

**MESSAGE OF THE CHAIRPERSON
ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCHING OF NCSR FOUNDATION'S VALIDATION WORKSHOP
THURSDAY 05 APRIL 2018
VOILA BAGATELLE**

**Hon. Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
Permanent Secretary
Members of the Council of the National CSR Foundation
Secretary General and staff of the National CSR Foundation
Representatives of the Private Sector
Representatives of the non-profit organisations
Representatives of the Media**

All protocols observed

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning and thank you for your presence among us this morning.

On 13th November, last year, as we concluded our first call for project proposals, the National CSR Foundation published three documents:

1. The National CSR Foundation Annual Report 2016 – 2018.
2. Our Report on the outcome of the first call for projects.
3. Our proposed Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019 entitled « Towards a New CSR Framework for collective action on social inclusion and equity ».

On that occasion, I explained the achievements of the National CSR Foundation during the period February to November 2017 and described briefly the proposed way forward.

Today, I will summarise the work done since the National CSR Foundation Council started its work in February 2017 to date and will describe our proposed plan.

In summarising, I will be repeating myself, but I believe repetition brings better and wider understanding, which is the basic ingredient to better collective understanding, a smoother participatory approach to implementation and wider accountability.

Let me summarise:

1. The National CSR Foundation was registered on 30 December 2016. It is governed by the Foundation's Act and the National CSR Foundation Charter.
2. The National CSR Foundation Council, comprising of representatives of Ministries, the Private Sector, the Civil Society and the Academia met for the first time in February 2017 and immediately started its work by setting up 3 sub-committees:
 - (a) The HR Committee chaired by the representative of the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment,
 - (b) The Finance and Audit Committee chaired by the representative of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, and
 - (c) The Project Management Committee chaired by the representative of the PMO.

3. The HR Committee made proposals for the staffing structure of the Foundation, produced the Terms of Reference, oversee the recruitment exercise and ensured that the following were recruited:
 - (a) A Secretary General
 - (b) A Finance Manager and a Finance Officer
 - (c) A Research and Development Manager
 - (d) A Project Manager and two Project Officers, and
 - (e) A Communication Manager

The HR Committee has also recently made proposals for the recruitment of additional staff members. Interviews have been conducted and all procedures have been followed scrupulously. The Council is presently awaiting the consent of the Founder for additional appointments.
4. The Finance and Audit Committee has ensured that sound financial procedures and good practices are followed in all our financial dealings to ensure accountability and good governance. We receive money from the MRA through the Accountant General and funds are disbursed on the basis of signed contracts between the Foundation and non-profit organisations. Projects are monitored by the Project Management Team and further disbursement are solely on the basis of monitoring reports.
5. The Project Management Committee prepared criteria for the registration of non-profit organisations leading to our online register. The Project Management Committee also worked on the National CSR Guidelines 2017, which has been the basis of our first call for project proposal in April 2017.
6. All documents are now uploaded onto our website. To date, our online register shows 320 registered non-profit organisations. Up to October 2017, the National CSR Foundation approved 231 projects submitted by 173 organisations for a total sum of Rs. 203m. Our website also contains the full list of projects funded under the National CSR Foundation.
7. We have also published on our website our Annual Report 2016 – 2017; our Report on the outcome of our first call for projects and our proposed Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019 entitled « Towards a New CSR Framework for collective action on social inclusion and equity ».

What have we been doing since November 2017?

- (a) We have been monitoring the implementation of the funded projects on the basis of the contracts signed between the National CSR Foundation and the implementing organisations, and
- (b) we have been engaged in a wide consultation with our stakeholders, namely the non-profit organisations, the private sector and the Ministries.

To date, the Foundation has monitored 118 funded projects and consequently has approved second disbursement and is providing mentoring support where the need is felt.

Allow me to announce that the National CSR Foundation will publish a first Monitoring Report by June 2018.

