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978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter

[More information](#)



Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Corporate responsibility has gone global. It has secured the attention of business leaders, governments and NGOs to an unprecedented extent. Increasingly, it is argued that business must play a constructive role in addressing massive global challenges. Business is not responsible for causing most of the problems associated with, for example, extreme poverty and hunger, child mortality and HIV/AIDS. However, it is often claimed that business has a responsibility to help ameliorate many of these problems and, indeed, it may be the only institution capable of effectively addressing some of them. *Global Challenges in Responsible Business* addresses the implications for business of corporate responsibility in the context of globalization and the social and environmental problems we face today. Featuring research from Europe, North America, Asia and Africa, it focuses on three major themes: embedding corporate responsibility, corporate responsibility and marketing, and corporate responsibility in developing countries.

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Frontmatter

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Frontmatter

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Frontmatter[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of tables</i>	ix
<i>List of contributors</i>	x
<i>Foreword</i>	xxi
Introduction: Corporate responsibility and global business	1
N. CRAIG SMITH, C.B. BHATTACHARYA, DAVID VOGEL AND DAVID I. LEVINE	
Part I Embedding corporate responsibility	11
1 A corporate social responsibility–corporate financial performance behavioural model for employees	13
JEAN-PASCAL GOND, ASSÂAD EL AKREMI, JACQUES IGALENS AND VALÉRIE SWAEN	
2 The integrative benefits of social alliances: balancing, building and bridging	49
IDA E. BERGER, PEGGY H. CUNNINGHAM AND MINETTE E. DRUMWRIGHT	
3 Integrating corporate citizenship: leading from the middle	78
PHILIP MIRVIS AND JULIE MANGA	
4 CSR in search of a management model: a case of marginalization of a CSR initiative	107
AURÉLIEN ACQUIER	

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978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter[More information](#)

vi

Contents

Part II Marketing and corporate responsibility	133
5 Global segments of socially conscious consumers: do they exist?	135
PAT AUGER, TIMOTHY M. DEVINNEY AND JORDAN J. LOUVIERE	
6 Impact of CSR commitments and CSR communication on diverse stakeholders: the case of IKEA	161
FRANÇOIS MAON, VALÉRIE SWAEN AND ADAM LINDGREEN	
7 The relationship between corporate responsibility and brand loyalty in retailing: the mediating role of trust	191
FRANCESCO PERRINI, SANDRO CASTALDO, NICOLA MISANI AND ANTONIO TENCATI	
Part III Corporate responsibility and developing countries	215
8 Stretching corporate social responsibility upstream: improving sustainability in global supply chains	217
EMMA V. KAMBEWA, PAUL T.M. INGENBLEEK AND AAD VAN TILBURG	
9 Breaking new ground: the emerging frontier of CSR in the extractive sector	241
V. KASTURI RANGAN AND BROOKE BARTON	
10 Overcoming rural distribution challenges at the bottom of the pyramid	268
SUSHIL VACHANI AND N. CRAIG SMITH	
<i>Index</i>	303

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter[More information](#)

Figures

1.1 Overview of the CSR–CFP behavioural model for employees	<i>page 26</i>
1.2 CSR influence on the dynamics of corporations–employees social exchanges	36
2.1 Drivers, processes and outcomes	59
3.1 Aligning, integrating and institutionalizing citizenship	82
3.2 Models of organizational change	84
4.1 The vicious circle of CSR marginalization within Energy Co.	122
5.1 Examples of choice tasks for athletic shoes and AA batteries	142
5.2 Standardized effects of attributes on choice for batteries	144
5.3 Standardized effects of attributes on choice for athletic shoes	145
5.4 Membership in segments by product	149
5.5 Country membership by segment for batteries	150
5.6 Country membership by segment for athletic shoes	151
5.7 Memberships for segment pairs	153
5.8 Percent knowing about most recent purchase by segment for batteries	154
5.9 Percent knowing about most recent purchase by segment for athletic shoes	155
6.1a External stakeholders' influence on the development of IKEA's CSR policies from 1981 to 1998 (date of first code of conduct)	167
6.1b External stakeholders' influence on the development of IKEA's CSR policies from 1998 to 2006	168

