

Social Sector Hotline

June 23, 2025

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM REIMAGINING CSR WEBINAR

Hosted by 360 ONE Foundation, Sattva Consulting, and Nishith Desai Associates

The poster is for a webinar titled "Reimagining CSR: From Grant Giving to Blended Finance & Outcome-Based Funding". It is based on real-world case studies from the 360 ONE Foundation. The speakers listed are Saumya Lashkari (Director & Board Member, 360 ONE Foundation), Saloni Gupta (Associate Principal, Sattva Consulting), and Rahul Rishi (Lead, Blended Finance and Social Sector, NDA). The date is Monday, 16 June, 2025. The poster includes logos for Nishith Desai Associates, SATTVA, and 360 ONE Foundation. A red play button icon is at the bottom right.

India's CSR landscape is evolving. A recent webinar brought together experts from the development, advisory, and legal sectors to explore how corporates can shift from traditional grant-based CSR models to more strategic approaches involving Blended Finance (BF) and Outcome-Based Funding (OBF).

Key takeaways include

- CSR as Patient Capital: With ₹30,000+ crore in annual CSR spend, India holds untapped potential to use CSR funds as risk-absorbing capital that unlocks public and commercial co-funding for systemic, scalable impact for underserved communities.
- Blended Finance & Outcome-Based Funding:
 - BF combines grants with commercial or government capital, using CSR to de-risk investments.
 - OBF links disbursement of funds to independently verified outcomes, fostering accountability and efficiency.
- Toolkit & Case Studies: The 360 ONE Foundation shared the toolkit featuring some of their livelihoods case studies. 360 ONE Foundation's portfolio of 17 flagship OBF and BF projects currently demonstrates a 4.6x financial leverage and 4x income growth in beneficiary livelihoods. Instruments like returnable grants and first-loss guarantees were showcased, along with programmatic insights.
- Legal & Compliance Perspective: Nishith Desai Associates emphasised that BF and OBF models can be structured within India's CSR legal framework if key conditions are met i.e. no profit motive, clear fund flow, alignment with Schedule VII, and robust documentation.
- Implementation & Monitoring: Sattva Consulting emphasised the additional aspects required to co-design, monitor and report BF and OBF projects given the cyclical nature of funds, market-based capital stacks, outcome verification mechanisms with payouts tied to outcomes (not outputs) and incentivisation of performance.

This webinar encouraged CSR leaders to think beyond compliance, adopt catalytic financing models, and unlock transformative potential in their portfolios, with a call to "do more with less" through innovation and strategic alignment.

The toolkit can be accessed from [here](#). And, [here](#), you can find all the presentation material.

Regards

For any queries, please connect with us at CSRBlendedFinance@nishithdesai.com.

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