The ongoing monitoring exercise has been very instructional to the whole team and to me particularly. While most traditional non-profit organisations are doing their best within their own framework, many NGO are facing implementation problems and will need support to ensure that their projects are more impactful. There is much room for improvement to achieve a “rights approach” and total good governance at all levels while dealing with vulnerable groups. There are many points that will need to be addressed collectively and on a participatory mode. I may highlight the following five main areas:

- (a) Difficulty to write a complete project proposal with all required information

- (b) Capacity to implement project as describe in project proposals
- (c) Good governance issues during implementation
- (d) Administrative capacity to collect and submit reports and receipts as required
- (e) Adopting a rights approach while dealing with beneficiaries within vulnerable groups

This should lead to a fresh reflection on our funding strategy. Inputs for the workshop today come from:

- (a) Lessons learnt during our first call for proposal and the ongoing monitoring process
- (b) Consultations with stakeholders during the period November 2017 – March 2018, and
- (c) The visible shift in the social landscape towards a more community centric approach to social intervention.

We will take up the issue during the consultative workshop today but I am hoping that, with the help of more experienced NGO and other coordinating organisations, we will be in a position to provide sufficient support to improve on administration and implementation of impactful projects.

The second point that will be taken up during our validation workshop today are the submissions made by you, our stakeholders, during our numerous sectoral meetings since the beginning of the year on our proposed Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019.

We have four strategic goals:

1. Ensure effectiveness of programmes and projects supported by the Foundation
2. Promote stakeholder collaboration and coordination
3. Empower NGOs to improve the impact and efficiency of their actions on the ground
4. Build and uphold a principled, professional and service-oriented organisation culture and reputation

We will go towards collective validations of the many interesting points made by stakeholders so that we will recommend their inclusion in the National CSR Foundation Guidelines 2018.

While we wish for a national social plan, this workshop will also allow us to reflect on global trends in social funding. We wish to put special emphasis on rights-based frameworks. We wish our projects to be impactful. Worldwide, the focus is on social investment approaches, social innovation, social entrepreneurship. How do we set collaborative partnerships among organisations? How do we promote community-based actions? We hope to determine a collaborative framework for action on social inclusion.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am hoping that our workshop today, with your close collaboration and active participation, will be a trend setter and will help us reflect on and set up a solid foundation on which we will, together, achieve a more inclusive and equitable society.

Finally, I wish to thank all those who have been instrumental to the achievements of the National CSR Foundation to date. I have a special word of thanks to:

1. The Prime Minister and the officials of the PMO and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
2. The Minister for Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, his Permanent Secretary and staff.
3. The individual members of the National CSR Foundation Council.
4. The Secretary General of the National CSR Foundation and his staff
5. Representatives of numerous Ministries, present today, who have participated in our consultations

6. Representatives of the private sector and non-profit organisations, who are our main partners and stakeholders, and
7. Last, but not least, I wish to introduce and thank Min Xuan Lee

Min is the CEO of Red Dot Innovation Consultancy. She is passionate about combining the power of business, design and technology for a better world. Min has a degree in Finance and Technology Entrepreneurship from the National University of Singapore and Stanford University. She has held positions in banking, healthcare and education. Min believes in living an authentic life built on compassion and courage, inspiring others to take charge of their futures and awaken their greater purpose. She finds joy in mentoring young social entrepreneurs, and playing in the in-between spaces, unlocking new value between unlikely partners, or finding synergies between non-profits, private and public sectors. She has spoken globally on social innovation, leadership, and the future of money. She also volunteers at ServiceSpace, a non-profit that believes in the power of small acts of kindness to change the world.

We have had a long conversation and I am glad that she has accepted to talk at our workshop today. I am hoping she will help unlock new energies.

Thank you Min!

Mesdames et messieurs

Pendant la journée aujourd'hui, nous aurons l'occasion, si nécessaire de reprendre les points que je fais dans ce message.

Je vous remercie tous pour votre attention et d'avance pour votre collaboration et contribution au développement de la nation mauricienne, ceci en marge du 50^e anniversaire de notre indépendance et 26^e anniversaire de notre république.

Merci.

Président du National CSR Foundation

05 avril 2018