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

List of figures

6.2 Stakeholders' role in the integration and development of IKEA's CSR policies	183
7.1 Structural model	200
9.1 Communities surrounding the Tintaya mine	248
9.2 CSR in the extractive sector: the emerging frontier	261
10.1 Factors affecting the rural population's income and quality of life	272
10.2 Interview sites	280
10.3 Intervention to enhance welfare through socially responsible distribution	289
10.4 Types of intervention	290
10.5 Degrees of leveraged distribution	293

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Tables*

1.1 Empirical studies on the influence of CSR on employees	<i>page</i> 20
4.1 The ‘external control’ approach of CSR management	112
4.2 The gap between strategic intent and operational translation	118
5.1 Selected demographic characteristics of respondents by country	139
5.2 Functional and social attributes for athletic shoes and batteries	141
7.A1 Items used in this study	206
7.A2 Measurement properties	207
7.A3 Means, standard deviations and correlations	208
7.A4 Comparisons of structural equation models	209
7.A5 Properties of the indexes	210
9.1 2006 revenues of top mining and oil companies as a percentage of total industry sales	243
9.2 Top ten mineral-dependent economies	244
9.3 The four pillars of the dialogue process	252
9.4 The hierarchy impacts associated with mining	257
10.1 Population living below \$1 and \$2 per day, 2001	271
10.2 Distance to primary school	273
10.3 Electrification rates, 2002	274
10.4 India’s rural and urban population living below \$1 and \$2 per day, 2001	277
10.5 Rural share in purchase of selected consumable and durable products in India, 1993–4	278

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of contributors

xi

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978-0-521-73588-9 - Global Challenges in Responsible Business

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Frontmatter[More information](#)

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Edited by N. Craig Smith, C. B. Bhattacharya, David Vogel and David I. Levine
Frontmatter[More information](#)*List of contributors*

xiii

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Frontmatter[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of contributors

xv

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of contributors

xvii

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Frontmatter[More information](#)

xviii

List of contributors

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of contributors

xix

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

List of contributors

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Frontmatter[More information](#)

Foreword

With the political and media spotlight falling on climate change, sustainability, the ethics of business leaders (and those in the financial services preceding the recession) as well as the other global problems in the under-developed world of poverty, HIV, etc., the business world is beginning to see the necessity of being more socially and ecologically responsible. This is not just about being ‘green’, but about exploring the full range of socially responsible behaviours. As Theodore Zeldin suggested in his book *An Intimate History of Humanity*: ‘The Green Movement could not become a major political force so long as it concerned itself primarily with natural resources rather than with the full range of human desires. Its setbacks are yet another example of idealism being unable to get off the ground because it has not looked broadly enough at human aspirations in their entirety’.¹ This book, edited by Craig Smith and his colleagues, provides the research base to this growing and increasingly important field. They focus on three key issues of corporate responsibility: embedding corporate responsibility, marketing and corporate responsibility and corporate responsibility and developing countries. Their contributors are comprised of some of the leading international scholars in the field from eight different countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, UK and the United States. This volume is based on state of the art research, which illustrates the importance of corporate responsibility, not only in terms of the ethical and environmental challenges but also because of their business imperative. More and more research is indicating that organizations who behave more responsibly, positively impact their bottom line.²

This book also supports Malcolm Gladwell’s contention, in his book *The Tipping Point*, that change can make a difference: ‘look at the world around you. It may seem like an immovable, implacable place. It is not. With the slightest push –in the right place- it can be tipped’.³ This is the challenge that confronts all businesses, big

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxii

Foreword

and small, and this book provides the evidence of what is possible and achievable. We hope that you will find this book useful in your scholarship, as well as in any change programmes you are considering in your organization, as we all move into a post-recession period of greater social and environmental responsibility.

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Jone L. Pearce, University of California, Irvine

Series editors

Notes

- ¹ T. Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity* (London: Vintage, 1998).
- ² E. Bichard and C.L. Cooper, *Positively Responsible: How Business Can Save the Planet* (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 2008).
- ³ M. Gladwell, *The Tipping Point* (London: Abacus, 2000).