

CSR Intervention Training

Workshop for Tea and Garment Sector NGOs and TUs

19 and 20 May

Hotel Topaz / The Tourmaline, Anniwatte, Kandy, Sri Lanka

Tel: + 94 81 7389000 6

E-mail: banquet@mclarens-hotels.lk

Introduction

SOMO and ISD Kandy felt the need for training of civil society organisations (CSOs) and trade unions (TUs) on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in general and CSR certification in particular. This training is aimed especially at CSOs in the tea and garment sector. Above all other sectors in Sri Lanka these export oriented sectors increasingly are faced with demands of buyers for increased and assured social, environmental and economic quality. For instance both upstream and downstream companies in the tea sector increasingly adopt or require CSR policies and (as a result) more and more CSR certification initiatives (global standards) are entering or about to enter the market. Consequentially CSOs that aim to improve social, economic and environmental conditions find themselves questioning their response to this emerging trend.

To illustrate CSOs in the tea sector are being approached by existing and emerging CSR schemes, either for information or for a role in the initiative. However, it is not always easy to distinguish between the various schemes and to be able to understand how effective they are. For trade unions in particular, the question is often posed whether these CSR initiatives are undermining or reinforcing worker organising and workers rights.

The garment sector nationally and internationally has more experience with the implementation of corporate CSR policies such as codes of conduct and their verification than the tea sector. However many Sri Lankan CSOs have limited knowledge on CSR and the possibility it might offer to contribute to organisational goals. Therefore it is expected that also CSOs addressing sustainability issues in this sector could benefit largely from this training workshop with its systematic approach and coverage of the latest CSR trends and impacts of CSR standards. NGOs in both sectors will benefit from the exchange of experiences and developments in each other's sectors.

Scope

In order for Southern CSOs and unions to be able to make an informed and strategically sound decision about their role and involvement in, or approach to, CSR initiatives detailed knowledge about various concepts and aspects thereof such as governance, scope, goals, implementation and verification systems, level of stakeholder involvement, complaints mechanisms and of course impacts and market shares is required. To a large extent these mechanisms and aspects would apply to individual company, sectoral and cross-sectoral initiatives as well. In the training the mechanisms and aspects of the most relevant initiatives will be analysed and discussed. Another important element of the training is the analysis and discussion of the various options for CSO engagement, from being directly involved as one of the participating stakeholders, being involved in monitoring and verification process, being one of the consulted parties to playing the role of watchdog organisation.

Objective

The objective of this training workshop is to increase capacities of non-governmental organisations and trade unions to effectively cope with CSR, and CSR certification in particular, as a tool to promote sustainable development. Thereby supporting civil society organisations in finding appropriate and effective approaches by discussing and identifying important concepts, trends, strategies and lessons learned in the field of CSR building on knowledge from within and outside the tea and garment sector.

Participants

NGOs and TUs working on the tea and garment sector in Sri Lanka and/or worldwide are hereby cordially invited to register by contacting Ms. Gayathri Katulanda on:

Institute of Social Development

No. 37, Bodhiyangana Mawatha,
Kandy
Sri Lanka
Tel/Fax : (0094) 81 220 29 23
Email : kandyisd@sltnet.lk

Limited seats are available attendance and stay is free of charge.

Speakers and contributors

(To be confirmed) industry representatives (Tata tea, Sri Lanka Tea Board), (inter)national governmental representatives (ILO), TUs (FTZWU, Plantation Sector Social Forum and the Joint Plantation Trade Union Sector) and NGOs (ISD Kandy, SOMO, Solidaridad India)

Funding

This project is part of a broader programme of SOMO financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

About the organizers

SOMO

Established in 1973, the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) is a non-profit Dutch research and advisory bureau. SOMO investigates the consequences of Multinational Enterprises' (MNEs) policies and the internationalisation of business worldwide.

SOMO's activities and research on corporations and their international context focus on sustainable economic and social development and on the structural eradication of poverty, exploitation, and inequality.

SOMO has been working on the tea sector and especially the garment sector for considerable time it is also host to a number of national and international NGO-networks on CSR. For more information on the centre's work and activities, please visit the SOMO website.

ISD Kandy

Institute of Social Development was formed in 1991, to promote and strengthen the upward mobility of the plantation community of Sri Lanka focusing on labour and human rights. In the past, it had implemented number of training on labour rights for the plantation workers while cooperating with the Trade Unions in the sector. ISD had played a major role to advocate the policy makers on plantation workers labour rights, housing, education, citizenship and land rights. Further, considering the increase of internal and external migrant workers in the plantation sector, ISD had focused on the unorganized sector workers and labour rights.

In collaboration with the trade unions and CSOs, ISD had formed number of networks locally and regionally to focus on labour and human rights of the plantation workers. Further, it had created a Plantation Workers Museum and Archive, which is a pioneer worker museum in Sri Lanka. Despite these organization is focus on good governance and CSR in the sector

Draft programme

1st Day: Corporate Social Responsibility different perspectives and forms

- 9.30 Welcome and introduction: programme and objectives of this training workshop
- 9.45 General introduction: CSR what is it, what is it for and what forms does it take, results, impacts (SOMO/Solidaridad)?
- 10.45 **Coffee/tea**
- 11.00 CSR at TATA tea
CSR Standards presentation by a voluntary standard (ETP, FT or RA...)
- 12.30 **Lunch break**
CSR in the tea sector in Sri Lanka and the NGO perspective (ISD Kandy)
CSR in the garment sector in Sri Lanka and the trade union perspective (General Secretary Free Trade Zone Workers Union of Free Trade Zones & General Services Employees)
- 15.30 **Coffee/tea**
- 16.00 Break away sessions (3-4 groups): "Experiences and attitudes": experiences with CSR, stance to CSR, perceived added value or threat for current activities, current role...
- 17.00 Plenary reporting of the break away sessions & discussion
- 18.00 **Drinks**

2nd Day

- 9:30 Introduction programme of the day recapitulation of yesterday's input
- 9.45 Elements of global standards and differences between CSR certification/Global Standards: scope: sector, PPP, governance, elements, chain of custody, continuous improvement, pay for certification, remediation, (SOMO/Solidaridad)
- 10.45 Key civil society roles when (or not) engaging with CSR schemes and what it entails (feed back on break away sessions last day):
Roles of Civil Society in CSR the international perspective (watchdog, partnerships, roundtables, multistakeholder initiatives, lobby, CSR platforms, national reference groups....) SOMO
- 11.15 Break away session: "How to make CSR work for you?": defining obstacles (and opportunities, possible roles, how to address these issues...)
How to go about (how to engage, share experience, expectations, bottlenecks, ...):
Group 1: Company Partnerships/Roundtable
Group 2: Watch-dog/campaign
Group 3: MSI/NRG
- 12.30 **Lunch break**
- 13.30 Plenary reporting on break away session: sharing experiences, dilemma's and opportunities (discussion)
- 14.00 Key issues when engaging with CSR and CSR schemes:
General (Problems): social auditing, audit fatigue, proliferation, limited market share, exclusion small farmers, purchasing practices, business case, no impact assessment, jobs versus sustainability
Specific: local realities, voice of workers, mediation, complaints mechanisms, governance, funding, monitoring the monitors
- 15.30 Plenary Q & A: future strategies
- 16.30 **Drinks**