

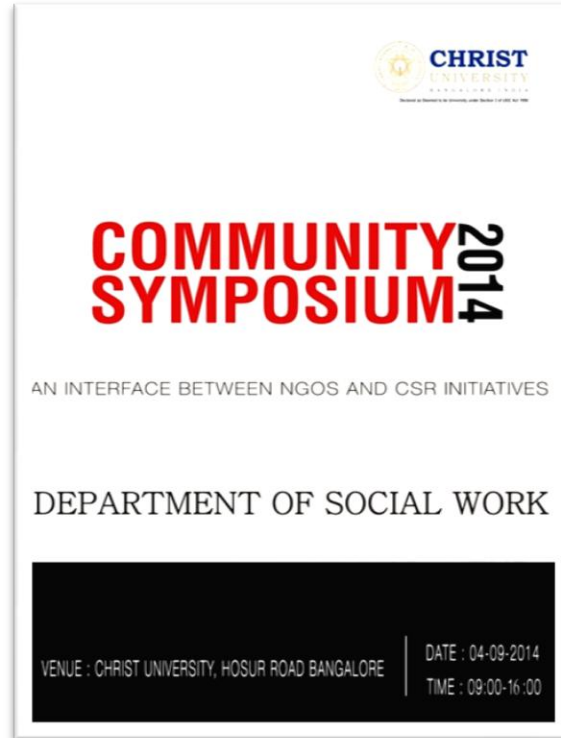


CHRIST
UNIVERSITY
B A N G A L O R E , I N D I A

Declared as Deemed to be University under Section 3 of UGC Act 1956

COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM

The Department of Social Work, Christ University is known best for its innovative practices, of which networking with nongovernmental organizations is one of the pioneer efforts of its kind to establish a common platform for the student community and the Non Governmental Organizations working for various social causes in the city. The occasion fosters the NGO's to spread awareness among the students about the social cause that they work for and also provide an opportunity for the faculty members as well as the students for exploring possibilities for developing service learning component in curriculum. Since its inception, NGO Mela has been instrumental in increasing awareness and consciousness among the students about the different social issues and the agencies working on those issues. This program provides an opportunity for the NGO's to sensitize the students while strengthening the networking between various NGO's and the University, to benefit in future prospects as fieldwork programs and placements.



This year, keeping in mind the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) bill of Companies Act, 2013, the concept of NGO meet was modified and a new idea of “**COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM – *An Interface between NGOs and CSR initiatives***” was held on the 4th of September, 2014. This program was organized with an intention to provide a platform for Non-governmental organizations and companies with CSR initiatives to create awareness, initiate partnerships and build network. The “COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM” began in the morning with an inauguration of the program after which stalls of the NGOs exhibiting their work interacted with the visitors and shared with them their success stories and sensitized them on social issues and the cause they work for., followed by a panel discussion in the afternoon where both the panels enriched the students’ knowledge with their insights on their respective topics.

INAUGARTION

The inauguration commenced at 10:05 am with the students, faculty and the dean Mallika Krishnaswami taking an active part in the event along with the participating NGO’s. A pledge

was taken by all those who were present to uphold the spirit of social work and all its values and principles as a profession. The pledge is displayed here as follows.



The Social Work Professional Oath

I solemnly pledge to consecrate my life to the service of humanity and to social justice;

I will practice my profession responsibly with conscience, integrity, and dignity which are consistent with its values, ethical principles, and ethical standards;

The welfare of my client will be my first consideration; I will respect the secrets which are confided in me, even after my professional relationship with my client has ended;

I will maintain by all means in my power, the honour and the traditions of the social work profession; my colleagues are my brothers and sisters;

I will not permit considerations of gender, age, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual affiliation, physical ability, mental ability, political philosophy, or socio-economic standing to intervene between my duty and my client; I will be sensitive to cultural and to ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustices;

I will maintain the utmost respect for the inherent dignity and worth of every human being even under threat to myself; I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honour

The pledge set a sense of duty and responsibility amongst all those present at the venue to remember the event as a beginning point for all activities to come about in the career of young social workers.

COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM – EXHIBITION

The exhibition started after the inauguration at 10.30 am. Representatives from 10 NGOs were present in each stall to explain their contributions to the development of the society. Each NGO stall conveyed the significance of different ways to give back to the society which in turn would contribute towards the betterment of the Nation. The vibrant NGOs that took part in the exhibition were Dream a Dream, Green Peace, YST, Sochara, Enable India, Sukrupa, Mantra, TSSS, E-Cure & CSA.

The students and faculty of various departments of the “Humanities & Social Sciences” deanery of the Christ University visited each stall which proved to be a source of fillip for the NGO representatives to advocate about their work. The exhibition continued till 2.30 pm in the noon.

COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM – PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel Discussion, took place in the latter half of the day. All the people from NGO’s who took part in the Symposium were divided into two panels and were given topics to talk about. Both the panel discussions happened simultaneously in different rooms with one student moderator and one faculty moderator in each panel.

Panel I – Sustainable development

Panelists: E-CURE, ENABLE INDIA,
MANTRA, TSSS, GREEN PEACE,
SOCHARA



The panel discussion started with the student moderator introducing the topic for the discussion with a brief explanation of what is sustainable development and its relevance in the functioning and programmes of NGO's taking part in the panel discussion. The panelists had a wide range of knowledge to share with all the students and faculty members present in the discussion. They shared their valuable insights on the process of sustainable development and how students can contribute to the same. The panelists also spoke of the different aspects of sustainability of any development program, some of which were, "association" how association can help in sustaining development. Words of inspiration like the "power of unity", the "change can begin with one" set the tone of the discussion.



Experiences from the field were shared and the audiences were also encouraged to take part in it. The latter half of the discussion was the interaction of students with the panelist, where each panelist answered questions of the students.

Panel II: Social Responsibility

Panelists: TSSS, Sochara, Green Peace,

Narayana Health CSR and Tata ELXI



The discussion was an interface between NGOs working in the field of Health, Education and Environment and CSR Managers working in the same domain. The main idea behind the discussion was to understand ‘Social Responsibility’ in the development sector from a dual perspective of NGOs and CSR initiatives in India. The panel had a total of 5 speakers out of which two were CSR professionals and the other 3 were from NGOs. Some of the predominant things that were discussed in the panel focused on how the term ‘development’ was coined and how it came to be evolved over the years with the responsibility shifting from the state , to the NGOs and then to the Corporate Bodies. The panelists emphasized greatly on the importance of social equity to maintain citizen involvement in any kind of development and how everyone in society is equally accountable on being ‘socially responsible’.

The session concluded with the panelists Mr. Mahesh Kumar from Tata ELXI and Ms. Mansi Kaul from Narayana Health talking about the term Social Responsibility and how it was perceived from different perspectives giving it multiple dimensions of sustainable development of communities, Industrial Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Risk Management and the

NGO representatives talking about Social Responsibility in terms of Volunteerism in implementing interventions for communities.

A brief note on the NGOs and their participation in the SYMPOSIUM

DREAM a DREAM: Dream A Dream envisions empowering young people from vulnerable backgrounds by developing life



skills. Their work also includes sensitizing the community through active volunteering leading to a non-discriminatory society where unique differences are appreciated. Youngsters with a lot of potential connected with the students easily, building a rapport. Colorful banners, posters and pamphlets were exhibited in the stall and the representatives explained to those who visited their stalls about their role in bringing about a change in the society.

SOCHARA: Involved in creating networks and linkages through campaigns and movements, SOCHARA brings the public back into public health and the voice of the community into the public health discourse. SOCHARA team is also involved in community health action, policy advocacy, dialogue and documentation on Community Health in India, action research, learning facilitation and documentation at local, national, regional and global levels. Several books on health and banners were exhibited at the stall which were informative and caught the attention of several students by creating awareness on public health.

