



CSR REVIEW

Potential Role of CSR in Attaining Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Introduction

Though the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not new, it has assumed the status of a movement in recent times. It is being enthusiastically embraced by scholars, policy makers and in many instances, corporate leaders as well. The ever increasing emphasis on CSR is partly attributable to the inadequacy of the capacity of many governments to deliver the public or merit goods vitally needed for achieving social goals. The movement has received boost from national and international groups concerned with civil rights, women's rights, consumer's rights and protection of environment. In this backdrop the



objective of this paper is to examine the role that CSR can potentially play in attaining sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. The goals are embodied in the Declaration entitled "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." SDGs contain as many as 17 goals and 169 targets. It would be, therefore beyond the scope of this paper to explore all areas where CSR can potentially make a positive contribution to the attainment of SDGs. The focus will be on those goals which appear to the author to be directly intertwined with CSR.

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"Sanpo Yoshi"— Japanese Philosophy for Corporate Longevity

Rumi Ariyoshi, First Secretary (Public Relations/Culture)
Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh

Every businessman is interested in how to make more profit by doing a long-lasting successful business; however, I am writing in hope of bringing about a change of mentality in Bangladesh for doing business in a sustainable way which allows for corporate longevity and which gives satisfaction and pride to the businessmen.

What is the objective of doing a business? Should money making be the only and utmost goal and satisfaction of your life?

To begin with, I would like to quote Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Laureate, who said, "Today there is concentration of economic power in a few hands because

financial institutions are dedicated to help them in accomplishing this." I was not so clear about what he meant until recently I experienced an incident myself.

A baby girl was born to my driver, so I decided to give him a financial gift for his children's education. My driver didn't have a bank account but I told him to save it in a bank so that he will not end up using the money for living expenses. My driver brought me an application form for Education Savings Scheme from a private bank; however, he told me that the form was only available in English, so he couldn't understand the terms and conditions nor could he fill out the form. It was such a shock to me to know that such favourable service as 60.5% interest rate upon 5 years maturity, in addition to monthly education allowance which was enough to cover his daughters' school tuition was only available to those who are well educated to understand the technical terms in English. Large population at the bottom of the pyramid in Bangladesh who do not normally deal with banks cannot enjoy such service.

Why didn't the bank think about getting more future educated clients from a long term perspective?

There are 2 key terms which are relevant to the theme here, namely, Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Many people understand CSR as philanthropic activity often related to environment or charity work which companies perform only when the business is going well because it is regarded as a cost or burden outside their business.

On the other hand, there is Responsible Business Conduct to which I would like to bring your closer attention. I'm very much convinced that the notion of Responsible Business Conduct needs to be promoted urgently as a national policy priority and is more pertinent to the situation in Bangladesh, or in any other developing country whose economy is booming and people are craving for material wealth in as short period of time as possible.

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CSR: A Vehicle of Development

Bangladesh seems to be on track to become a middle income country by the year 2021. It has shown the courage to attain over 7% GDP growth in the fiscal starting July 1, 2016. The Perspective Plan of Vision 2021 has clearly laid out the expectations: ending poverty and crossing the middle income threshold by 2021. This will mean ensuring to every citizen basic rights and needs like food, clothing, healthcare and housing. The expectations can be fulfilled in an environment where every citizen has an equal opportunity to contribute to the economy and the society; where everyone gets equitable share of the development benefits.

Bangladesh has attained most of the recently expired Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including poverty reduction, food security, education and health. The development caravan has been moving forward. But limitations and challenges remain. Eradicating illiteracy, reducing headcount poverty to 13.5% and attaining other targets of the Vision 2021 will require concerted efforts and participation of all segments of the population. Government initiatives alone are not sufficient. Efforts from the business community, NGOs, development partners and entrepreneurs are required to materialize the vision.

As we entered into the era of UN-adopted Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in 2015, we need to match our vision with this global document. Most of the 17 SDG goals are to be attained to achieve Vision 2021 targets.

