

India@75-Probono Initiative....Transforming Vision into Reality

A better India can be built by leveraging on India's core strength – its people. Large-scale, non-violent social change is a result of a concerted and directed collaborative process. In this pursuit, India @ 75 shares its vision of a National Volunteering Grid (NVG) which lets people contribute through Time, Skills or Money. The overarching grid is institutionalized by various initiatives steered by India @ 75 such as Count me In & Probono.

The Pro bono Program is one of the most high-impact volunteering programs of India@75's National Volunteering Grid (NVG). Through well-crafted models of engagement, the program aims to leverage business talents of professionals and corporates in India to work with non-profit organizations on areas that can help improve their internal capacity and organizational functioning.

A task force was constituted in June 2013 under the chairmanship of Dr. Mukund Rajan, brand custodian and Chief Ethics Officer, Tata Sons and has presence from 30 organizations representing corporates, Non profits and intermediaries & had 72 people directly or indirectly involved. Diversity of the group, their varied backgrounds and experiences besides the energy and passion was instrumental in the successful evolution of Probono from a vision to reality. Unlike normal teams – this was a PROBONO team that was self motivated and working towards a tangible deliverable.

India@ 75, organized the 4th and concluding meeting of the Taskforce on Probono at Hotel Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai on June 26, 2014. The task force

had been working on a defined Charter to "Make India@75's vision for the creation of a National Volunteering Grid a reality, by focusing on the Probono opportunity in the country"

This was the fourth & the last meeting of the taskforce since its inception in June 2013. The previous gatherings had provided opportunities to discuss share and deliberate the progress of their work. Apart from meeting as a group, the taskforce was in regular contact with each other through, calls, mails, Skype, and messages and other means of communication. The working structure of the taskforce was broken down into four subgroups; **WEB PLATFORM, COMMUNICATION, MEASUREMENT, and BEST PRACTICES**, each group was led by a group leader and a defined mandate to work.

The outcome of one year of passion, commitment, skills and wisdom of the taskforce was in the form of a web portal that is going to be the focal point of all the Probono activities. The official website "PROBONO UNPLUGGED" was unveiled at this meeting. The chairperson also floated the proposition for the next phase that is implementation and scaling of this initiative. The proposition was deliberated and widely accepted by all the members.

"PROBONO UNPLUGGED ultimately believes that those touched by it will be able to : Unleash their best potential, deliver on their roles to the best of their ability, & live the highest expression of their life."



Top (L-R) Rajan Navani, Chairman, National Committee, India@75, Dr. Mukund Rajan, Chairperson, Probono Taskforce, Brand Custodian and Chief Ethics Officer, Tata Sons, Mr. Virendra Gupta, Deputy Director General, Confederation of Indian Industry. (Below) Members of Taskforce attending the meeting

PROBONO PILOTS

India@75, as a part of its Probono initiative has been working with organizations like Boston Consultancy Group (BCG), Cognizant and GE who already have a robust Probono /Corporate Volunteering program. The material developed by India@75- Probono taskforce was validated with GE & Cognizant by BCG. The three major areas validated were; Web Portal, Communication & Measurement calculator. Feedback on portal was received from multiple corporate, non profits & intermediaries resulting in a comprehensive 150 line feedback to Infosys which had dedicated a team to design and develop the portal.

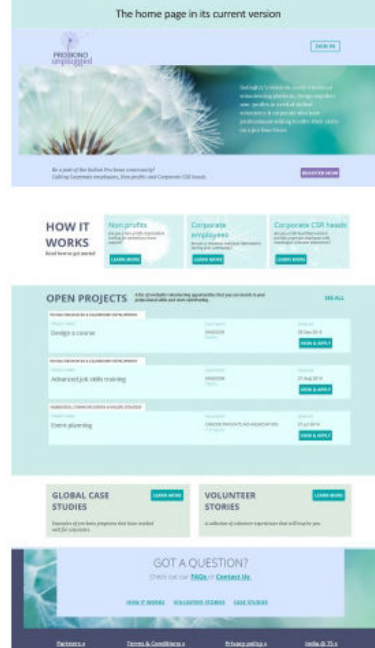
India@75 communication material like posters and documentaries were customized as per GE initiative, and used for publicity and awareness within GE offices to Increase total volunteering hours/ year of GE volunteers.

Case study of Cognizant outreach program was prepared and the document shared with best practices team for uploading on portal, as a part of "Probono Best Practices" repository. The calculator developed by the taskforce, which gives an economic value to the Probono work done was tested in Cognizant computer literacy program and GE science workshops. This would be immensely beneficial to corporate as Government in its latest amendment to Companies Act dated 18 June, 2014 has included volunteer time to be offset within the overall 2 percent mandated CSR spend.

The pilots were executed with support from BCG, who on Probono basis had deputed a full time resource on secondment.

First look of the WEB PORTAL

The Web portal was The "Centerpiece" of the work of Taskforce. With a much focused objective "Creation of a National Pro Bono platform, for both facilitation and implementation of Pro Bono in India." The portal was launched in the beta version, and is still presently in test phase.



Voices of the Taskforce Members

One of the most engaging experiences of working in India.

Dr. Mukund Rajan,
Chairperson of the Probono taskforce,
Brand Custodian and
Chief Ethics Officer, Tata Sons

The Start
A distant dream they had all seen in sepia tint and golden hues
The path ahead looked tough and long
But they had put on their best shoes
The time has now come to get started
On a journey that may lead to glory
Of course there will be challenges on the way
How else will it make for a good story?

Mr. Amitabh Mall,
Boston Consultancy Group

In the words of Maya Angelou who just passed, *Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud*
To me, we have put together a portal for rainbow making opportunities, giving probono corporate skills to non-profits who do the great work at the grass roots. Its been a edifying personal journey and have really enjoyed the rousing discussions and the thinking through our project and especially the golden opportunity to work closely with some very special people. Raising my hand for Task Force Part II

Kabi Sharman, Pyera Global

The best part of the Task Force is being given the permission to dream big. It's not often we get the opportunity to think about making an impact not just within a team, or within a company, but at the level of an entire nation

Lauren, Net impact