Practitioner's Guide to

Corporate Social Responsibility

About the Book

Texts and guidance on corporate social responsibility (CSR) are abundant, both globally, and in India. Notably, the Indian framework for CSR is marked by its focus on spending, whereas global frameworks are focused on sustainability and responsibility. However, the inspiration for this book, and therefore, its notable feature, is that it fits the Indian concept of CSR against the larger backdrop of responsible business conduct. The book is not just an analysis of law and regulations: it is a complete implementation guide, enriched by the questions that have arisen over years of the authors' consulting experience in the domain. The book also captures the subject in all its relevant dimensions – accounting and taxation included.

Additionally, the book will also be relevant for NGOs who house CSR activities, implementing agencies engaged as intermediaries, impact assessors, and the like. And above all, corporate law students will find the publication addressing their need of a lucid exposition of the subject.

Key Features

- Written with a practical approach based on authors' experience in handling client
- For each issue, a step-by-step guidance, including actionable, relevant formats, policy, resolutions, SOPs, etc
- FAQs in the form of illustrations, arising from practical implementation, added to each important topic
- Guidance on implementation agencies, beneficiaries, impact analysis, need analysis etc
- Global mapping with several leading and relevant standards and principles, OECD, SDGs. etc
- Guidance on tax and accounting issues- providing a holistic solution to readers
- Discussion and guidance on treatment of surplus arising out of CSR, excess spending on CSR, etc
- Comes handy with RoC adjudication orders till May 2023 passed in the context of
- Critical analysis and discussion on core concepts like applicability, profit computation, etc.







Practitioner's Corporate Social Responsibility Guide to

CS

Pammy Jaiswal

2023

CORPOR ATE

LAW

ADVISER

Practitioner's Guide to

Corporate **Social** Responsibility



CS Pammy Jaiswal

Partner, Vinod Kothari and Company **Practising Company Secretaries**







Contents at Glance

About the Auti	hor vii
Acknowledgen	nentix
Foreword	xi
Table of Conte	ntsxvii
Chapter 1	Understanding nexus between climate change, sustainability and business responsibility
Chapter 2	Introduction to the concept of CSR
Chapter 3	Getting Started for Complying with CSR Framework 57
Chapter 4	CSR Activities
Chapter 5	Understanding CSR Expenditure
Chapter 6	CSR through Implementing Agencies
Chapter 7	Monitoring and Disclosure Requirements 299
Chapter 8	Impact Assessment
Chapter 9	CSR Accounting Aspects
Chapter 10	CSR Taxation. 397
Chapter 11	Penal Provisions
	ANNEXURES
Annexure I	Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 477
Annexure II	Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Rules 2014 as amended by the Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Amendment Rules 2021. 481
Annexure III	FAQs on CSR 2021 Amendments
	FAQs on Corporate Social Responsibility
Annexure V	Glossary
	Subject Index. 571



Table of Contents

Abou	t the Au	thor vii
	O	nentix
Forev	vord	xi
Cont	ents at G	lance
Chaj	pter 1	Understanding nexus between climate change, sustainability and business responsibility
1.1	Triple	Bottom line
	1.1.1	Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainability Reporting
	1.1.2	Global Reporting Initiative and GRI Standards: 4
	1.1.3	International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) 6
	1.1.4	Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) 7
	1.1.5	Climate Disclosure Standards Board (CDSB)
	1.1.6	Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) 9
	1.1.7	Value Reporting Foundation (VRF)9
	1.1.8	International Sustainability Standards Board and IFRS Standards10
1.2		d Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change CC) and COP 27
1.3	Manda	atory ESG Reporting in countries around the world 12
1.4	ESG In	nvesting
1.5	How c	loes CSR align with the ESG goals?
Anne	exure A	Aligning CSR with global sustainability goals19
Chaj	pter 2	Introduction to the concept of CSR21
2.1	Origin	and Evolution of concept
	2.1.1	11 five-year plan - the idea of 'inclusive growth' 23
	2.1.2	Corporate Social Responsibility Voluntary Guidelines, 2009 24
	2.1.3	National Voluntary Guidelines (NVGs) on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of
		Business, 2011

