Itaú Social

Study on Corporate Volunteering in the World

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1. Introduction

"Volunteering has made me learn human skills – like patience, perseverance, never give up attitude, relentless work and efforts."

Rishi Banshiwal

Today workers are less stable in their jobs, more diversified in their knowledge and more expert in technology than their predecessors. They are also working in an era of more incertitude, since the whole industry is being transformed by technology and globalization.

This shift in their path really surprised us: about five or six years ago, companies were very concerned with aligning their volunteering actions to their business objectives; nowadays they are much more concerned with the internal impact in the company and with the acquisition of abilities by their employees. We can also observe the importance given to collaboration with other company programs in local joint actions.

Evaluation thinking hasn't advanced much. Just like 10 or 15 years ago, most studies still consider as indicators the register of hours, of volunteers, and of people attended or affected. The reason remains the same: "It is very difficult to measure impact".

However, some companies want to promote actions that add value, that shouldn't be seen as isolated acts and that generate continuous changes. This kind of thought may give a new aim to the next five to ten years of corporate volunteering. It is possible that the adherence to the UN Sustainable Development Goals becomes clearer in the future because up to now there hasn't been an active movement towards this theme in the companies, which can be translated as a lack of a clear understand of the topic by employees.

The quotes below can illustrate how volunteering is seen by the companies.

The greatest source of pride in the program:

- *"Young people commitment. They live far away and participate in volunteering actions on the weekends; instead of resting, they must get up early to arrive on time. Sometimes they come with their families and share this day with them."*

- *"I am proud that the company rather than doing the easy thing, offer its time and work to produce activities and concrete and real solutions."*

The most inspiring action:

- *"The best idea was to invite the clients to get involved in volunteering work… We posted an invitation on the TV program and received more than 1000 e-mails from clients: **'I want to volunteer"**…*

Innovations in the actions:

- *"**Zero Poverty:** the idea to take volunteers to the OCSs that are dedicated to the eradication of poverty and to work a whole day in the field with people who are really poor, learning and understanding the concepts of how it is done."*

- "**Strategic Management of Human Resources Challenge** (Health Generation): Social global competition to find solutions to health problems in the world and help create healthier generations.

Innovations in management:

- "We created the concept of pre-volunteers, and our employees can include their children from 14 to 16 years old as volunteers."

- "Geolocation" of volunteering activities. With the help of digital media, communities were included in the decisions about actions needed by the neighborhood. "It is the greatest generator of faithfulness and commitment with the community."

- Exclusive application for volunteers… "Let us know about activities which might interest you in your area, you may send photos and communicate with the other volunteers. It is a tool to be used to manage your life as a volunteer with the facility of a tool which is in your pocket."

Evaluation: what we are aiming at:

- "… That the generation of value be the focus of the campaign and avoid get sidetracked by unnecessary data."

- "Our indicators are above all about efficiency and performance and not about impact."

- "More focus on results and less on activities, less coverages, workshops, people… and more on changes in people's lives."

- "The indicators of impact have to do with the previous analysis done in the community: we aim at changes and that those indicators move in the long run (from three to five years, the minimum period to see changes)."

Concerns:

- "The eternal dilemma of corporate volunteerism: find the balance between the responsibility of a delegate as an employee and as a volunteer."

- "What we do must become more and more relevant, that generates value, and helps connect people."

- "The authenticity of what we do, the credibility of the volunteering program… The critical point of each activity that we develop is to maintain the credibility and the respect of people who participate in it, the volunteers and the social group that we want to affect."

2. Background of the study and the demands of Itaú Social

Itaú Social wanted to know more about (to be better acquainted with) volunteer corporate experiences today. The area of Research and Development requested the mapping out of good practices in Brazil and in the world, levantando cases that would serve as reference and inspiration for the Itaú Unibanco volunteering program and for other companies and organizations.

The focus of the research, with a certain emphasis on education programs, was management innovation, digital volunteering and strategies of organization and mobilization through local committees. The focal point of observation should be details about management, structure and composition of teams, and the adoption of committees for decentralized management, to improve capillarity and to reach wider communication and volunteer's qualification.

