

## **Essar and IBM join hands in improving school education in rural Gujarat**

**Jamnagar, September 09, 2013:** With changing paradigms and policy advancement Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is making new strides across the globe. Setting an example of partnerships in the CSR arena global conglomerates Essar Foundation and IBM recently joined hands to contribute to improving quality of school education, especially in enhancing children's proficiency with English language.

A team of five delegates of IBM from five different countries volunteered for this cause and visited the targeted 17 elementary schools around Vadinar area to assess the existing situation and to analyse gaps. The team also interacted with parents, teachers, and senior officials from the Education Department to get a holistic view of the issues and needs. The need for improvement in the approach and quality of English language emerged as a key aspect from the intensive assessment process. The team is working on a detailed strategy including expert recommendations, based on which Essar Foundation will design and execute a programme for the schools aimed at benefitting about 1,500 children and 50 teachers.

The project will focus on creating a framework to impart quality education with special focus on English learning. Essar Foundation has been undertaking an array of community outreach initiatives in eight states across the country with thrust on education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, environmental and agricultural development, and women's empowerment. Recently, at an event marking the annual celebration of employee volunteering at Essar facilities, Vadinar, the IBM team shared their insights and vision for their contribution to the upcoming programme.

Discussions are also underway to see the possibility of linking the English improvement programme with the ongoing employee volunteering initiatives of Essar. Sharing his thoughts on the partnership, the Managing Director of Essar

Oil Limited, Mr. Lalit Kumar Gupta appreciated the efforts made by the collaboration, and said that he was hopeful of fruitful outcomes.

The event also saw the presence of Mr. Jatin Meswani, and Ms. Mamtha Sharma, Associate Director, Services, IBM India, and Head of Corporate Citizenship, and Corporate Affairs, IBM India, respectively.

### **About Essar Foundation**

Essar Foundation is the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of the Essar conglomerate that is committed to maintaining the highest standards of CSR in its business activities and aims to make a difference wherever it operates. Essar Foundation collaborates with multiple stakeholders, especially the local administration and community based institutions, and aspires towards creating lasting impacts, ultimately leading to positive change and sustainability. Essar Foundation imbibes the essence of the ten Principles of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and aligns its vision with the larger vision of the conglomerate based on the four Ps – PEOPLE at the core, PROGRESS towards aspirations, POWER of synergy, and PASSION with compassion.

### **About Essar Group**

The Essar Group is a multinational conglomerate and a leading player in the sectors of Steel, Energy, Infrastructure and Services. With operations in more than 25 countries across five continents, the Group employs 75,000 people, with revenues of over US\$ 27 billion.

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