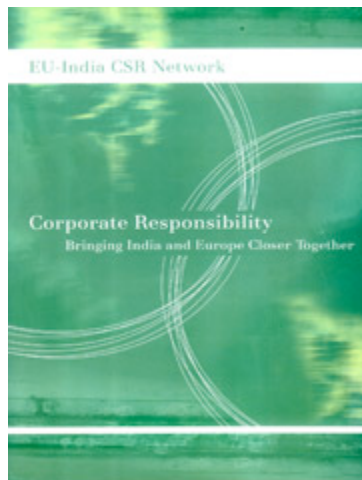


Corporate Responsibility Bringing India and Europe Closer Together.



This publication contains all you need to know about corporate responsibility and how European and Indian companies and civil society organizations are responding to it. Both Indian and European companies are working hard to reach high standards in corporate responsibility. But they are doing it separately, yet, there is much they can learn from each other. This publication is the bridge between European and Indian responses to Corporate Responsibility.

European companies have a direct responsibility in influencing labour and environmental standards through their investment in India. As consumers, employees and shareholders, the public in Europe shares that responsibility. It is a responsibility, however, that has to be shared with companies, workers and civil society in India too.

Consequently the implantation of standards of corporate practice internationally applicable can only work if Indian business and other stakeholders are fully involved and if Europe and India better understand each other. So European companies in India must try to understand not only the Indian Business environment and its practices but also the needs of the local community in the national context. At the same time Indian companies need to be aware of European innovations and best practices in social and environmental responsibility, in order to meet the increasing standards which the European public is setting.

To reach this partnership Indian companies and foreign companies implanted in the country, but not only the bigger ones and the ones from the industrial sector, have to integrate their Corporate Responsibility practices into their core business strategy such as mark and brand management. They also have to develop a comprehensive implementation and monitoring system. Simultaneously they have to reduce the discrepancy between the perception of workers and management about company compliance with labour regulation.

Ideally companies, the government and the civil society would work together toward making the local community an equal partner in the decisions and deals that impact on their lives, developing disaster relief and prevention programme.

Beside, European buyers should accept their reciprocal responsibility of agreeing to pay a reasonable premium for products made under socially and environmentally responsible conditions. There is a need to prevent CSR from being used by developed countries as non-tariff barriers.

Surely there are still interrogations from every side. What role should a company play versus the role of local and international institutions, trade unions and civil society? Should a company act as a campaigner in a country for human rights activists, or is that going beyond their remit? How does corporate responsibility intersect with the pressures of trade and competition?

But the most important in this publication is that questions are raised, the dialogue opened, the fragmented information currently available in India and Europe collected and consolidated to be disseminated as widely as possible, the links between business, government and civil society in India and Europe facilitated, best practices promoted and perhaps the most important of all is that finally a platform for a organized and cross -cultural debate has been provided.

It constitute an essential meeting point in an increasingly interdependent world, in which Corporate Social Responsibility will not begin or end in Europe or the US but will emerge as a global trend that transcends regional and national boundaries, north and south's cut-out. Through this mutual understanding, this publication gives us an approach of what could be Corporate Social Responsibility at an International level.