	2.1.4	Companies Bill, 2011 - proposal to include CSR in law 27
	2.1.5	Business Responsibility Reporting (BRR)
	2.1.6	Inclusion of CSR in law - Section 135 notified
		2.1.6.2 Companies Amendment Bill, 2020
		2.1.6.4 Companies (CSR Policy) (Amendment) Rules, 2022
	2.1.7	Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR
2.2	Internat	ional Scenario30
	2.2.1	Emergence of the concept of CSR - global outlook.312.2.1.1 Economic Responsibilities.322.2.1.2 Legal Responsibilities.332.2.1.3 Ethical Responsibilities.332.2.1.4 Philanthropic Responsibilities.34
	2.2.2	The Pyramid of CSR
	2.2.3	Development of the concept of CSR
2.3	Countrie	es without a specific CSR spending mandate 39
	2.3.1	Japan
		by top Japanese Companies
	2.3.2	Netherlands
		by top companies in Netherlands 42
	2.3.3	Canada
		2.3.3.2 Extractive Sector CSR Counsellor
		by top Canadian Companies
	2.3.4	USA
		by top US Companies
	2.3.5	UK
		by top UK Companies

	2.3.6	China	
2.4	Countri	es with a specific CSR spending mandate 50	
	2.4.1	Mauritius	
	2.4.2	Indonesia	
2.5	Is mand	atory CSR spending a good idea?51	
2.6	Meanin	g of CSR	
	2.6.1	Indian Regulatory Framework for CSR 53	
	2.6.2	Under the Act	
	2.6.3	Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) Guidelines on CSR and Sustainability for CPSEs	
	2.6.4	Guidelines for CSR under the Corporate Governance Guidelines for Insurers	
Chap	oter 3	Getting Started for Complying with CSR Framework 57	
3.1	Introduc	etion	
3.2	Checking Applicability		
	3.2.1	Nature of companies on which CSR is applicable	
	3.2.2	Understanding the thresholds and its nexus with the CSR philosophy	
	3.2.3	Point of time to check applicability	
3.3	Complia	ances to be ensured upon applicability of section 135 65	
	3.3.1	Constituting CSR Committee	
	3.3.2	Framing of CSR Policy	

	3.3.3	Formula	tion of Annual Action Plan	. 71
	3.3.4	CSR exp	penditure	. 73
		3.3.4.1	Computing the three-year average of net profits	. 73
	3.3.5	Monitor	ing and review of expenditure	. 76
	3.3.6	Reportir	ng and disclosures	. 76
	3.3.7	Impact a	assessment	. 76
Anne:	xure B	Sample c	alculation for networth for checking the	
		applicabi	ility of CSR	77
Anne:	xure C	Draft CS.	R Policy	78
Anne:	xure D	Sample F	Format for an Annual Action Plan	89
Chap	oter 4	CSR Activ	vities	.93
4.1	Activiti	ies that qua	alify as CSR	. 95
	4.1.1	Underst	anding the eligible activities under Schedule VII . Examples of eligible CSR activities	. 96
		4.1.1.2	under Schedule VII	
		4.1.1.3	in Schedule VII	
4.2	Evoluti	on of Sche	dule VII	110
	4.2.1	Exclusio	ons from CSR activities	111
		4.2.1.1	Activities undertaken in pursuance	
		4.2.1.2	of normal course of business of the company Any activity undertaken by the	113
		4.2.1.3	company outside India	119
		4.2.1.5	or indirectly to any political party	121
		4.2.1.4	Activities benefiting employees of the company	
		4.2.1.5	Activities supported by the	
			companies on sponsorship basis for	100
		4.2.1.6	deriving marketing benefits Activities carried out for fulfillment	126
		4.2.1.0	of any other statutory obligations	129
		4.2.1.7	One-off events do not qualify as CSR activity	
4.3	Circula	ırs providir	ng clarifications on CSR	131
4.4	Philant	thropy vs C	SR	131

