

At The Same Table™ (ATST), hosted by EdelGive Foundation, is an equal platform for free and frank discussion on issues and ideas that collectively concern the funding community.

At The Same Table™ - Mumbai, April 2018

At The Same Table™ (ATST), hosted by EdelGive Foundation, is an equal platform for free and frank discussion on issues and ideas that collectively concern the funding community. The tenth edition hosted at Edelweiss House, on 24th April, centered on **Collective Impact: Focus on Collaborations and Coalitions**.

The meeting was tremendously interactive, and the energy and involvement of all persons in the room served to underline the need and importance of collective funding and impact.

The session commenced with the launch of a paper on *Collective Impact* (CI) developed by EdelGive in partnership with Sattva Consulting which validated the relevance of collectives as an avenue available to funders desirous of creating systemic impact, for shared learnings as well as shared risks. The paper analyzed 14 currently operational CI initiatives across India, including **EdelGive's Coalition for transforming Education (ECE)**. The ECE program in its first 2 years has been supported by Tata Trusts, Sita Devi Malhotra Charitable Trust and the Great Eastern CSR Foundation, with EdelGive as the anchor funder.

Key takeaways from the discussions that followed include:

A single definition of a 'collective' is limiting, as there are many parameters to be considered including time, population, scale, approach, role of government, efficiency.

The social problems that India is battling with are huge, complex and systemic, added to which is a huge shortfall in the funding available to achieve set goals (SDGs).

Fragmented, isolated efforts haven't resulted in much traction to date. The need of the hour is the coming together of multiple players who are: committed to investing long-term and willing to absorb the costs of risky investments aimed at returns/impact greater than the investment.

One of the challenges to collective/collaborative funding is the time taken to bring different players together; getting all parties aligned to the same goals and processes. The government must be included in a coalition to bring scale and create sustainability of social impact. The participants agreed that, getting governments on board, with a focus on outcome instead of output, is valuable but entails a long, challenging process.

Vidya Shah, CEO, EdelGive emphasised that coalitions should adopt, "a problem-solving approach" wherein every participant "feels invested" and thereby assumes "accountability for execution". At the same time, she insisted that one needs to be patient while expecting results from coalitions. "It is unrealistic to expect impact in Year zero," she said.

Another key speaker, emphasized that mutual respect by and for all players involved is an imperative to the success of a coalition. "Respect, is followed by trust and subsequently by partnership, adds value," he reiterated.

Insights that emerged from the ECE were shared which established that the crucial components to any partnership are the technical partners, the government, and the funding partners. Coalitions need a central framework with broad guidelines and that the growth is more of a snowballing effect, wherein a value chain is created with existing partners bringing in new partners.

In the EdelGive Coalition for Transforming Education, EdelGive plays two crucial roles viz. that of backbone funder (responsible for bringing and holding all the players together while pushing the program) and the anchor funder (the one who by its presence takes away the worry of funding being available at all times). EdelGive is now working on setting up a gender coalition that works on women's empowerment.

Naghma Mulla, COO, EdelGive drew attention to the fact to most coalitions in India being on Education. In addition to being need-driven, measuring the impact of interventions in Education, is more amenable as

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compared to similar interventions addressing critical needs in the gender empowerment space. EdelGive's proposed coalition on gender that will be launched later this year is aimed at addressing this need and gap in gender and women-related coalitions; which are currently nonexistent, with little or no funding earmarked for them, despite the high need.