Business community can significantly contribute to the economic growth of the country. In recent years, businesses have come up with their CSR initiatives for the uplift of the deprived communities and marginalized people. Companies and corporate houses set different priorities of interventions with the common purpose of poverty alleviation and overall development of the country. CSR interventions in addressing women empowerment, skills development, income generation, food security, children's education, health services, environment protection and other development needs can definitely contribute to the attainment of Vision 2021 and SDG goals. CSR is a medium through which the private sector can contribute to poverty reduction and other social objectives. The business community plays an important role as a link connecting business and development, and their CSR programmes have high potentials of contributing to development. If utilized properly, CSR can make profound changes in major sectors of development. Overhead operational cost of government and foreign aided development projects is much higher than that of local CSR initiatives. This allows target beneficiaries derive maximum benefits from the allocated budget of the CSR intervention.

Poverty-related deprivations in health, education and asset ownership like physical and mental disabilities, discrimination by gender, social disruptions from prolonged conflicts etc., are major causes of financial and social exclusion. CSR expenditures as both passive one-off donations to voluntary/non-government organizations, and provision of funds for scholarships for facilitating the pursuit of studies, financial aid for healthcare services etc., can provide valuable support to efforts to help ease such poverty-related deprivations and social exclusions.

Education stipends for children of low income families/poor freedom fighters and of people living in remote areas like char, haor, and coastal belt, supporting

the running of non-formal schools for children of the underprivileged, donations to hospitals, clinics and other facilities run by voluntary organizations for the poor/underprivileged people are good examples of CSR.

It is found that overall improvements in poverty and hunger in Bangladesh are accompanied by rising regional and social disparities including persistent pockets of extreme poverty that are lagging far behind with respect to the national averages. Despite improvement in school enrollment, dropout rate is still high. The scheme of employment for all, including women and young people, is far behind the target. These findings are very important for planning and implementing development projects. Corporate entities are not supposed to conduct social investigation and research studies to find these issues. They are not expected to have enough capacities to undertake such studies, design projects, implement the activities and evaluate impact and changes that have taken place. These are done by NGOs, academics and research organizations. So a fruitful partnership of the corporate entities with the reliable and capable relevant organizations in planning and operating CSR interventions can create the desired impact among the target communities.

Allocation and expenditure of CSR funds have significantly gone up over last few years. But optimum and judicious usage of the funds and their low impact in poverty reduction are still matters of concern. A study conducted recently by MRDI identified optimum use of CSR funds and ensuring value for money as a challenge. Proper planning and target specific implementation of interventions are required for addressing the challenge. Specific CSR strategy in a written form and its proper application can create a sustainable impact in the target community. Banks, as a disciplined business sector, have started mainstreaming CSR as a part of their ethical mandate. Majority of the banks have now CSR desk officers in place. Some of them have already developed systems for fund allocation, CSR operational planning, identification of projects, baseline assessment and implementation plan. Such standard practices improve efficiency in implementation and cost effectiveness. However, banks mostly depend upon proposals from other entities like NGOs to identify projects. It is imperative that in addition to identifying the baseline situation, there have to be a system for outcome assessment, which again would require support of NGOs/ research organizations. So the scope and necessity for corporate-NGO partnership are quite relevant.

Other business sectors can also come up with the idea of streamlining CSR with their business plan. Telcom, pharmaceuticals, RMG, tannery and other sectors can follow the example of the banking sector in operating their CSR programmes to have a visible impact in the target communities.

Another idea that emerged from the research and other experiences suggests that individual business sectors can create a consolidated fund for best utilization of their CSR money, thus demonstrating better impact in the community.

All stakeholders, therefore, have to come up with the ideas of strategy formulation, partnership building, common fund creation and impact assessment for the best utilization and successful operations of CSR initiatives.



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Potential Role of CSR in Attaining Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The concept of CSR¹

Any assessment of the role of CSR in attaining SDGs has to be based on a clear understanding of the concept of CSR. Many scholars have attempted to clarify the concept and delineate its scope. Only a few are mentioned below.