	4.4.1	Meanin	g of Philanthropy	132
	4.4.2		anding the difference between aropy & CSR	132
	4.4.3		ions on Philanthropy vs CSR	
Anne.	xure E		? VII	
Anne.	xure F	CSR Poli	icies where priority sectors have been identified	138
Anne.	xure G	MCA Cii	rculars	146
Chap	oter 5	Understa	nding CSR Expenditure	149
5.1	Introduc	ction		151
5.2	Identify	impact ta	argets and goals	152
5.3	Chalkin	g out an a	action plan	154
5.4	CSR Bud	dgeting a	nd allocation thereof	154
	5.4.1	Comput	tation of CSR budget	155
		5.4.1.1	Meaning of "net profits" for budget computation.	
		5.4.1.2	Exclusion of specific amounts in	
			accordance with the rules	156
		5.4.1.3	Making adjustments in terms of section 198	158
		5.4.1.4	Averaging of three-year profits and	
			computation of 2% limit	167
		5.4.1.5	Averaging of adjusted net profits and	1.00
		E / 1 (the possibility of a double deduction of loss	168
		5.4.1.6	Adjustment of surplus arising out of	160
	F 4.0		CSR activities of previous financial years	
	5.4.2		g of 'surplus' arising out of CSR activities	
		5.4.2.1 5.4.2.2	Treatment of surplus arising out of CSR	1/1
		3.4.2.2	By when is the surplus required to be spent in CSR activities?	171
		5.4.2.3	Surplus arising out of CSR projects	1/1
		0.1.2.0	of which financial years are required	
			to be kept into account?	172
	5.4.3	Set-off o	of excess CSR expenditure of previous years	
	0.1.0	5.4.3.1	Who can demand "set-off"?	
		5.4.3.2	Period within which set-off can be	0
			availed of excess CSR expenditure	174
		5.4.3.3	Conditions for availing set-off of	
			excess CSR expenditure	175

	5.4.4	.4.4 Fixing budget more than the minimum spending obligation		
	5.4.5	Allocation 5.4.5.1	on of CSR budget	
			projects"	
			projects" and need thereof	
			5.4.5.1.4 Distinction between "ongoing" and "other than ongoing" projects 18	
5.5	Incur CS	SR expend	diture	86
	5.5.1	What is	expenditure?	87
	5.5.2	What qu 5.5.2.1 5.5.2.2	Limits on administrative overheads	90
	5.5.3	What do 5.5.3.1 5.5.3.2 5.5.3.3	Does not qualify as CSR expenditure?	91 95 96
			projects	
			5.5.3.3.2 Relating to ongoing projects 19	99
5.6		_	SR spending obligations in case of corporate change in the nature of the entities	01
	5.6.1	Cases w	here a scheme of merger is involved 20	01
	5.6.2	Cases w	here a scheme of demerger is involved 20	08
	5.6.3		where an LLP or a partnership converts company or vice versa	08
5.7	Monitor	ing and r	eporting of CSR expenditure	09
Anne	xure H		Qs on CSR2	
Anne	xure I		colutions relating to CSR obligations and	•
		related a	ctivities23	32

