

CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance

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CSR in Latin America and the Caribbean

Cristian R. Loza Aduai

The socio-economic reality in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is not homogeneous and neither are the various approaches to corporate social responsibility (CSR) that are being implemented in this geographical area. On the one hand, a historic charitable tradition—inherited from colonial times and from indigenous cultural traditions—has motivated business leaders to engage in the solution of major societal challenges, forging the current practices of strategic philanthropy [1]. On the other hand, CSR in LAC has been driven by multinationals (with American, European, Asian or Latin American provenience) or their subsidiaries and their efforts to comply with international standards. This is evident especially in countries where particular industrial sectors dominate the economy, as in the case of mining in Peru and Chile.

Latin American countries can be considered developing countries or emerging economies, in which Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role for socio-economic development. Some empirical evidence sustains the hypothesis that a large majority of LAC SMEs perform—sporadically and not strategically—activities related to CSR, without acknowledging them as such. Latin American SMEs privilege internal stakeholders in their CSR activities emphasizing issues of work-family conciliation, equality of opportunities, worker's health and safety and other issues related to basic labor conditions and social inclusion [2].

In general, social issues such as poverty, crime, corruption, informality, unemployment, labour issues, and high levels of inequality have been more in the focus of CSR activities in LAC than environmental degradation issues like deforestation, loss of biodiversity and pollution [3]. This reflects the expectations of stakeholders of LAC and the role played by international organizations as the Inter-American Development Bank, and other organizations as the network *Forum Empresa*—a business alliance that unites 22 organizations from at least 19 countries of the region—in promoting and shaping the CSR agenda across the continent.

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CSR Marketplace

Florian Beranek and Thomas Walker

The CSR Marketplace [1] is an integral part of the intervention tools of UNIDO's reap26 program [See section "UNIDO reap26"]. Looking at the general "recipe" for innovative organizational development, "The more common values, common language, common culture and finally common sense an organization is agreeing on with its stakeholders, the higher will be the individuals' input and subsequently the organizational output." (Beranek and Walker, Singapore 2013) The CSR Marketplace mainly targets the common sense agreement amongst single and multiple stakeholder groups.

The range of topics is based on the core subjects and issues determined by the ISO26000 Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility. Split up in six thematic groups (see UNIDO reap26) tangible exemplary situations/processes taken from day-by-day of an average enterprise or organization are arranged in a simple matrix with 2 empty fields (A and B) on the right hand side of each statement.

By raising a set of maximum 2 questions (for A and B) an intervention in smaller up to larger groups can aim for e.g.: Awareness, Associations, Current Situation, Expectations, Potential Conflicts, etc. In general this exercise is done with a limited number of "coins" (sticky dots) given to individuals or groups. Besides the valuable learning from the results the process of deciding and the ongoing discussion during and after the spending of all coins on most voted issues.

At the same time the participants will experience the relations and dependencies of issues, which become only visible from the desired holistic perspective. The discourse triggered by such intervention is expected to surface the individually differing perspectives, relevancies and priorities. Thus the need of a common sense agreement on the organization's viewpoints becomes clearly visible and the result acceptable for all involved stakeholders.

Up to a certain degree the tool allows the adaptation of the exemplary situations and/or processes reflecting certain cultural and social perceptions/expectations. It proved also its deployment as stand-alone intervention as well as part of a long-term strategy development process. Remarkable results were achieved during internal exercises whereby the discrepancies amongst traditional companies's departments lead to the desired strong discussions.

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