

# THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A CASE STUDY FROM AGRA, INDIA



democracy and governance

education

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CAP-CSY



# THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## A CASE STUDY FROM AGRA, INDIA

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Education Development Center, Inc (EDC)

In collaboration with the Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE)

EQUIP3 (Education Quality Improvement Program) is a USAID “leader with Associates” consortium that focuses its work on opportunities for earning and learning, especially for young people out of school and out of work. The Cross-Sectoral Youth initiative breaks new ground in engaging resources from education, health, economic growth, and democracy and governance sectors in order to learn which strategies are most likely to have positive impacts on the development of young people in partner countries.

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## I. Introduction

During the last decade many in the development arena have begun to focus on the role that the private sector can play in furthering the development agenda. A wide variety of alliances have been created between non-governmental organizations and private enterprises, sometimes with the participation of governments and sometimes without. These alliances have sought to achieve positive social change by harnessing the interests and expertise of the alliance members. Private sector involvement in these alliances is motivated by many different things, as varied as a desire for good publicity or the ability to expand market share. Non-governmental organizations and their public sector partners have had to learn how to negotiate with the private sector to achieve the development benefits they are pursuing, while harnessing the expertise and desires of the private sector partner. This case study looks at the ways in which the private sector contributed to the success of a specific youth development project, the Cross-Sectoral Youth (CSY) project in India, locally known as the Crosscutting Agra Project (CAP), thus, referred to as CAP-CSY project. The experience of this project may provide insights and ideas for how to harness the power of the private sector for other NGO practitioners.

Contributions from the private sector can take many forms, ranging from cash or in-kind contributions, which are the most typical, to deeper, more innovative and committed types of engagement, such as skills training, mentoring, and various other activities planned and run jointly. This document analyzes the beneficial roles played by the private sector throughout the course of the CAP-CSY project, and looks at the many positive outcomes for a local community resulting from such a role.

## II. Project Background

The Indian city of Agra is a popular tourist destination and the home of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Taj Mahal. The poor condition of the infrastructure in and around Agra makes for very unhygienic and unhealthy living conditions, negatively affecting local low-income communities and the possibility of tourism beyond the Taj Mahal area. In addition to Agra's health challenges, it also has an under-developed economy and high unemployment. The CAP-CSY project aimed to improve access to sanitation services and develop

sustainable livelihoods in five low-income communities in Agra: Katra, Wazir Khan, Yamuna Bridge Colony, Marwari Basti, and Kachpura.

The project targeted female and youth community members by focusing on slum-upgrading and livelihood development. Due to improvements in wastewater disposal systems, solid waste management, more accessibility to toilets, and an overall improvement in hygienic practices, Agra was made more attractive to tourists. Increased tourism levels brought about more opportunities to generate income for the young men and women in Agra, particularly those living in the lowest income settlements.

Under CAP-CSY, young men and women were able to develop small, eco-friendly enterprises such as bag-making and henna painting. Through an animated tour called the Mughal Heritage Walk (MHW), these young people engaged tourists who were interested in exploring local areas in Agra around and beyond the Taj Mahal. The MHW was designed along a heritage trail of four lesser-known monuments: Ram Bagh, Chinni ka Rauza, Itmatud Daulah, and Mehtab Bagh. The MHW links Marwari Basi, Kachpura, and Mehtab Bagh monuments and passes through low-income communities that took part in this project.



The private sector had much to contribute to the project's development, based on their local experience, "know how," positioning, and prestige. Solid partnerships between the youth livelihoods project and members of the private sector were nurtured from the beginning, leading to an invaluable collaboration that took different shapes throughout the life of the project. This case study presents the successful integration of the private sector into two aspects of the project: the development of eco-friendly bags and the delivery of animated tours around Agra. The specific success stories of the CAP-CSY project clearly show that the role of the private

sector can play out in a variety of ways; in this case, the relationships between and commitments of individuals were the keys to the private sector's successful integration into the project, and to the project's overall success.

### III. Laying the Groundwork



The private sector can play an integral role in a project beginning as early as the initial brainstorming and planning stage. Before designing or developing a product, gaps need to be identified and assessed in order to create a project that will serve a specific need and generate successful sales. The private sector can help to identify specific customer needs and help to identify what capacities already exist for making products that satisfy those needs. Once the idea for a product or service is identified, the first step of its actual development is to gather the necessary inputs and materials. The private sector can provide such materials, provide knowledge and know-how to assist in the gathering of materials, provide storage space for large materials, or provide help with matching available raw materials with relevant manufacturers. Additionally, the private sector can provide support in building beneficial relationships, which is what occurred in the CAP-CSY project.