Chapter 6		CSR through Implementing Agencies	. 251		
6.1	Stages i	involved in implementing CSR activities	254		
6.2	CSR implementing agency vs Project implementing agency				
6.3	Meanin	ng of Implementing Agency (IA)	256		
	6.3.1	Meaning of implementation	258		
	6.3.2	Meaning of agency	259		
6.4	Need fo	or implementing agencies and recent trends	261		
6.5	Entities	allowed to be Implementing Agencies	263		
6.6	Manner	r of formation of an IA	264		
	6.6.1	IAs formed by company(ies)	264		
	6.6.2	IAs established by Government	265		
	6.6.3	IAs established through statute	265		
	6.6.4	IAs established by public authority	265		
		in undertaking similar activities"	266		
6.7	Modes	of formation	267		
	6.7.1	As a section 8 company	267		
	6.7.2	As a public trust	268		
	6.7.3	As a society	268		
6.8	Registra	ation requirements for an IA	268		
	6.8.1	Registration with tax authorities	268		
	6.8.2	Registration under law governing structure	270		
	6.8.3	Registration with MCA	270		
6.9	Roles a	nd Responsibilities of an IA	271		
	6.9.1	In identification/ designing of projects:	271		
	6.9.2	In implementation of projects:	272		
	6.9.3	In monitoring of projects and funds:	273		
	6.9.4	In reporting implementation of the projects:	273		
6.10	Points t	to be kept in mind while choosing IA	274		
	6.10.1	Valid Statutory Registrations	274		
	6.10.2	Track record requirements	274		
	6.10.3	Engagement with local areas/communities	275		

	6.10.4	Conflict of interest	75
	6.10.5	Other partnerships	75
	6.10.6	Resources	75
	6.10.7	Values and leadership	75
	6.10.8	Internal impact assessment	76
6.11	Points to	be kept in mind by IAs	76
	6.11.1	Before approaching a company for seeking CSR	
		contribution	
		6.11.1.1 Ensure statutory registrations	
		6.11.1.2 Develop infrastructure	
	6.11.2	Implementing CSR projects	
	0.11.2	6.11.2.1 Develop the implementation and	•
		disbursement schedule27	
		6.11.2.2 Gestation of CSR funds of the contributor 27	
		6.11.2.3 Continuous monitoring of implementation 27	
		6.11.2.4 Reporting shortage in expenditure	
6.12		ry documentation between company and the IA	78
	6.12.1	Setting out guidelines for agreement between a company and IA	79
6.13	Treatme	nt of outstanding CSR funds on discontinuance of IAs 28	30
6.14	Beneficia	aries under CSR Activities	31
	6.14.1	Meaning of Beneficiaries	31
	6.14.2	Who can be a beneficiary under CSR?	31
	6.14.3	Rights and responsibilities of beneficiaries	32
6.15	Differen	ce between an IA and beneficiary	32
	6.15.1	Need for distinction between an IA and a beneficiary 28	33
		6.15.1.1 Dealing with unspent amount	33
		6.15.1.2 Classification of projects as 'ongoing'	o o
		or otherwise	33 22
		6.15.1.4 Monitoring and evaluation	
	6.15.2	Points of distinction between an IA and a beneficiary 28	
6.16	Concept	of Crowdfunding Agencies and its growing relevance 28	35
	6.16.1	Meaning of crowdfunding	

	6.16.2	Types Of	f Crowdfunding	287
	6.16.3	Statistics	on crowdfunding	288
6.17	Relevan	ce of crow	dfunding agencies in the context of CSR	289
	6.17.1	Different	tiating between crowdfunding platforms and IAs	290
	6.17.2	Can a Cr	owdfunding Agency be an IA?	292
6.18	Other m	odes of in	nplementation	292
	6.18.1	Direct in	nplementation by the company	293
	6.18.2	Collabor undertak	ration with other companies for king CSR activities	293
6.19	Factors	relevant to	the choice of manner of implementation	294
Anne	xure J	IA evalua	tion matrix	.296
CI.				•
Chap			g and Disclosure Requirements	
7.1	Meaning	g and relev	vance of monitoring in the context of CSR	301
	7.1.1	Č	g of monitoring	
	7.1.2	Stages of	f monitoring during the life cycle of a project \dots	303
	7.1.3	Respons	ible Authority	303
7.2			er of monitoring for various modes of	
	•			
	7.2.1	Monitori	ing in case of direct expenditure	304
	7.2.2	Monitori	ing in case of indirect expenditure	306
	7.2.3	Monitori	ing in case of ongoing projects	307
7.3	Monitor	ing of ove	rall CSR compliances of a company	309
	7.3.1	Meaning	g of CSR audit	309
	7.3.2	Applicab	oility of CSR audit	309
	7.3.3	Areas of	CSR audit	310
		7.3.3.1	Review of the CSR policy of the company	310
		7.3.3.2	Review of the composition of CSR Committee	
		7.3.3.3	Verification of the CSR budget of the company .	310
		7.3.3.4	Review of the functioning of CSR	
		7225	Committee/ board	
		7.3.3.5 7.3.3.6	Review of the AAP and implementation thereof	311
		7.5.5.0	Review of the activities against which expenditure has been incurred	311
			T	

