take technical sessions for the children selected for Abdul Kalam Susandhi Fellowship programme run by 'Vidya Poshak'. The initiative helps the children to gain knowledge in the domain of VLSI / Embedded / Software.

Work to Give

Hinduja Global Solutions

“Work to give for a better tomorrow” – is a value that motivates everyone at HGS to actively participate and drive EV program. To facilitate effective participation, HGS also has the *Work to Give* portal, an online platform for employees to find events and sign-up to volunteer for the same. This is accessible through web and mobile applications.

HGS focuses on Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and involves its employees to maximum the reach and impact of the efforts. 450 volunteers focused on supporting 450 PwDs and support them through skills training. The volunteers support the PwD through vocational trainings, interview training and other skills to prepare them for job interviews. Through the support of HGS and efforts of its employees, close to 80 beneficiaries have already been placed.

HGS also involves its employees in imparting skill trainings in various subjects ranging from MS Office, Interview facing skills, Internet usage and orientation sessions to the youth to make them aware of the skills required to fetch a corporate job. 350 beneficiaries were reached through this programme that also involved 323 volunteers dedicating 1,161 hours of time. HGS involves its employees in imparting health education to community children WASH sessions to community children. Volunteers use colour visuals and compelling narratives to teach the children about proper methods of handwashing and sanitation. HGS conducted more than 40 Health & Hygiene sessions at underserved schools and communities across 10 Locations and conducted engagement sessions for children at Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology. These programmes engaged 2,260 volunteers dedicating 2,613 hours that benefitted 4,520 beneficiaries from the vulnerable sections of the society.

Consistent

Volunteering, in its best form may be articulated as a company’s commitment to support the community by not only conducting EV but absorbing the system in the ethos of the company. Policies and procedures of volunteering that are documented in a company’s *bible* are often resultant of the top management’s philosophy. This kind of an approach helps employee satisfaction and retention to a larger level. A company that has a commitment to foster EV in a strategic and planned manner often leads to attract the newer generation.

A lot of studies suggest that millennials and college fresher are often decoyed towards an organisation that has an embedded value within its ecosystem to serve the community. The current trend has motivated many employers to increase their intensity towards social obligations. A structured volunteering programme helps the Human Resource department particularly when there are satisfied employees and the retention rates are high. The most difficult part for the HR is to manage and retain employees. Motivation and satisfaction by engaging with a socially responsible company reduces the chances of an employee signing off due to boredom and continuous routine tasks.

Having inculcated volunteerism as part of the overall strategy helps an employee to plan and devote his or her time accordingly as compared to a non-structured system that calls for instant participation deterring the current flow of task one is part of. There are many corporates who have embedded volunteerism in the development plan which instates a sense of responsibility among the employees. A lot of employees are driven by the fact that they are a part of the larger system that aims to not only target profits but also have social commitments. Be it a one-time activity or a prolonged commitment, its embedment in the company’s vision and mission greatly affects in enhanced social recognitions.

Young Leaders Programme

Bharti Airtel

The *Bharti Airtel Young Leaders Programme* (BYLP) creates a pool of business leaders with an understanding of the social issues. The programme covers the new recruits to Bharti Airtel from premier B-School campuses across the country. The new recruits get exposure to all verticals of the company through cross functional trainings. A key component of the programme is mandatory on-site experience at the locations of Bharti Foundation. Bharti Foundation is the social arm of the Bharti Group and its flagship programme Satya Bharti School (SBS) focuses on improving the access and quality of education in the country. Bharti Foundation has set up over 200 schools in rural parts of the country. Under the BYLP, new recruits are required to work with a specific Satya Bharti School for a period of about three weeks as a part of their induction. The participants of the programme work with the school teachers and students to improve learning levels of the students. Each year about 40 to 50 recruits undergo this programme with an aim to develop skills by understanding a varied perspective and enable innovation at the workplace. Through the programme, the future leaders of the company

get first-hand knowledge of the employer’s commitment to social welfare and also inculcates a sense of giving right from the first day of employment.

Employees speak...