Davis (1960) argued that social responsibility refers to "businessmen's decisions and actions taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest." McGuire (1963) postulates that CSR implies assumption of the certain responsibilities to the society which extend beyond their economic and legal obligations. According to Murphy (1978), CSR includes involvement in community affairs, concern about urban decay, correction of racial discrimination, alleviation of pollution and charitable donations. According to Carroll (1979) the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic expectations that the society has of businesses at a given point in time. Kotler and Lee (2005) define CSR as a commitment to improve community well-being through business practices and contributions of corporate resources.

Based on the brief survey above it can be concluded that CSR would include attention to (i) climate change (ii) product responsibility (iii) governance issues including reporting and management structure (iv) labor practices for decent work (v) human rights (vi) services to community (vii) ensuring non-discrimination in all aspects, for example, racial or sexual and (viii) charitable donations.

CSR and SDG goals

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Of particular relevance to CSR are the two indicators associated with this goal: mobilization of resources from a variety of sources and implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems. CSR in this context would involve contribution to mobilization of resources intended for eradicating poverty going beyond legally required tax payments. With regard to Social Protection System, CSR would include provisions for life and medical insurance for workers and appropriate pension/ provident fund system.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

There are many indicators under this goal. The important areas for potential contribution of CSR to the fulfillment of the goal relate to increasing agricultural productivity through inclusive financial services, creation of opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment for small-scale food producers, indigenous peoples, family farmers and fishers, investment in research and technology development and ensuring proper functioning of food commodity markets in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

The most important area of the contribution of CSR in respect of this goal would be to help achieve universal health coverage through enhancing access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all as well as through ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all.

Here CSR can contribute to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant effective learning outcome. Another point of interest is to ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university education.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

The role of CSR would be to ensure women's effective and full participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

The role of CSR in this case would lie in increasing the share of renewable energy and development of advanced and clean fossil fuel technology and promoting investment in energy infrastructure.

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Here again there are many indicators. Those of direct relevance to CSR in my opinion are : (i) full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value (ii) eradication of forced labor and worst forms of child labor (iii) Protection of labor rights and promotion of safe and secure working environment for all workers.

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

The contribution of CSR in this area would include ensuring access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport system; enhancing inclusive and sustainable urbanization and providing safe universal access to green spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

In this case CSR, specially by large transnational corporations, could contribute to the mobilization of financial resource for developing countries. Another important contribution could be the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms.

Some concluding comments

This paper has identified selected goals and indicators of SDGs where CSR could make a positive contribution without any claim to be exhaustive. The mechanisms for operationalizing the roles of CSR in the specific contexts of particular countries and societies have to be worked out. Besides, a question may be asked as to why corporate entities should show any interest in CSR to further the cause of SDG goals. The rationale lies in the evidence that CSR has a positive impact on financial performance of firms. The impact occurs through a number of channels which include (i) reduction of costs and risks (ii) strengthening legitimacy and reputation (iii) building competitive advantage and (iv) creating win-win situations through synergetic value creation (Kuruez et al, 2008). It is hoped that corporate entities in Bangladesh will pay greater attention to CSR than has been done so far and thereby fulfill some SDG goals while pursuing profit.

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¹ This section has drawn substantially from Carroll and Shabana (2010)

MRDI's CSR Initiative



Banks Urged for Coordinated CSR Programmes

CSR, particularly in the banking sector, is no more a sporadic act of social welfare. It has become an approach and a dimensional change has taken place in the mindset of banks. Developing a common CSR fund by banks can subsequently facilitate government to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the targets of the Paris Accord on Climate Change.

Speakers noted at a programme to release the findings of CSR impact assessment study and scope of CSR funding in climate change affected areas conducted by MRDI in partnership with Bangladesh Bank.