		7.3.3.7	Review of the disbursements against	
			the budgeted amount	311
		7.3.3.8	Review of the utilization of funds by the IA	
		7.3.3.9	Review of the implementation of the	
			ongoing project	312
		7.3.3.10	Verification of the amounts booked	
			as administrative overheads	312
		7.3.3.11	Review of the adequacy of	
			disclosures to be provided in relation to CSR	313
		7.3.3.12	Review of the transfer of unspent	
			amounts within due timelines	313
		7.3.3.13	Review of the applicability of impact	
			assessment and analysis of the report thereof	313
7.4	Periodic	ity of mor	nitoring	314
7.5	Reportir	ng require	ments under CSR	314
	7.5.1	Reportin	ng on an annual basis	315
		7.5.1.1	Annual Report on CSR	
		7.5.1.2	Filing under e-Form AOC- 4	
		7.5.1.3	Reporting under CSR-2	
		7.5.1.4	Reporting in the financial statements	
			under profit & loss statement	319
		7.5.1.5	Reporting under CARO, 2020	
		7.5.1.6	Business Responsibility and	
			Sustainability Report	319
	7.5.2	Continu	ous reporting	
7.6	Decodin	g the Anr	nual Report on CSR	322
7.7	Form CS	SR -2: Prac	etical filing and queries thereto	329
7.8			FO	
	7.8.1		nd documents to be checked by CFO	
	7.8.2		nts to be checked	
	7.8.3	O	of certificate	
Anne.	xure K	CSR Com	pliance certificate	345
Anne.	xure L	Format of	f Annual Report on CSR	347
Anne.	xure M	Sample fo	ormat of CFO Certificate	350

Chap	ter 8 I	mpact Assessment	353
8.1	Meaning	of Impact Assessment	354
8.2	Need for	impact assessment	355
8.3	Need ass	sessment vs impact assessment	357
8.4	Applicab	ility of Impact Assessment	360
	8.4.1	Who Can Conduct Impact Assessment?	362
	8.4.2	Procedure/ steps involved in impact assessment	363
	8.4.3	Frequency of Impact Assessment	364
	8.4.4	Can Impact Assessment be carried out for contributions to government funds?	364
8.4.5.	Reportin	g of Impact Assessment	364
8.5	Case Stu	dies	365
	8.5.1	Outlay exceeds INR 1 crore but project not completed/ less than a year from the date of spending	366
	8.5.2	Multiple large projects	366
	8.5.3	Multiple large projects spread across several FYs	366
	8.5.4	Frequency for assessment for multiple past projects	366
	8.5.5	Appointment authority for impact assessment agency \dots	367
	8.5.6	$Format / Contents of Impact Assessment Report \dots \dots \dots$	367
8.6	Global P	rinciples on Impact Assessment	367
	8.6.1	Types of Impact Assessment	369 370
	8.6.2	OECD's Guidance on Evaluation Criteria	372
Annex	ure N	Impact Assessment Reports/ Study reports by compa- nies in India	.373
Chap	ter 9 C	CSR Accounting Aspects	375
9.1	Recognit	ion of CSR expenditure in financial statements	376
	9.1.1	Accounting treatment in case of direct implementation of CSR by company	377

