

Short overview of the activities carried out by OECD Watch as part of the Capacity Building project of OECD Watch, coordinated by IRENE

OECD Watch is an international network of NGO's promoting corporate accountability. The purpose of OECD Watch is to inform the wider NGO community about policies and activities of the OECD's Investment Committee and to test the effectiveness of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Research and Fact Finding

The production/writing of case-based material

In Pakistan a research and capacity-building programme will be carried out in 2005 as part of the Capacity Building project of OECD Watch. The activities undertaken in Pakistan consist of a review of the existing national and local legislations (relating to the social/environmental sectors) that require compliance from the corporate sector. Case studies will be made to understand in practicality the relevant issues concerning compliance with standards, public disclosure of corporate practices and mechanisms for public participation and community development. The existing legislations/standards/international standards will then be related in a comparative/gap analysis with the OECD Guidelines to identify areas and sectors not encompassed within the applicable legislations. Later, an extensive survey of selected national citizen groups/NGO's will be conducted to identify the level of awareness/understanding on the subject of corporate social responsibility and elicit views and opinions on the subject. Based on the results of this survey, an analysis will be carried out to develop baseline strategies for capacity building and pro-active involvement of citizen groups in advocating and lobbying for better corporate social behavior. The OECD Guidelines will be assessed and compared for application with other existing legislative instruments and a baseline framework for proactive citizen involvement will be prepared leading to an extensive training program for the citizen groups in Pakistan on the subject of corporate social responsibility and OECD Guidelines application.

In India the capacity building project on the OECD Guidelines as part of the OECD Watch focuses on awareness raising of the OECD guidelines among civil society organisations in the region and to build their capacity to use it as an instrument to hold TNCs responsible for their social and environmental impact. In addition it will promote coordinated action and sharing of information among NGOs and other civil society organisations in the region by using provisions of the guidelines and the mechanism of the National Contact Point. For 2005 the capacity-building project on the OECD Guidelines in India consists of intensive research of identified sector(s) and companies, the collection of case material and preparation of specific complaint cases, informal meetings with Civil Society Organisations concerned with Corporate activities in India and establishing contact with such organisations elsewhere in Asia and an exchange of information, production of relevant documents. Other activities include lobbying with business associations and government agencies to explore potential of the OECD Guidelines to promote better investment climate and ensure Corporate Social Responsibility and a training workshop for capacity building of civil society organisations in the use of OECD Guidelines.

In Ghana the capacity building programme as part of the OECD Watch project will first investigate the extent to which the OECD guidelines for MNE's have been implemented in mining operations in Ghana. Specifically it determine the extent to which mining MNEs have implemented the guidelines to safeguard the environment, protect Human Rights of communities in which they work, to understand the extent of change that communities'

livelihood systems have undergone. It will make recommendations to various actors in community development, government and businesses to help the implementations of the OECD guidelines in the country, and will use the findings for advocacy to make OECD adhering countries more responsive to CSR in developing countries.

Other activities consists of capacity training on OECD/UN Conventions and its application to achieve CSR for CSOs/NGO in Ghana, information gathering and support for communities to file a case against non complying company in Ghana, and information sharing and dissemination within the African region.

In the USA case-based material will be produced about specific companies and company activities, with a special focus on the procedures of the National Contact Points of the OECD member states and adhering countries. In addition advice and support to Southern NGOs when using the OECD Guidelines will be given. Specific focus will be on mining companies and their activities in Ecuador, and on companies' business activities related to illegal natural resource exploitation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In Argentina research and awareness raising activities on the OECD Guidelines will be carried out in 2005 as part of the OECD Watch project. These activities include an analysis of the complaint cases and of the procedures used by the different National Contact Points, of the organization structure of these NCPs and how they function. Secondly a seminar will be held with the various stakeholders in Argentina to stimulate the debate about the OECD Guidelines. By focusing on the OECD Guidelines the discussion in Argentina amongst the stakeholders on Corporate Social Responsibility will be stimulated.

Promotion of cooperation

As part of the promotion of cooperation between the partners and the NGOs of OECD Watch project the first inter-regional strategy and capacity building seminar for NGOs was held, in Brussels, organized by SOMO and IRENE. This was the first in a series of inter-regional seminars to plan the activities of OECD Watch for the coming year. As part of the project programme, funded by the Dutch Foreign Ministry, there will be an annual seminar in each of the regions (Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America) between 2005-08.

On 1 April 2005 OECD Watch's members SOMO, RAID, GermanWatch and IRENE organized an international multi-stakeholder Round Table on the OECD Guidelines, entitled 'Putting the OECD Guidelines for MNEs into practice, the Guidelines as an instrument for implementing CSR: Five years after their revision'.

The Round Table, held in Brussels, Belgium and co-funded by a.o. the European Commission, provided a unique opportunity to bring together more than 80 people from government, business, trade unions and civil society organisations to evaluate the practical application and the effectiveness of the OECD Guidelines five years on from their revision in 2000. See for the report IRENE's website or go to www.oecdwatch.org.

Capacity building of Southern NGOs in OECD Watch

End of June, early July 2005 SOMO has participated in a series of meetings in Bangalore and New Delhi, India to provide information and training of NGOs regarding the OECD Guidelines.

Advice and support to Southern NGOs when using the OECD Guidelines is being given on a.o.t. mining companies and their activities in Ecuador, and on companies' business activities related to illegal natural resource exploitation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Involvement of Southern NGOs in the lobby and strategy activities of OECD Watch

As part of the OECD Watch project Southern participation at meetings of the OECD and the OECD member states has been facilitated. Participants from Pakistan, India, Congo, Zambia, Brazil and Ghana participated in the consultations of the OECD Investment Committee in Paris held on 5 April 2005.

OW members from Europe and from Latin America (Ecuador) participated at the OECD Roundtable on CSR – OECD Guidelines for Multinationals Enterprises and the Developing World – Building Trust, June 14, Paris.

Similarly they participated at the Annual NCP meeting of the OECD with a stakeholder consultation scheduled within the day on June 15, Paris.

Exchange of information

In February GermanWatch and SOMO published the discussion paper on supply chain responsibility.

The first OECD Watch newsletter of 2005 has been published. The newsletter produced by RAID and SOMO, is published three times a year in English, Spanish and French.

See www.oecdwatch.org

Currently OECD Watch is producing the paper: Five Years On - A Review of the OECD Guidelines and National Contact Points.

Furthermore an analysis of complaint cases has been made by OECD Watch.

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