

# Preface

*Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)* has become a topic of increasing importance in all areas of human existence—in business, politics, academia and the civil society in general. Issues relating to CSR are discussed, researched and propagated in all economies around the globe. There is practically nowhere in the world today where issues relating to CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance are not debated, researched, encouraged, practised and perceived as being desirable. In fact, it is now a core part of corporate strategies of many companies in most economies.

CSR activities and the financial resources corporate entities devote to them, some scholars have argued, are just like an insurance policy premium on an insurable interest: when times are hard one either cancels the policy or allows the current policy to expire unrenewed. How has CSR fared during the recent global financial crisis? Have companies abandoned or cancelled planned CSR activities because times are hard? Or do companies perceive hard times as good time to even be more socially responsible by devoting more resources to CSR activities? Chapters in this book provide answers to these and many other questions people would like to have answers to in times when things are not so great for companies either on a micro or macro level.

The objective of this book is to add to knowledge by exploring and providing an overview of how corporate entities from around the world cope with financial resources challenges in terms of their CSR activities in periods when things are difficult. These issues are explored from the standpoint of corporate entities' quest to help find solutions to our social, economic and environmental challenges. Understanding how corporations cope with life during a period of uncertainty like the one which besieged our world in 2008 is the motivation for wanting to consolidate in a single book information on how corporate entities in different countries around the world dealt with their planned and pressing CSR activities.

It is believed that the way different dimensions of CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance are propagated and practised when times are hard would be of interest to CSR scholars, practitioners and stakeholders in general worldwide. Thus, these three editors provide original contributions from a dozen countries in

14 chapters that explore different versions of CSR practices in difficult times from around the world as at this point in time in the twenty-first century.

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