### III.a. Local Capacity & Skills Assessment

The CAP-CSY project assisted those living in the low-income communities by improving their livelihood opportunities. In order to create these opportunities, the CAP-CSY project sought to match the skills of young women in the community with local product demand. Many questions were explored to determine which products should be made, including: what skills did the women have; what needs and support did women have to work outside/inside the home; and what kind of tools and raw materials were easily available? An inventory was taken of products regularly used in local hotels which could be produced locally (such as the eco-friendly embroidered bags). A thorough value chain analysis was conducted to identify entry points to ensure appropriate product design, acceptable standards, and quality improvement.

Private sector partners like the Tourism Guild, a Tour Operators Association, provided guidance as to which products would be most commercially successful. Project partners also helped procure tourism-based livelihood products and helped build the capacity of livelihood groups to develop these products and generate sustainable income. Per the suggestions and professional guidance of the Tourism Guild, a product catalogue was developed to publicize the full range of products and services the group had to offer, and to showcase each product in detail. This catalogue has been shared with partner agencies and is regularly used by young entrepreneur women during their meetings with clients. Due to the expansion of both the range of products and the number of clients, the project has been successful at generating sustainable income for young women.

**COMMUNITY PRODUCT CATALOGUE.....a venture for "Fair Trade"**

CAP is a Community Development Programme implemented by an NGO, (Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence) with financial assistance from USAID.

**UTILITIES** Women from low resource communities have been mobilized and enabled for livelihoods linked to the local city economy, providing them with new, appropriate and sustainable livelihood pathways.

ITEM:	UR-1 PLATE COVER	
SIZE:	13" X 13"	
MAE:	Tissue Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 1.25 each	
ITEM:	UR-2 SHIRI COVER	
SIZE:	6" X 12"	
MAE:	Cotton Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 10 each	
ITEM:	UR-3 LAUNDRY BAG	
SIZE:	24" X 18"	
MAE:	Tissue Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 7 each	
ITEM:	UR-4 CAKE BAG	
SIZE:	10" X 16"	
MAE:	Tissue Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 7 each	
ITEM:	UR-5 NEWSPAPER BAG	
SIZE:	13" X 19"	
MAE:	Tissue Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 2.25 each	
ITEM:	UR-6 KARRY BAG	
SIZE:	13" X 13"	
MAE:	Matte	
PRICE:	Rs. 45 each	
ITEM:	UR-7 CARRY BAG	
SIZE:	13" X 16"	
MAE:	Tissue Cloth	
PRICE:	Rs. 20 each	

## III.b. Relationship Development

To bridge the gap between project staff and the private sector, local business men and women played a key role. This support increased the impact of the CAP-CSY project; for example, by giving young and low income entrepreneur women access to private service partners like hotels that they would not otherwise have. The Tourism Guild, an association of prominent tourism-related businesses in Agra, was a close and supportive partner to the project in a variety of important ways. Through the Tourism Guild, the project team expanded their knowledge and understanding of the local tourism industry operations. This allowed the project team to explore the potential of tourism-based employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, contributing to the project team's skill development and initiating new relationships for project participants, particularly women.

Mahatam Singh, Secretary of the Tourism Guild, was a key partner of the project from its inception. He helped the project team make connections with the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Agra, local tour operators, and the Tourism Guild itself. Mr. Singh's participation was integral in attracting foreign tourists to visit the Mughal Heritage Walk (MHW). The relationships that were developed with the local hotels opened doors for marketing and product distribution during later phases of the project. Mahatam Singh was a strong advocate for the CAP-CSY India project activities, helping to build linkages with other private sector players, some of whom participated on a paid and unpaid basis providing professional and expert guidance throughout the project.

### *Lessons Learned for Relationship Development*

The CAP-CSY project experienced a significant breakthrough as a result of these partnerships in building and developing relationships between the project and hotels in Agra. In order to develop a relationship with the higher management groups in the hotels, project staff needed to take specific preparatory steps. Before formalizing a partnership with hotels, project staff conducted analyses in order to better understand this specific stakeholder group. It was essential for project staff to understand the needs of this stakeholder group in order to feel comfortable and confident working with them and ensuring that they could move towards a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, project staff had to learn not only the motivating factors of the partner and the level of detail they expected to

hear from project staff, but also what was necessary to create a comfortable space for dialogue since it is uncommon to have a young women from a low-income community run a meeting with high executives of a hotel. Thus, there were social and stereotypical considerations that needed to be addressed and prepared for prior to approaching particular stakeholder groups.