The different types of activities carried out today would also be checked, as well as the technology used for monitoring and management. Special attention should be paid to the impact of volunteerism both on the external public, by means of the results in the community, as well as on the internal public, by means of the employees' perceptions as to their professional development and the impact in their personal lives. Finally an analysis of the value of volunteerism should be carried out beyond the eventual economical value that many people attribute to it.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participating companies

It was decided that approximately 50 companies, national, regional and international, from 4 different continents would be studied. Those companies and industries should be different in size, area of operation and geographical division.

Based on many previous experiences of team members, it was possible to identify about 190 companies that fit the expected profile. That list was validated by Itaú Social by checking out if the companies had volunteering programs running for a certain number of years, with consolidated programs, monitored actions, and registered results, published in the usual social media. After a first analysis, 107 companies remained in the process. E-mails were sent to each one of them and phone calls were made.

About 50% to 60% companies accepted the invitation right away; 20% asked for more details about the study itself and approximately 5%wanted to know how the name of the company would be published or quoted. The rest, from 15% to 20% either declined or didn't return the various contact attempts.

After the positive contacts, 10 to 12 companies were picked up for each interviewer, and four companies in Brazil. Official letters were sent by Itaú Social inviting them to participate in the study. The first 15 to 20 contacts promptly accepted the invitation and the interviews happened within 15 days. It took about 3 weeks for the other ones to schedule the interviews: some leaders were away on vacation, and many mentioned schedule problems. Some mentioned that they would not have the time to follow all the steps to have the project approved (more than 5 internal steps, but one of them authorized the Mexico branch to speak for the local program.

Almost all the interviews were conducted remotely (with the exception of 3 in Brazil which were conducted face-to-face) in a 2-month period, from July 30 to September 30, 2017. Weekly follow-up and orientation meetings about eventual difficulties with the companies and the interviews were granted (about 15 meetings by Skype or GoToMeeting with the research team, from May to August).

The data collected was registered in the Google Drive in a file opened specially for the project. This file had sub-flies with the interviews conducted by each researcher, with sub-files for each company. In the sub-file of each company, the transcribed interviews, the most part of the recorded interviews, additional material indicated by the companies, Portuguese translations, and elucidatory comments were stored. Another file in the Google Drive, shared with Itaú Social, was opened in order to store more defining material for follow-up: the final version of the questionnaire in 3 languages, letters from Itaú Social, lists of approximately 70 companies which first answered, the weekly reviewed list of interviewees, the interview scheduled, up-to-date chronogram and other material.

A model interview was created on the platform SurveyMonkey, in which the answers were posted item by item, after being translated to Portuguese. This way it was possible to know the answers of all interviewees to any of the questions. This system made the thematic horizontal analysis easier which helped establish the structure and format of the study. The conversations were very productive because they allowed the investigators to capture the interviewees' personal perception.

3.1.2. The 47 companies interviewed

1. Amway
2. Asociación UNACEM (Unión Andina de Cementos)
3. AUDI AG
4. Avnet, Inc.
5. BAC Credomatic
6. Banco de Crédito del Perú (BCP)
7. Bank of America Merrill Lynch - México
8. BD (Becton Dickinson and Company)
9. BRF S.A.
10. C&A Brazil
11. Cargill
12. Cervecería Nacional | Anheuser-Busch InBev
13. Corona Industrial
14. Dell Technologies
15. Denso
16. DIAGEO
17. DIRECTV Latam
18. Discovery Limited
19. Empresas Polar
20. Ford Motor Company
21. Fundación La Caixa
22. GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)
23. Grainger
24. Grupo Bolívar - Fundación Bolívar Davivienda
25. Grupo EDP- Energías de Portugal, S.A.
26. Grupo SURA - Grupo de Inversiones Suramericana
27. Hogan Lovells
28. InterCement Brasil
29. Johnson & Johnson
30. Manpower - Argentina
31. Marsh
32. Mutua Madrileña
33. Nike, Inc.
34. Northrop Grumman
35. Novo Nordisk A/S
36. PIMCO (Pacific Investment Company)
37. RBC (Royal Bank of Canada)
38. SAP (Software Solutions)
39. Softtek (Software y TI)
40. Sompo Holdings
41. Starbucks Coffee Company
42. Telefonica Vivo S.A.
43. The Walt Disney Company Latin America
44. UPS (United Parcel Service)
45. Volkswagen Financial Services México
46. Walmart México
47. Yamato Holdings