Dr. Atiur Rahman, the then Governor, Bangladesh Bank, Shitangshu Kumar Sur Chowdhury, Deputy Governor, Bangladesh Bank; Mohammad Naushad Ali Chowdhury, Executive Director, Bangladesh Bank; Anis A. Khan, Chairman, ABB and Manoj Kumar Biswas, General Manager, Sustainable Finance Department, Bangladesh Bank, Hasibur Rahman, Executive Director, MRDI, other officials of Bangladesh Bank and MRDI were present.

The study reports



Please visit for full report

<http://www.mrdibd.org/publications/Waiting%20for%20Change.pdf>
<http://www.mrdibd.org/publications/Impact%20Assessment%20Book.pdf>

ফিন্যান্স শিখি, অর্থ বুঝি

A Joint Initiative of HSBC and MRDI

Bangladesh is thriving to become a middle income country by 2021. A sound financial and banking system is mandatory to ensure sustainable economic development. This, again, cannot be achieved keeping people away from the formal financial system. It is observed that, Bangladesh stands at the bottom of the strata on the financial literacy issue in global and regional standards. Lack of financial literacy and awareness among the people contributes to misappropriation of finance in the national economy.

To address the issue, HSBC collaborated with MRDI as a part of its CSR to create awareness among the children and adolescents on needs and benefits of financial literacy. At the pilot phase, students of grades 8, 9 and 10 from six schools of Dhaka and Chittagong will be disseminated basic knowledge on financial literacy and financial inclusion through lecture session, quiz competition and essay competition.

The pilot initiative also targets RMG workers of two Dhaka based factories under the age of 25 years who will be provided with basic concept on finance. They will be facilitated about their personal financial planning, saving, investing and transaction through formal banking channels.

Under this initiative elementary hand book on financial literacy, flip chart, poster and comic book will be developed as learning materials.



Bank Al-Falah Supports Rain Water Preservation

A unique partnership between corporate and community

Efforts have been there for decades to overcome the acute water crisis in villages adjacent to the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest. Abundance of water in rivers, canals, ponds and creeks is of no use to people due to high level of salinity and presence of harmful germs in water.

Bank Al-Falah Limited, with its CSR support, joined MRDI's initiative in the Sundarbans villages for provision of safe water through re-excavation of existing ponds and facilitating women to generate income through formation of women's associations (Somity). The pond re-excavation programme was partially effective whereas income generation initiative has been able to make positive changes and enthusiasm among women of the community.

As continuation of this change making effort, Bank Al-Falah responded to a demand of the community for plastic water tank that would be

used to store rain water during the monsoon. Members of the somities offered to share cost of the tank. Accordingly, the families of somity members of Bon Laudob, Koilashgonj and Dhangmari of the Sundarbans were provided with plastic water tank for preserving rain water during the monsoon on cost share basis.

Each of the 140 members of three somities has received a plastic tank with a capacity of 1200 liters of water. It will not solve their water crisis for the whole year, but at least provide relief for 3-4 months of the dry season. Paying a portion of the cost has given them a feeling of ownership.



MTB's Total Well-being Approach

CSR for a Caring Society

Facilitating education to children was the purpose of Mutual Trust Bank (MTB) when the bank joined MRDI's CSR initiative at Char Patila, a remote offshore island in the southern Bangladesh five years back. Children of the Sharifpara Primary School of the 'char' got a new school building and furniture which invigorated them to study with a new zeal. School enrollment went up, drop out got down. Children and their parents were happy.

But that was not the end. Physical ailment of children appeared as a concern that impacted attendance in school. With the motto of total well-being of a focused community, MTB came forward to provide health care support to school children through fortnightly health camp. A doctor's visit from the town every alternate week has been a big support to keep safe from common ailments. Family members of children also get treatment of common diseases from the camp.

Recently a school girl Fahima got her left eye pricked with a needle accidentally. As traditional treatment did not work, doctor advised to shift her to Dhaka for surgery. Having known this, MTB immediately came forward for her advanced treatment in a specialized eye hospital in Dhaka with all follow up support. This small incident hints at a close bonding of a corporate entity with a deprived community.