The study, in its scope tried to capture the views and feedback of employees with respect to employee volunteering. The testimonials mentioned below highlight the significance that EV holds for the employees.

“What I love about these volunteering opportunities is that it brings together our employees, people in the community together for a common cause that benefits the community and all of us.”

- Vijay Shivakumar

Thomson Reuters

“Employee Volunteering is way of giving back to society, a way for us to step back and see how fortunate we are and do something meaningful for others.”

- Balaji Ramani

Netapp

“Work to Give EV program has been one of the best employee engagement programmes in the company. The systematic way in which the programme is driven really helps us make a lasting and measurable difference.”

- Nagesh R Mehendale

Hinduja Global Solutions

“It’s an immensely satisfying feeling to see the underserved children grow and I hope our efforts encourage them to pursue higher education and work towards a satisfying career.”

- Ramesh Ramani

Texas Instruments

3. Conclusion: how can you leverage employee volunteering

A strategy that integrates scopes for benefitting multiple stakeholders is the key to drive employee volunteering in a company. The categorization made in the study was largely derived by the nature of involvement of the employees. Not to waive the fact that each category has its underlying positives for the company; be it a one off activity or a strategy that embeds EV in its policy, results are common, i.e. benefits to the employees, employers and largely to the community. Employee volunteering in particular leads to employee satisfaction in absence of which an employee can lose productivity in works and in turn cost the company on revenues. For the community in particular, there lies an opportunity for them to learn and get benefitted through volunteering activities. Transfer of skills and knowledge within the participants and the community coupled with ameliorated social relations drive an engagement activity towards the desirable results.

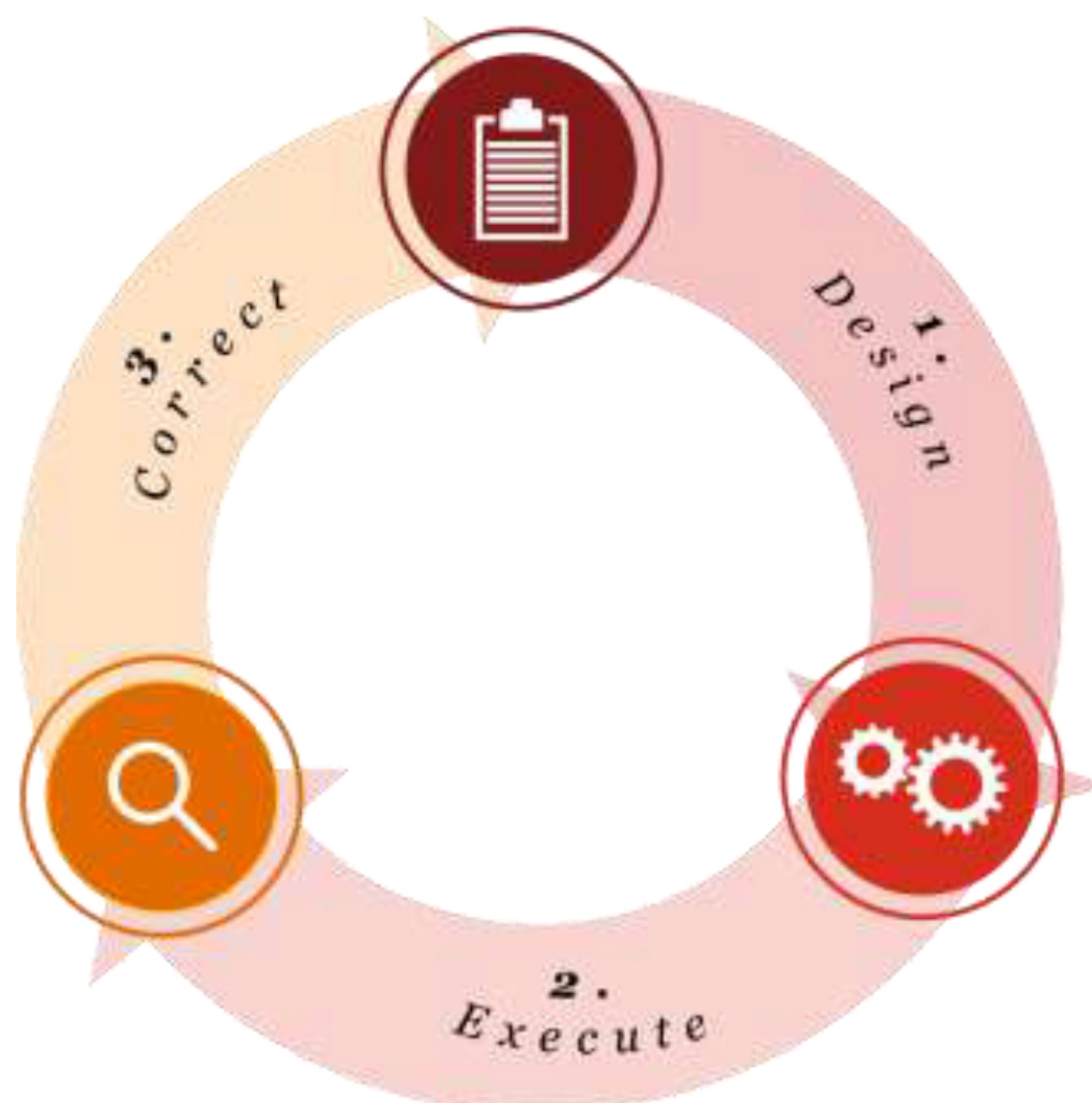
An organisation that plans to undertake volunteering activity can follow the **Design, Execute** and **Correct** framework to develop a strategy for employee engagement through community centric activities. The section below details out how companies could develop its employee volunteering programmes including key questions that the company should take into consideration.

