



THEMATIC LUNCH: CSR in India - Diwali

BACKGROUND

You are doing business in India and you want to set up a CSR initiative. Join this lunch and learn more about CSR trends in this area.

Lille's World Forum tallies with the Indian festival of lights called "Diwali". It extols the victory of good against evil, of light against dark. CSR in India is in transit from good towards better. The outbreak of CSR unique approaches highlights its social processing and its shared values. This is an excellent occasion to think and to celebrate.

DEBATES SUMMARY

The Diwali lunch gathered different participants:

- Vinita Apte, President of Terre Policy Center
- Philippe Olivier, "reliability and sustainable development" Director, Roquette (biorefining / starch production)
- Antoine Watissée, Sales Director France, TATA Communications
- Rajendra Shivaraiakar, Associate VP, Garware Wall Ropes Ltd (providing customized solutions in the Cordage and Infrastructure industry)
- Anne Gerardi, CSR consultant (listener)

During this lunch, the participants mainly shared their respective CSR initiatives. Antoine Watissée began with the history of TATA that was the first Indian company that came in Europe to do business. As an Indian company, Tata has CSR in its culture, a statement that Rajendra Shivaraiakar strongly agreed with. 30% of TATA profits are given to charity. Moreover, every TATA communications employee is being asked if they want to do something for society. It is not compulsory and it mainly concerns education. The employees can give 3 hours of their time once a week in order to explain to young students how a company works so that they better understand the working world. Those initiatives highlight an internal aspect of CSR. At Roquette, they lead the same type of initiatives. Indeed, they explain to children what sustainable development is, they want to launch a program in which they would explain to children that the fog they see around their factory is water coming from plants that are good for the environment. They were also asked by an NGO to adapt the food supplements they produce so that it is healthier for the poor in Madagascar. Finally, they are working on ways to create renewable energy thanks to their activity. Rajendra Shende insisted on the importance to teach to the younger generations how to lead entrepreneurial actions. He gave an example based on his experience: he asked students to produce flowers and to sell them on markets, to convince companies that their flowers are the best. According to him, this is a good way to teach them how to sell a product and how to be innovative (some of them used the flowers to make a compost and to sell it).

Antoine Watissée gave the example of teleconference as a type of CSR. Rajendra Shende agreed with this idea and said that in Indian companies, CSR is perceived as a tool and that teleconference would be a good tool to lead CSR initiatives. Indeed, it would permit students from all around the world, to discuss and lead innovative entrepreneurial actions.

The Diwali lunch ended with the common idea that a good way to make French and Indian CSR meet, would be to allow reciprocal exchanges between young future entrepreneurs.

THEY SAID IT !

« You can do CSR along with your business, keeping the business objectives in mind » R. Shivaraiakar, Garware Wall Ropes

« Wouldn't it be a CSR initiative to make French and Indian students exchange about entrepreneurial topics and actions, in collaboration with a company ? » R. Shende, Terre Policy Center

Thematic lunch organized & animated by:

Mr. Rajendra Shende

TERRE POLICY CENTER



Mr. Rajendra Shende founded Terre Policy Center, a non - profit, non - partisan and independent organization dedicated to the sustainable solutions to the global developmental imperatives, and is its current chairman. He also is the head of the Paris based Ozon Action Programme of United Nations Environment Programme.

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