What started as an initiative to support children's education has now turned into a strong bondage aiming to build a caring society.

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"Sanpo Yoshi" – Japanese Philosophy for Corporate Longevity

The most striking evidence is the case of food poisoning by formalin for longer shelf life of products in the recent years. This is the typical example of doing business in a nearsighted perspective -earning maximum amount of money, not thinking about the risk of being prosecuted or creating a dire long term health consequence of causing deformity of babies in the next generation whose parents kept eating the poisoned food. Furthermore, often I hear about problems of companies which do not faithfully keep the business contract. These are typical bad examples against the notion of Responsible Business Conducts.

So what can a company do to meet the standards of international level if it wishes to excel in gaining trust from business partners abroad? Responsible business conduct is not reserved to big companies capable of understanding complex technical reporting standards. In this regard, you may find the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises useful. They are voluntary recommendations for Responsible Business Conduct which cover the following 9 areas:

OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises
Recommendations for responsible business conduct
http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,3746,en_2649_34889_2397532_1_1_1_1,00.html

9 Areas Covered

Disclosure	Human Rights	Employment And Industrial Relations
Environment	Combating Bribery, Bribe Solicitation and Extortion	Consumer Interests
Science and Technology	Competition	Taxation

Apparently, they are not about philanthropy or charity, and they are equally valid to domestic enterprises as well. It is about compliance, and common sense of propriety and fair action.

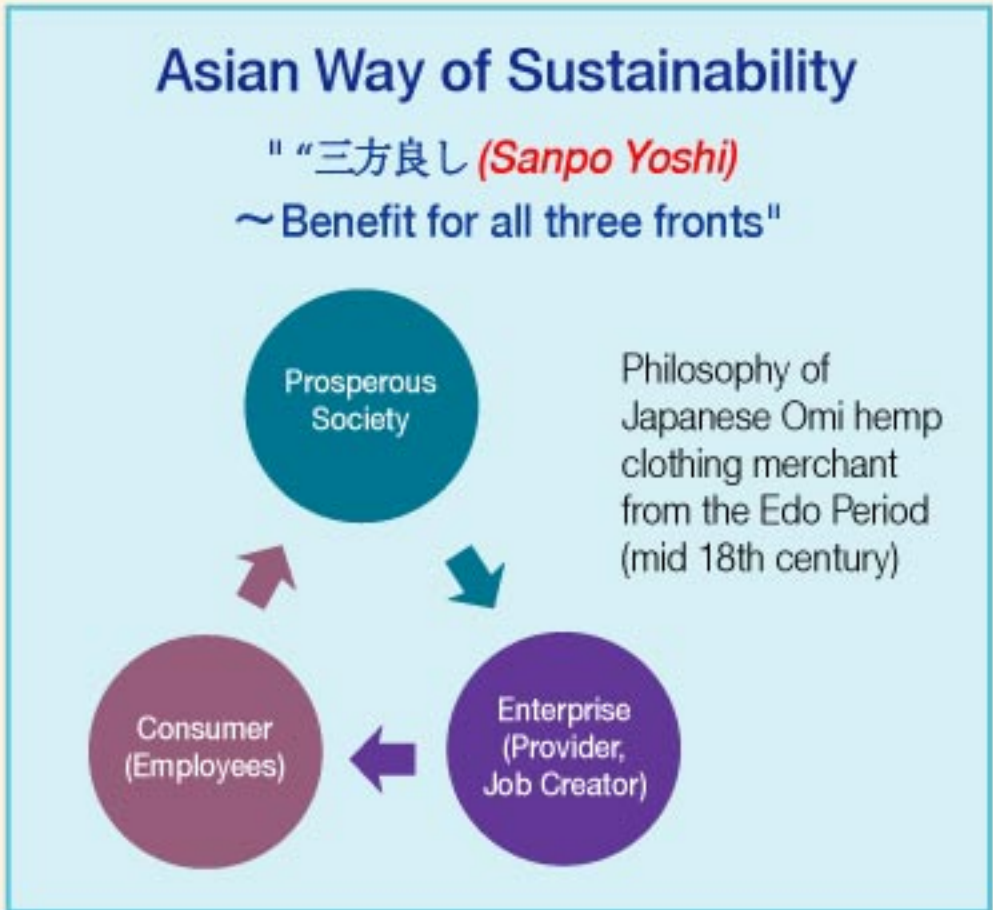
Why should companies take fair action and not just seek maximization of its short-term profit? The answer lies in a Japanese philosophy of Omi merchants from the mid 18th century Edo period, called Sanpo Yoshi, which means benefit for all three fronts of the society. This is a long Japanese tradition of social sustainability which helped many companies in Japan to survive even over 1000 years.