“It is essential to involve all the right stakeholders while developing a volunteering programme. Co-creating programmes with our leadership, employees and NGO partners ensures the success of the programme and reflects our commitment towards improving quality of life of communities.”

Joydeep Sen

CSR-Lead (India Sub-continent)

GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare



Design

A company that considers EV to be a part of their overall structure, must look for the current engagement activities in which their employees are participating. The top management must have a vision that supports employee participation in community welfare programmes and in dialogue with the stakeholder, develop plans that have community at its centre. The strategy must be formulated considering the viewpoints of the leadership team, the employees, the non-profit and the community. Since the current scenario of business demands for a continuous vigil in every sphere, there must also be an anticipation of any upcoming roadblocks that might hamper the process and in turn distract the motto of the engagement. The strategy can be even improved by including rewards and recognition in the overall process that will encourage participation at a larger level. A survey in the initial stage of the planning process can be conducted to gauge the employees' inclination towards volunteering. A well deliberated structure coupled with a leadership vision that recognizes the need of engagement with the community will lead to the success of EV in an organisation.

Questions to be asked:

- What are the current employee engagement activities being carried out by the company? Are they all company sponsored activities?
- What are the visible gaps in engaging the employees? How can we address these gaps?
- What are some of the areas / causes that are important to the leadership and employees? Do the employees support any cause / organization in their own time? How can the company encourage the same?
- What goal/s can be created to connect business, community and employees?
- How will the employee engagement strategy be weaved with the overall HR strategy?
- How can rewards and recognition be embedded in the overall system of employee volunteering?

Execute

An employee volunteering strategy must have communication as the core of the execution policy. There must be a robust tactic enabling participation of maximum employees and members from the leadership team. A prolonged approach to EV can also have volunteering entrenched in the initial trainings of new recruits that will route positive word of mouth benefitting the company's brand image. Any activity that is characterized as an outside activity and conducted in an area other than office premises must have adequate provisions that support for logistics and associated requirements.

Also, a clear communication for a leader to participate carries veiled benefits for other stakeholders. An engagement involving top management motivates other employees as well to participate.