	9.1.2	Accounting treatment in case of CSR through IAs 379 9.1.2.1 Contribution received in cash		
9.2		ing of administrative overheads and impact ent costs		
9.3	Recogni	ion of capital assets created in course of CSR 382		
9.4	Recogni	ion of surplus earned from CSR projects 383		
	9.4.1	Meaning of the term "surplus"		
	9.4.2	Meaning of the term 'income'		
	9.4.3	Treatment of CSR Surplus as Income		
9.5	Treatment of unspent CSR			
	9.5.1	Recognition and measurement		
	9.5.2	Unspent CSR as a liability3859.5.2.1 Meaning of liability3859.5.2.2 Features of liability386		
	9.5.3	Unspent CSR as a provision.3869.5.3.1 Meaning of provision.3869.5.3.2 Features of provision.387		
	9.5.4	Unspent CSR as a contingent liability3879.5.4.1Meaning of contingent liability3879.5.4.2Features of contingent liability387		
	9.5.5	Comparison of Unspent CSR vis-à-vis liability vis-à-vis provision vis-à-vis contingent liability 388		
	9.5.6	Accounting for non- ongoing projects		
	9.5.7	Accounting for ongoing projects		
9.6	Accounting treatment in case of excess amount spent as CSR 392			
	9.6.1	Recognition as an asset		
	9.6.2	Recognition as an expenditure		
		treatment of the excess expenditure in a FY \dots 394		
9.7	Case Stu	dy		

Chap	ter 10 (CSR Taxation	397
10.1	Provisio	ns under which companies seek deduction	398
	10.1.1	Admissibility of deductions under profits and	
		gains of business or profession	398
		and exclusively for business/ profession	399
		10.1.1.2 Permissibility of deductions under	
		Section 35 to 36 of IT Act	402
		10.1.1.3 Deductions under Section 80G & 80GGA of IT Act	404
10.2	Point of	deduction	
10.2	10.2.1	Point of deduction under direct CSR	
	10.2.1	Point of deduction under CSR through IAs	
10.2			
10.3	10.3.1	lications under GST	
	10.3.1	Rulings supporting claim for ITC by contributing	409
	10.3.2	company	410
	10.3.3	Free supply of goods	
10.4	Tax imp	lications in the hands of the beneficiaries	
10.5		ecommendations on tax treatment of CSR expenditure	
C1		•	
		Penal Provisions	
Intro	duction		416
11.1		mpliance with spending requirements attracts specific	
		Activities attracting specific penalty	
	11.1.2	1	
11.2	Penalty	for other non-compliances	418
11.3	Adjudication of penalties		
	11.3.1	Who can be an adjudicating authority?	418
	11.3.2	When is adjudication done?	419
	11.3.3	Process of adjudication	
		11.3.3.1 Receipt of Show Cause Notice (SCN)	
		11.3.3.2 Sending reply to SCN	
		11.0.0.0 Consideration of Reply by AO	1 40

11.3.4	Nature of order passed by AO
11.3.5	Factors considered by AO while adjudging the penalty 421
11.3.6	Payment of Penalty by Company
11.3.7	Appeal to Regional Director
11.3.8	Consequences of non-compliance with adjudicating order422
Annexure O	Adjudicating Orders by the RoC in matters connected with non-compliances with section 135 of the Act, 2013423
	ANNEXURES
Annexure I	Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 477
Annexure II	Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Rules 2014 as amended by the Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Amendment Rules 2021
Annexure III	FAQs on CSR 2021 Amendments 497
Annexure IV	FAQs on Corporate Social Responsibility 541
Annexure V	Glossary 567
Annexure VI	Subject Index 571