A stable, violent hartal-free and prospering society is beneficial for enterprises. In such a prospering society, the enterprises can do business well and provide goods and services and create jobs.

If the enterprises are doing well in business, then it allows the enterprises to benefit their employees with higher salaries. The employees are at the same time, consumers of goods and services so when mass people become wealthier, it leads to a prosperous society and favourable business environment. Thus, Sanpo Yoshi creates a good cycle of sustainable society.

Sanpo Yoshi is a traditional Japanese strategy or philosophy for corporate longevity. This philosophy is reflected in the following message by an Omi hemp clothing merchant, Jihei

NAKAMURA which he left for his grandchild who succeeded his business in 1754:



This sounds good and convincing to me, especially to "never aim for a short term high profit" which is particularly appropriate in the context of the past financial crisis which was triggered by financial institutions driven purely by the principle of supremacy of short term capital gain. Also I firmly believe that the situation in Bangladesh where the gap between the rich and poor is widening ever more, critically requires this philosophy to maintain stability and a healthy growth of the society.

There are many long-lasting companies in Japan doing business for even 500 years or 1000 years, who continue to follow Sanpo Yoshi as a corporate strategy.

In order to implement Sanpo Yoshi, the OECD Guidelines can be useful particularly Chapter-I "Concepts and Principles", Chapter-II "General Policies", Chapter-V "Employment and Industrial Relations (paragraph 3 and 6)"; and Chapter-VIII "Consumer Interests."

"Sanpo Yoshi"
~ a traditional Japanese philosophy for corporate longevity

When you go abroad to do business, it is most important to always keep in mind:

- ✓ To make sure that the garments (products) you are selling satisfy all customers in that country;
- ✓ Think and act customers first;
- ✓ Never aim for short term high profit;
- ✓ Be humble that you are dependent on Gods' blessing;
- ✓ Do business with a caring mind for the people in the region;
- ✓ Never lose faith in Gods in order not to avoid malicious mind.

By so doing, you are in line with the Reason and will be able to keep a healthy body and mind

— Message for rising child Jihei NAKAMURA 1754

My practical advice to take immediate first action on the OECD MNE Guidelines is to take the following key steps:

1: Obey domestic laws and apply common sense of propriety.

This is the first and foremost obligation of enterprises. Do not abuse the loopholes of laws. Obey the law even if some others may be cheating and not being prosecuted for wrong doing. And even in situations where local law does not exist or does not meet the international standards, apply the common sense of propriety and take a fair action. By doing so, your company's reputation will excel the others, and you will gain trust from business partners and your business shall flourish in a longer term.

2: Implement risk-based due diligence including supply chain due diligence.

For the purposes of the OECD Guidelines, due diligence is understood as the process through which enterprises can identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their actual and potential adverse impacts as an integral part of business decision-making and risk management systems. It is helpful to know that due diligence is an obligation of process and not the result.

