



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

Corporate Social Responsibility in the APEC Region

Current Status and Implications

APEC

Human Resources Development Working Group

Capacity Building Network

December 2005



Institute for International Studies and Training

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Preface

The Asian economic crisis in the late 1990s and the advent of the so-called “new economy”, where information and communication technologies changed the way of doing business, brought new challenges to enterprises management. It also created a greater need for enhanced corporate governance. Globalization and the interdependency of business across borders have multiplied the complexity of risks, making it necessary for management to tackle those risks in a more systematic and integrated manner.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Human Resources Development-Capacity Building Network (HRD-CBN) has decided to address the issues of developing the capacity of management for effective corporate governance. To this end it has endorsed the project entitled, “Enhanced Risk Management System in the APEC Region – Toward Establishing Effective Corporate Governance”.

Since then the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an encompassing concept has emerged, affecting all facets of business with which management has to be concerned. Increasingly, CSR is being used to shape the behavior of an enterprise. Failure to meet the expectation of stakeholders on CSR matters may pose great risk to management and enterprise.

Taking this high level of interest in CSR into consideration, APEC has launched projects focused on CSR to highlight the emerging risks for enterprises. These projects stress the different CSR perspectives in doing business across different social, religious and ethnic groups as business activities span across borders.

The project took advantage of the diversity within the APEC community and of the effective collaborative structure among the different institutions in an effort to share best practices, with the end view of developing necessary human resources in the region.

An international symposium entitled “CSR for the Global Business – What is expected in doing business in Asia” was organized in January 2005 in Tokyo with the support of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Nippon Keidanren, the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI), and the Business Policy Forum, Japan (BPF-J). More than 250 senior business people and government officials attended the symposium. Eleven experts from APEC economies also attended the event.

Following the symposium, an experts’ workshop was organized to deepen the discussions and identify human resource development needs. At the workshop, future actions, including the preparation of economy-based Reports on CSR by APEC members and the establishment of a network of experts and institutions, were supported by the APEC experts.

This collection is a compilation of reports both from the Tokyo symposium and workshop, and of highlights from the economy reports. The full economy papers are available in CD-ROM. Both this report and the complete economy reports are on the APEC website in downloadable form.

As the Project Overseer, may I take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude for the cooperation extended by the experts and their organizations to make this project successful. We are particularly grateful to the speakers at the symposium and workshop, and the following experts who spent precious time to complete each economy paper on CSR despite their busy schedules. In the course of preparing for the event, we were able to establish good working relations with each other.

Preface

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In closing, I would like to thank several individuals who participated and contributed valuable information to the symposium, workshop and various other activities throughout the run of the project. Ms. Maria Jilla Phoebe S. Decena, Research Manager of Asian Institute of Management, deserves special acknowledgement for preparing symposium and workshop documents and reviewing the entire paper. Also, I would like to acknowledge the continued support of the officers and staff of the APEC Secretariat. Last, but not the least, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Mrs. Etsu Inaba, Ms. Kinuko Wakita and all my IIST colleagues for their tireless efforts in managing and finalizing this project. With all the support we obtained, if there is any omission or misrepresentation, the responsibility rests on our office.

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