## III.c. Infrastructure Improvement

One of the critical aspects addressed during the first stage of the development of the Mughal Heritage Walk (MHW) was sanitation. The area surrounding the MHW consisted of inadequate and low-quality urban and tourism infrastructure. In Agra, the project was faced with lack of a solid waste management system and high levels of accumulated waste within the communities. In working to address these issues, the project staff was hampered by the lack of materials and physical labor to create and improve sanitation facilities throughout the walk. Without such hygienic improvements, tourism would suffer.

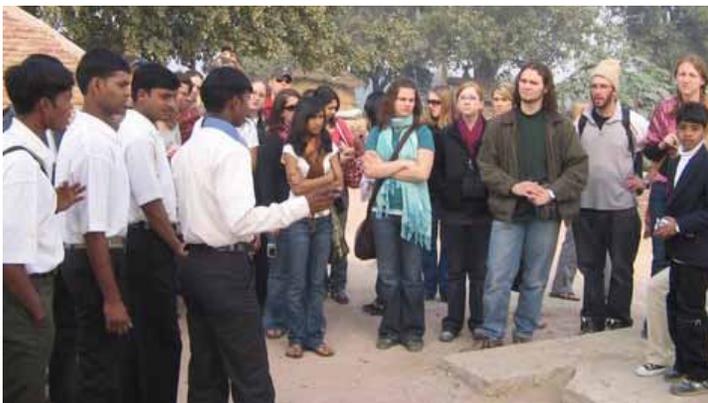
To help address the sanitation issue, Water Trust United Kingdom, a project partner, funded the construction of 75 toilets in Agra. As a result of the strong relationship developed during the project, Water Trust pledged to continue its supportive role by developing sanitation facilities in the slum settlements. During the project, youth participants were able to observe the construction process and develop their skill sets; these youth can, consequently, contribute to the slum development efforts in the future. The guidance on toilet construction and drain development, provided by Maan Singh, a local contractor for the Water Trust, helped sanitize the pathway for the Mughal Heritage Walk to increase its attractiveness to visitors and tourists.

The strong relationship with Water Trust and the visible outcomes of this relationship paved the way for another relationship with a local charity founder, Dr. Simon. As a result, CURE proposed the need for a community toilet in Marwadi Basti (one of the low-income communities in Agra that the project has impacted) and, with Dr. Simon's charitable funding, carried out the construction plan successfully. As a result, community members helped to develop systems to ensure continued use of the toilets.

### III.d. Professional Guidance & Advice

The private sector is well-positioned to provide professional advice and overall capacity building support, particularly when increased capacity will benefit the physical and financial environment in which the private sector is working. The private sector players who contributed to the CAP-CSY project were local to Agra and it is this loyalty that allowed the project to capitalize on high levels of private sector support. Recognizing that the main target customers of the MHW are visitors interested in experiential tourism, the CSY project realized that providing them with modest, safe guesthouses, in which to stay 1-2 nights in the community, could increase their interest in the MHW and its environments. Young project participants identified a facility with a uniquely clear view of the Taj Mahal and re-designed it to serve as a guesthouse.

Their objective was to enhance the experiences of visitors, while simultaneously increasing the income-generating opportunities at the community level. Youth participants, however, in order to develop the project, needed more knowledge; this is where the private sector came in. Chanda Singh, freelance consultant, worked closely with the project team, helping young participants review legal agreements, helping them manage required paperwork, providing professional advice on their legal obligations, and educating the youth on the steps necessary for creating a guesthouse in Kachpura. The guesthouse adds to the tourists' experience by offering a pleasant terrace for a tea break during the walk, and, with the Taj Mahal situated in the background, serves as a beautiful and memorable place for photographs.



### IV. Strengthening Implementation



The private sector can provide support in developing the product or service. An important entry point for the private sector is in skill development, training, and “know how” sharing for product manufacturing or for the development of services. The private sector can also help teach the project team, as a whole or individually; and provide creative approaches for progress, increasing overall productivity and efficiency in the delivery of a given service.

#### IV.a Training & Skill Development

For the Mughal Heritage Walk to be successful, it was imperative that tourists be satisfied with their overall experience during their visit. While training provided by the project increased young participants' skills to adequately serve customers, a private sector perspective to improving service quality added great value. Saroj Agarwal, freelance consultant, and SANKALP helped to develop the MHW, including identifying the path, perfecting the timing, and drafting the script for the tour guides.

An integral requirement for tourists' satisfaction was high quality tour guides, or locally known as tour animators; in this area the private sector was able to significantly improve the services provided by the project.

