

Makarand Teje

AppLabs: CSR Initiatives with Care, Innovation and Passion

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President & CEO, AppLabs

AppLabs CSR is strongly understood as Citizen's Social Responsibility, and our employees being responsible citizens, ideate, initiate, and execute this responsibility very conscientiously. It indeed is very heartening to see that our employees are sensitive to social issues and the needs of the underprivileged communities, and have given us their whole-hearted support in successfully implementing our CSR programs.

The CSR programs at AppLabs are carried out under the umbrella of the AppLabs Charitable Trust (ACT), with a special focus on Health and Education welfare activities for the poor and needy communities. With the commitment of over 2,000 global employees, since its inception, ACT has made a visible impact towards the social causes it supports. All the initiatives of the Trust are targeted towards the disadvantaged population in all the countries where AppLabs has a significant presence.

ACT was borne out of the following beliefs:

Having a responsibility to serve the underprivileged

Serving the needy gives unparalleled satisfaction

Care, Innovation, and Passion are the core values that drive all the CSR activities. Each country that AppLabs is present in has an ACT Chapter. The local chapters decide the programs they would like to implement. The ACT leadership team plans, mobilizes volunteers, develops partnerships with local NGOs, and implements the services. The ACT headquarters in Hyderabad acts as a facilitator for a majority of the programs.

The objectives of ACT are defined every quarter by the decision-making committee. Membership in this committee rotates quarterly, so that different people get the opportunity to lead the initiative. Currently, ACT has over 600 registered volunteers working on various initiatives. The following are the areas in which ACT works.

1. Education Welfare

Adoption of Government Primary School: Education has been a major area of CSR activity for AppLabs. It has adopted a government school at B.R. Ambedkar Nagar, a small locality in the up-scale Film Nagar area of Hyderabad. Looking at the lack of infrastructure at the school premises, ACT initiated a dialogue with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) department of the Government, to work on a public-private partnership to fund the construction of the school building. The building is almost complete in about 450 square yards, comprising the ground and first floor with five classrooms and two staff rooms. As per the signed MoU with the SSA authorities, the school will be named as AppLabs Ambedkar Government Primary School and is expected to be inaugurated soon. **Working with Private Schools:** ACT also works with three private schools under Sharada Vidya Niketan on the outskirts of Hyderabad. These schools have around 200 students, most of them orphans aged between 3 and 11 years. ACT's activities in these schools include donation of uniforms, textbooks and stationery items. ACT members visit the schools regularly on festivals and national days, including Independence Day and Children's Day. ACT staff members also dedicate their time in these schools. **Collaboration with MV Foundation:** AppLabs has also collaborated with the MV Foundation; an NGO based in Hyderabad, which is run by Shantha Sinha, the Magsaysay award winner. ACT helps the NGO in initiatives to teach spoken English in the Government schools of Hyderabad.

2. Health Welfare

Working with NGOs: AppLabs reaches out to its employees through various workplace initiatives for awareness generation, and encourages them to volunteer their time and skills with local NGOs working on HIV/AIDS issues.

AppLabs closely works with Rakshana Deepam, an NGO dealing with HIV cases in Hyderabad. The employees visit these organizations during holidays; donate clothes, medicine, stationery, food items, and books, and most importantly, spend time interacting with the patients. AppLabs also works closely with Nirmal Hriday, an NGO run by the Mother Teresa Charitable Trust, which supports 17 old-age homes in Andhra Pradesh and 14 in Orissa, and provides shelter to destitute patients suffering from tuberculosis, diabetes, and HIV.

Organizing Voluntary Donation Camps: AppLabs Charitable Trust regularly organizes Voluntary Donation Camps called Samarpan, where its employees make generous donations of clothes, footwear, books, foodstuff, household and personal care items for the poor and the needy. The proceeds are distributed in all the schools and homes adopted by ACT, as well as in the slum areas in and around Hyderabad. AppLabs also makes quarterly donations of life-saving medicines. It also organizes quarterly blood-donation camps, in association with the Chiranjeevi Charitable Trust in Hyderabad.

Other initiatives: When the devastating floods caused widespread loss of life and damage to property in Bihar, ACT collaborated with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to donate necessary items, including medicines, clothes, bed-sheets, blankets, baby food, milk powder and polythene sheets for the victims.

To promote civic and social welfare, AppLabs has initiated the Traffic Awareness program in collaboration with the Government of Andhra Pradesh, wherein AppLabs employees regularly distribute traffic regulation flyers at all the major traffic crossings in Hyderabad.

Every year, AppLabs gives out CSR awards to employees who have looked beyond professional success, and have aimed to become holistic individuals, by assuming a leadership role and actively working to implement the company's programs in the multiple organizations and communities.

Recently, a compilation of case studies, entitled Inclusive Response to HIV and AIDS challenge: Experience from the Indian IT sector, on the initiatives and experiences of eight leading IT companies in addressing issues related to HIV/AIDS, was released by the World Bank Institute (WBI), CII, and India Business Trust (IBT) for HIV/AIDS. AppLabs is happy to announce that it is one of the eight IT companies included in the compilation.