To start implementing due diligence, pay attention to the 9 areas covered and know the local rules. Think not only about the risk or loss to one's own business but also about the possible adverse impact by the company's activity. Prioritize which fields are most cost-efficient in preventing troubles as far as enterprise risk management is concerned, and try to do as much as you can incrementally.

3: Encourage your business partners to adopt similar practices.

If you are a client of some company, then there's a chance for you to demand your business partner to also do a fair and decent business which does not cause any negative impact onto the society. This is called supply-chain due diligence through which you can contribute to making Bangladesh a better country to live in.

Regarding Employment and Industrial Relations, Chapter V article 3 and 6 are the key, which read:

"3. Promote consultation and co-operation between employers and workers and their representatives on matters of mutual concern.

4: In considering changes in their operations which would have major employment effects, in particular in the case of the closure of an entity involving collective lay-offs or dismissals, provide reasonable notice of such changes to representatives of the workers in their employment and their organisations, and, where appropriate, to the relevant governmental authorities, and co-operate with the worker representatives and appropriate governmental authorities so as to mitigate to the maximum extent practicable adverse effects. It would be appropriate if management were able to give such notice prior to the final decision being taken."

Regarding Consumer Interests (Chapter VIII)

It applies to food poisoning and the case of my driver.

"When dealing with consumers, enterprises should act in accordance with fair business,



marketing and advertising practices and should take all reasonable steps to ensure the quality and reliability of the goods and services that they provide. In particular, they should :

5: Take into consideration, in applying the above principles, the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers."

In a nutshell, Sanpo Yoshi relies on good communication and trust between the enterprise, workers/consumers and the community. Keeping honest communications saves companies from facing unnecessary strikes, demonstrations or destructive action which is beneficial to the company.

One last piece of advice. The timeless universal philosophy of Sanpo Yoshi should be implemented as a core strategy for corporate longevity by the corporate leadership.

In conclusion, Bangladesh with a view to achieving the status of middle income country by 2021, time is now that businessmen change their mentality to gear towards a longer term sustainable business instead of short term high profit for their own sake. And as consumers ourselves, we should be mindful and aware of what efforts decent companies are making to make our society sustainable and not decide just by the low price. By acting together, we can

create a self-sustaining business environment in which both large and small enterprises can flourish and enjoy their longevity with pride.

I hope the readers agree and now consider this way: "I shall do business with Sanpo-yoshi spirit to make my company survive long period and make my life meaningful." Please remember, that responsible business conduct is for your own sake of business and for the prosperous future of Bangladesh.

The Importance of having a SR Strategy

Rodney Reed, Managing Director, Reed Consulting Bangladesh Ltd.

Funding projects without a strategy in place to coordinate the activities or to manage and optimize their performance is a random approach that would not usually be considered appropriate in a business house - except in the funding of a multiplicity of CSR projects. A well planned programme that implements a carefully thought out strategy delivers a better 'return on social investment' and enables monitoring for improved performance going forward.

Investing in the human resources of a company is a socially responsible activity by an employer whether that employer is a business house, a bank, or a manufacturing facility. Most, if not all, business houses have an opportunity to employ people with disabilities. This can be as simple as employing people with visual or physical disabilities as lift operators - because mobility is not a key feature of this task. At the other end of the scale would be the employment of the graduates who had benefitted from the scholarships and educational programmes of the company but who now need work experience and long term employment i.e. more than internships. This will enable a company to have a return on investment in terms of human capital. In between these two poles, would fall initiatives such as employing people from minority communities and disadvantaged groups and also prioritising the training and promotion of women into management and senior management.

Another aspect of a socially responsible business addresses the impact of its processes on the natural environment. The directors of a socially responsible business house will want to be sure their processes and the manufacture of their products or the supply of their services does least damage to the natural environment. A socially responsible office will have some of its energy needs met by renewable energy, namely by solar panels. These companies will want to have 'green offices' where ventilation and air conditioning is carefully designed to waste no energy and is carefully monitored so there is adequate ventilation and cooling without inefficiencies causing 'hot spots' or 'cool spots' which make the offices less than comfortable for staff.