SANKALP helped to mobilize the young tour animators. Saroj Agarwal; Tulika Kapok with Aaryashri, Personality Development Institute; Nitin Saraswat, with an English

Language Training Institute; and members of the Tourism Guild were involved in training the tour animators to improve their language skills, etiquette, and other performance skills. The tour animators were provided with general knowledge and awareness to improve their responsiveness to tourists and to the Walk management processes. Young participants received hospitality and sales and marketing training from the CAP Foundation. JSS (Jan Shikshan Sansthan), provided courses on vocational skills to the young boys, while Gurpreet Kaur, computer teacher, and Monty, youth mobilization expert, provided computer technology training to develop their basic skills using Microsoft Office. Rehearsal walks were conducted for the tour animators to practice using their newly developed skills.

The tour animators received mentorship from the trainers, who volunteered to boost youth's confidence. Anil Shukla, a professor and writer for a local Agra media service, played a mentoring role for the young tour animators. He developed an encouraging and motivating relationship with each of them. He interacted regularly with the tour animators and constantly returned to visit them to observe their progress and provide continuing support and encouragement, turning into a role model. The young tour animators were trained to be engaging tour guides in order to entertain and work well with visitors.

Dr. Mridula Seth, Technical Advisor, UNFPA New Delhi, developed a guidebook for storytelling and writing, including performing street plays, which was created after a storytelling workshop with young men and women of Agra. This guidebook was and will continue to be used in advocating for support from agencies and linkages with academic institutions in Agra and in Delhi. The idea behind Dr. Seth's intervention was to portray story writing as a tool for dealing with the issues pertaining to the communities and society, in particular to generate awareness, and identify solutions. The project effectively promoted good reading and writing habits by developing youth storytelling and story writing skills.

Dr. Seth provided training to project staff and participants on a creative and innovative method for addressing local issues. Project contributions like that of Dr. Seth helped educate the local youth community members on the importance of community awareness campaigns, which could help to bring attention to the importance of sanitation and waste

management systems. Storytelling, street theatre, and other art forms introduced to the project by in-kind contributions resulted in community mobilization and paved the way for some of these health and sanitation concerns to begin being addressed.



## V. Spreading the Word

### Private Sector Role

- Market Assessment/  
Customer Demand  
Assessment
- Advertising & Promotion
- Mobilizing support for  
programs/projects  
(Awareness Raising)

### V.a. Media & Awareness Raising

Media played an integral role in raising awareness and interest in project activities. Media coverage highlighting project activities, both electronic and print, generated awareness about the project's initiatives related to the MHW and livelihood-promotion activities. Anil Shukla, a local professor and writer for Agra media, played a crucial role in promoting the project activities and opportunities. He helped mobilize support for the project from other key players in the private sector.

Prominent media coverage increased the project's visibility and led to a larger marketing campaign.. The local government took a serious interest in the project and constructed roads and improved infrastructure around the path of the Mughal Heritage Walk. What better marketing can there be for a potential tourism area than various leading local media outlets highlighting improvements in infrastructure and overall sanitation? Additionally, private media coverage highlighted various structures in the area that needed maintenance, leading to the successful renovation of the Humayu Mosque. Media can play a powerful role in advocating for the needs of specific communities and, in the case of Agra, media was successful in helping to leverage government resources to enhance the sanitation and urban infrastructure.

The role of the electronic, print, and television media in the CAP-CSY India project was mutually beneficial, as it increased visibility and marketing of the MHW, while benefiting from diversifying the stories that the media outlets were covering. This resulted in a long-term relationship between the project staff and local media representatives, who were very supportive in continuing to highlight the project's activities, particularly around the Mughal Heritage Walk and related improvements in sanitation. Local television media covered various project campaigns, the Diwali Mela, and street theatre performances, which significantly increased the project's reach and visibility. This partnership continues to benefit the local partners and young participants in Agra as an avenue for marketing and promotion of the Mughal Heritage Walk even after the project concluded.

## VI. Conclusion

Contributions from the private sector can take many forms, many of which are illustrated throughout this document. Private sector involvement ranges from cash or in-kind contributions to deeper, more innovative and committed types of engagement—such as skills training, mentoring, and various other activities planned and run jointly. The private sector contributed tremendously to the development of the CAP-CSY India project based on their local experience, “know how,” positioning, and prestige. Solid partnerships between

the project staff, participants and members of the private sector were nurtured from the beginning, leading to an invaluable collaboration that took different shapes throughout the life of the project.

This case study presented the successful integration of the private sector into the development of a product—eco-friendly bags—and a service—the delivery of animated tours around Agra. The specific success stories of the CAP-CSY project demonstrate the variety of roles that the private sector can play in youth development; in this case, the relationships between and commitments of individuals were the keys to the private sector's successful integration into the project, and to the project's overall success.



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To learn more about the Cross-Sectoral Youth Project please visit

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