CSR Drivers

The Forces Shaping Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

By Wayne Visser

In doing research for my chapter entitled "CSR in Developing Countries", published in *The Oxford Handbook of CSR*, I identified 10 drivers for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility (CSR), which I summarise below.

CSR Drivers

National (or internal) drivers refer to pressures from within the country, while international (or external) drivers tend to have a global origin.

National Drivers	Description
Cultural tradition	CSR often draws strongly on deep-rooted indigenous cultural traditions of philanthropy, business ethics and community embeddedness.
Political reform	CSR cannot be divorced from the socio-political policy reform process, which often drives business behaviour towards integrating social and ethical issues.
Socio-economic priorities	CSR is often most directly shaped by the socio-economic environment in which firms operate and the development priorities this creates.
Governance gaps	CSR is often seen as a way to plug the "governance gaps" left by weak, corrupt or under-resourced governments that fail to adequately provide various social services.
Crisis response	CSR responses can be catalysed by economic, social, environmental, health-related or industrial crises.

Market access	CSR may be seen as an enabler for companies in developing countries trying to access markets in the developed world.

International Drivers	**Description**
International standardization	CSR codes, guidelines and standards are a key driver for companies wishing to operate as global players.
Investment incentives	CSR is given an incentive by the trend of socially responsible investment (SRI), where funds are screened on ethical, social and environmental criteria
Stakeholder activism	CSR is encouraged through the activism of stakeholder or pressure groups, often acting to address the perceived failure of the market and government policy.
Supply chain	CSR activities among small and medium-sized companies are boosted by requirements imposed by multinationals on their supply chains.

Article reference

Visser, W. (2008) CSR Drivers: The Forces Shaping Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility, *CSR International Inspiration Series*, No. 3.

***

Part of the CSR INTERNATIONAL INSPIRATION Series