Socially responsible companies will also want to ensure that their solid waste does not present a hazard to others e.g. disposal of used toner cartridges and of failed fluorescent tube lights needs special attention and not simply disposal with ordinary 'non-toxic' waste. Environmental responsibility makes it clear that offices should be lit by energy efficient light units e.g. LEDs (light emitting diode) in place of T8 tube lights with magnetic ballasts. The office IT equipment of an environmentally responsible company will also be energy saving e.g. replacing old style PC monitors with energy saving flat screens. These same socially responsible offices will also want to minimise their water use by having aerating taps in their wash rooms and dual flush cisterns on their toilets. Company vehicles in an environmentally aware company would be run on CNG rather than on octane or diesel. These companies would also have a policy of shared travel to the office to avoid the 'one car, one driver, one manager' arrangement which is unfortunately the norm. Video conferencing would also be in use to minimise the number of journeys between company offices and between Headquarter offices and production facilities.

Business ethics is another aspect of Social Responsibility. A responsible company will accept its responsibility to pay the carefully assessed

amount of Income Tax, Company Tax and VAT. Sub-contractors will be paid in full and on time. There will be no unfair advertising or unfair business practices and of course corrupt payments will not be offered or accepted. There will be no child labour in the company or its supply chain and if children are found within the company's activities they will be provided with education and a safe environment.

A company's social responsibility has been likened to the DNA of the company, meaning that the intention to be socially responsible and the acceptance of the implications of that intention are the building blocks on which all company policies and activities are based.

Social Responsibility extends well beyond donations of cash or company products to projects however worthwhile or praiseworthy the cause being supported. A Social Responsibility strategy will have clearly identified objectives that are linked to the core business of the company. This Social Responsibility will be both inward and outward looking i.e. taking responsibility for the health and welfare of company employees and of the community around the company premises and of the customers of the company products or services. Environmental responsibility will similarly be internal and external i.e. minimising wastage of water and energy and raw materials inside the company offices and factories and careful disposal of discarded materials and liquid and solid waste and minimising emission of dark smoke and noise from the company standby electricity generators. 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' is well-known as an environmental axiom but it is also good business sense for a company that recognizes the business case for 'green offices' and 'green factories'. Where to desire exists to have a sustainable socially responsible business 4BL, quadruple bottom line, accounting can be useful in reporting on the outcomes of responsibility (people, profit, planet, purpose is 4BL)

Social investment as Social Responsibility can provide competitive advantage, a 'win-win' for the 'business bottom line' and for the employees and for the company stakeholders including customers and the community at large. The alignment of Social Responsibility and business objectives is not a contamination of altruistic CSR. Rather it is a means to make the activities sustainable by having them central rather than peripheral to the core business. This mainstreaming of this responsibility can coincidentally reduce the company environmental footprint and help to 'green the supply chain'.

With so many opportunities and possibilities to align Social Responsibility with business objectives adopting a strategic approach becomes essential. This is particularly pertinent if the intention is to measure the impact of investment and to improve Social Responsibility programmes by review and deliberate strategic development. Social Responsibility strategy can be said to be an expression of how a business house decides it needs to evolve over time to meet its social objectives along with a detailed assessment of what needs to be done. Developing a Social Responsibility strategy for a business involves comparing its present expressions of social and environmental and ethical responsibility to its targeted state in order to identify differences - a gap analysis - and then move on to stating what is required for the desired changes to take place.

CSR Catalogue

Like previous fourteen issues of CSR Review, a catalogue of business houses practicing CSR prepared through random monitoring of reports published or telecast by the national media over a certain period is being placed on this page of the current issue of the newsletter. This time the monitoring period was December 2015 to May 2016. We would highly appreciate if the corporate houses send information on their CSR initiatives to csr@mrdivd.org. Since MRDI works with media and journalists, the news about such initiatives will certainly reach a large audience through them.

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CITIZEN SECURITY



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