

Corporate Social Responsibility – a new Agenda for Development Cooperation

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- CSR is a relatively recent issue → discussion on what it covers and which role the political sector is playing not yet finalised: voluntariness versus obligation to take on social responsibility with need of state control mechanisms.
- Strategic terms of reference for development policy: Plan of Action of World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (active role of the policy sector in supporting CSR, accountability of enterprises); AP 2015 (poverty reduction successful only if in the form of strategic alliances with business community and society)
- From a development point of view, putting into practice of basic social standards as stipulated in the conventions of the ILO is an important step towards reducing poverty, enhancing sustainable development and ensuring that globalisation is accompanied by social responsibility.
- Project-related support of CRS through BMZ: Public-Private Partnerships - joint projects with the private sector which are meaningful in terms of development and at the same time serve the enterprises' properly understood self-interests, e.g. with the provision of basic health services, preventive health care or the introduction of labour and social standards.
- From the development point of view those entrepreneurial initiatives aiming at a broad effectiveness and sustainability are especially important: projects with a proven supra-regional and structure-building impact, which in the long term make a decisive contribution to poverty reduction and can ensure income opportunities reflecting human dignity.
- Multi-Stakeholder initiatives where representatives of all parties concerned can take part have a special potential for achieving a structure-building effect.
- Examples in the coffee and textile sector: Common Code for the Coffee Community (together with the German Coffee Association), model of social responsibility with the Foreign Trade Association of the German Retail Trade.
- Dialogue-related support of CRS through BMZ: Global Compact at the international level, round table on codes of conduct at the national level (again a multi-stakeholder approach)

Conclusion: The policy sector can give an important initial impulse and role as moderator (multi-stakeholder processes); however, there must be a fundamental conviction of, and interest in, the problems on the part of enterprises/stakeholders.

Curriculum Vitae

Evita Schmieg is head of the Globalisation, Trade and Investment Division in the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development. She is an economist by profession with several years of experience in the area of trade, globalisation and development in the Ministry as well as in the Commission of the European Communities in Brussels. On a previous post she prepared a conflict prevention strategy for German development co-operation.

Other experience comprises inclusion in the 2001 "Who is Who of the International Historical Society"; participation in the seminar on "Broader Aspects of Security Policy", April/May 1999, Federal College for Security Policy Studies; as well as a German Marshall Memorial Fellowship in the United States of America in fall 1992.

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