SUKRUPA: Registered as a non-profit charitable organization, SUKRUPA works with a mission - "to create a pathway to a dignified life for marginalized Indians who are below the poverty line" and addresses the socio-economic development of the disadvantaged in urban and rural parts of Bangalore, India. The programs offered currently through Sukrupa include: Free Schooling from Pre-school through Class 10, Youth Training in life skills, distant learning and college education, Community and Rural Economic Development benefiting adults and families. The agency also maintains a school "The Sukrupa Education Center" and undertakes couple of community development programs and youth training programs. It also has certain income generation activities for the mothers to provide money for the education of the children. The

exhibition stall of Sukrupa was filled with the exhibits of these kinds to give an idea to the viewers about the kind of work they do.

GREEN PEACE: Greenpeace India has been working on various issues related to the environment since 2001. Their work in India is focused on four broad campaigns namely, stop climate change, sustainable agriculture, preserving the oceans and preventing another nuclear catastrophe. The proactive young representatives of Green peace, engaged in a one to one conversation with the viewers briefing them about the work done by their agency. They also had videos, banners and pamphlets providing information their organization.

ENABLE INDIA: Enable India's mission is to empower persons with disability. The mission is founded on the firm belief that the disabled do not need sympathy - they need a supportive environment to grow and fulfill their needs, potential and dreams. Enable India's core activities include employment of people with disabilities, pre-employment services, supplemental education, counseling and support services, consultancy and training for other institutions and NGOs and technology services.



MANTRA: A bunch of committed and passionate individuals trying to make this world a place of opportunities. To champion the never-ending quest for a better world, Mantra for Change through their innovative models and projects, makes quality education and informed health care the flywheel of development.

TELLICHERRY SOCIAL SERVICE SOCIETY (TSSS): TSSS is the official social work organ of the Archdiocese of Tellicherry. Started in 1966, it caters to the socially and economically disadvantaged sections in the society irrespective of caste, creed and community. With a vision for a society of equals founded on divine love where everybody enjoys absolute



freedom its mission is the holistic development of the community towards self-reliance with preferential option for the deprived sections.

**YASHASWINI
SWAVALAMBANA TRUST**

(YST): The endeavor of this agency is to enable the challenged students

passing out of schools to lead a life of dignity and self-reliance. This is achieved through vocational training and placements.

CENTRE for SOCIAL ACTION: Centre for Social Action (CSA), is a 'Students Movement for a Humane and Just Society' where student communities are sensitized on various issues affecting the poor and the marginalized sections of society. Established in 1999, CSA works towards promoting the value of Social Responsibility amongst the student community. With the support of volunteers, faculty and full time development professionals, CSA is strongly engaged in addressing issues related to child rights, socio-economic development of women, youths and farmers, livelihood, community mobilization and environment/climate change issues.

A brief note on the representatives CSR initiatives and their participation in the SYMPOSIUM

TATA ELXSI: Corporate Social Responsibility in Tata Elxsi takes the form of “Social Activity Forum of Elxsians” (SAFE), an initiative run by Tata Elxsi and its employees. SAFE is involved in adoption of schools, providing scholarship to needy students, arranging outings, medical camps, and providing nutritious meals, providing books and other stationery to students from identified schools, among others.

NARAYANA HEALTH: At Narayana Health, CSR is ingrained in their DNA, therefore they are modeled as a Social Enterprise rather than a typical Corporate. The CSR policy is a set of basic principles and guidelines to direct focus and influence their actions and decision-making in pursuit of their goals. At Narayana Health, they want to make a difference to society by engaging in any activity that eliminates or alleviates pain and suffering. They work closely with philanthropic organizations and their donations are used only for direct financial assistance to the needy.

Conclusion

The **Community Symposium** which took place on 4th September 2014 was an *Interface between NGOs and CSR initiatives*". This program was organized with an intention to provide a platform for Non-governmental organizations and companies with CSR initiatives to create awareness, initiate partnerships and build network. The panel discussion was very informative imparting knowledge to the students about sustainability and social responsibility. The Symposium was successful in meeting the objectives.