

March 2025: Saksham: School Development Initiatives Stakeholders' Meet



The **Centre for Public Policy (CPP)** at IIM Bangalore has marked a pivotal step in rural education reform with the launch of Saksham, the school development initiatives stakeholders' meet, held on 15 February 2025. The event, which served as a collaborative platform to align schools with implementation partners and funding opportunities, convened educators, policymakers, and CSR leaders to decipher systemic challenges that deter high-impact interventions in government schools.

Inaugurated by Prakash Koliwad, MLA, Ranebennur; Dr. Rajeev Gowda, Former MP, Rajya Sabha & Vice-Chairman, Karnataka Planning Commission; and Prof. **Gopal Naik**, Chairperson, CPP, the discussion brought to light the critical role of teacher training in enabling government school students to compete with their private school counterparts.

MLA Koliwad called for action on the “4 E’s” of education: Expansion, Equity, Excellence and Employability. He urged the need for trained teachers and dedicated reading spaces, suggesting that every school allocate a room for a library to enhance learning outcomes.

Dr. Rajeev Gowda highlighted Saksham’s focus on long-term behavioural change, with a strong push for environmental education. Revisiting his research on climate change

awareness published in '97, he reaffirmed the integration of sustainability and pollution awareness into school curricula.

The first panel discussion on 'Challenges of Quality Education in Rural Schools and the Need for External Assistance', convened by Suresh G M, Member, SDMC; Suresha S R, Headmaster, KPS Nonavinakere; and Prof. Gopal Naik as the moderator.

The next panel titled, 'How do we provide cost-effective support to rural schools?', brought together Gopinath KN, Executive Director-Dhwani Foundation; Madhvarao Kamath, Manager, OSAAT; Nandi J Hoovinahole, Founder, Hoovinahole Foundation; Brinda Poornapragna, CEO, eVidyaloka and IIMB faculty Prof. **Manaswini Bhalla**, Economics area.

The final session of the event on 'The necessary conditions for CSR and Philanthropy in rural school development', featured Geeta Krishnamurthy, Hanasoge Charitable Trust; Shreepad Kuthyar, Avakaasha Foundation; Praveen Gupta, Moneyboxx Finance Ltd; and IIMB faculty Prof. **Haritha Saranga**, Chairperson, Sustainability Taskforce, Production & Operations Management area.

IIMB also introduced a digital platform designed to bridge gaps between schools, funders, and implementation partners. The initiative seeks to centralise school challenges, connect them with credible partners, and streamline funding through CSR, community-driven action and philanthropic channels.