Questions to be asked:

- How will the leadership and employees be informed about the volunteering opportunities? What would be the communication strategy for the employee volunteering programme/s?
 - How can employee volunteering be integrated with the induction / orientation process of new recruits?
 - How well are the work processes supporting your plans?
 - Who are the champions / ambassadors in the organization for leading the programme/s? What would be the role of the leadership in the implementation of the volunteering programme/s?
-

Correct

Any strategy that also includes in it an element of performance check must suffice with adequate indicators to benchmark. The management can also focus on policy changes to include performance ratings in the overall appraisal process in a manner that does not decay the overall spirit of volunteerism. This approach in particular has fortes to develop a culture of meaningful engagement in the company. Another very important measure to check the efficiency can be an independent impact assessment of volunteering programmes. A company may also look into calculating its employee engagement index⁵ and attempt to attribute the improvement in the score to the volunteering programme/s. This may be used to assess the effectiveness of the programme and support decision making in the future. It may be, however, not feasible to conduct an assessment to gauge the impacts of every such engagement but a company with promising and stretched engagements can always look forward to check and correct their programmes.

Developing a robust communication strategy is equally important, given the fact that stakeholders must be made aware regarding a company's motives to serve the community at large. It might not always be easy to ascertain the results of a programme and hence key pointers that measure an employee's engagement can be verified. Rewards and recognitions to motivate employees can be a driver especially when the whole domain of EV is still fresh in the country and is essentially meant to develop in the employees a sense of responsibility towards the community and in turn suffice for the vision of the company.

Questions to be asked:

- What KPIs can be identified to monitor the achievement of the goal to connect business, community and employees?
 - How can the annual performance appraisal process be linked to the goals of the volunteering programme/s?
 - How can the achievement of goals be communicated to the internal and external stakeholders?
 - What platforms maybe used to reach out to the employees and high achievers? Microsite? Social media?
 - How can the results achieved be measured and validated? Third party impact assessment of the EV programme?
 - Have you calculated your employee engagement index?
-

Aligning a company's business strategy with the causes that the employees' are passionate about is a win-win situation. Providing a platform for employees to connect with a part of the world that is largely alien to them provides them a new perspective that can in-turn spark innovative problem solving at the workplace. Getting employees to personally vest in the company's success can come from either or all of the programme categories viz. connect, continuous and consistent. Using models of continual improvement already available at most companies, one can carve out its employee volunteering strategy that is connected, collective and innovative. As a result a company can create a differentiated approach towards employee engagement through CSR and community based programmes and build lasting value for the employees and in turn business.

⁵ Metric calculated using employees responses to 12 actionable workplace elements with proven linkages to performance outcomes, including productivity, customer service, quality, retention, safety, and profit (Gallup, 2016)

List of companies

Adobe Systems India

Hindustan Unilever

Bank of America

IBM

Bharti Airtel

Indus Towers

Coal India

Infosys

CISCO

Lupin Foundation

Coca Cola

Netapp

CRISIL

PepsiCo

Dell

PwC India Foundation

Edelweiss

Sunlife

GMR

Texas Instruments

GSK Consumer Healthcare

Thomson Reuters

HCL Foundation

Vodafone

Hero MotoCorp

Wells Fargo

Hinduja Global Solutions

Welspun

HSBC

Wipro

Note: The companies mentioned above were covered in the secondary research phase during which the publicly available information from company websites/reports were collated and analysed.

Disclaimers

- The conclusions drawn are based on the information available publicly and as per information shared by key personnel of the organisations at the time of writing this report. YFS does not make any representation or warranty, express or implied, with respect to the information contained in this report. The information contained in this report is subject to updating, expansion, revision and amendment in the publicly available website and revisions in the programmes within the companies.
- The work was limited to the specific procedures described in this report, and was based only on the information and analysis of the 25 companies for secondary research and 12 companies for primary research.
- Multiple companies have varied EV programmes mentioned, however for the purpose of the reporting only significant programmes have been considered for benchmarking strategies.



youthforsevaTM
experience the joy of giving

'Jnanagiri', # 75/76, 4th Cross, 2nd Main, Soudamini Layout,
Konanakunte, Bengaluru - 560062

734 924 6271

contact@youthforseva.org

www.youthforseva.org

This benchmarking study was carried out as a part of Youth for Seva's decennial celebrations (2017-18) and released during the Corporate Volunteering Conclave on March 16th, 2018.