3.1.3. Geographical areas of action

Leaders of companies operating in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America and North America were interviewed. China seems to be extremely involved according to the companies which have great levels of environmental footprints in the region. However, working there means working with the government, which brings along some challenges, mainly a change in approach. Generally speaking, the companies act this way in terms of business, but they usually don't have to do the same with the communities. Nevertheless, China is anxious to take part in these programs and the employees seem to be ahead of the process (lead the way) to make sure that volunteering is an effective part of the effort towards business social responsibility.

The results showed more participation of countries in the EMEA area (Europe, Middle East and Africa, in the English acronym) than what had been observed a few years ago[1]. Nowadays we can see much more involvement in EMEA – in Europe, more specifically due to the question of refugees. Furthermore, some companies reported strong activity in the Middle East.

The companies which were interviewed operate in 1 to 220 countries (including territories) with volunteer programs in every place where there is an open office. Some are very big companies, including 8 which are present in more than 100 countries. On the other hand, there are companies present in only 2 cities, and companies which operate in about 500 countries.

Companies operating in #countries

- 1 to 10
- 11 to 30
- 31 to 50
- 51 to 100
- 100 to 200
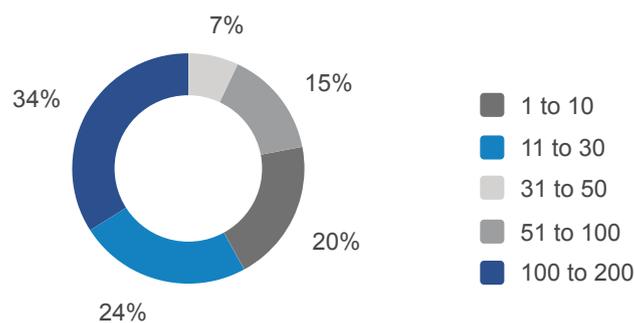
For the big world companies, to have a global volunteer program it is not a challenge yet. The tendency continues: they are trying, but it is not easy (it has never been) and the great majority still say that they don't feel that their program is really global and consistent. They aim high and they may never reach it, but they want to get there and they all feel that they are still below their own expectations. This is an item that should be taken into consideration when their progression is analyzed.

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1. In previous research: Allen, K. Galiano, M and Hayes, S. **"Global Companies Volunteering Globally"**, IAVE, Washington, June 2011, Available in English, Portuguese and Spanish in https://www.iave.org/knowledge-development/.

3.1.4. Number of employees and volunteers

Companies of all sizes were part of the sample interviews. The smallest one had 230 employees and the largest had 2,300,000 employees all over the world. On the one hand, one of them manages a small group of 40 volunteers. On the other hand, the second company reports having more than 200 thousand volunteers worldwide.

The participation percentages in volunteer projects differ a lot, which gives us the impression that the concept of volunteering used by all of them is not homogeneous. A few companies consider money or material donors as volunteers, and, for that reason, the numbers rise exponentially because each participant in donation campaigns is counted as a volunteer. In Asia teamwork is very common and many times volunteer work is "strongly suggested" by the hierarchical supervisor. Asian culture itself, with the importance given to work – and the real challenge of unemployment – makes those decisions very common. Some employees said to us: "we want all employees to be volunteers." And other companies answered that "all employees in every single office in the world" are volunteers.

3.1.5. Companies' areas of operation: types of industries and services

As empresas entrevistadas para esta pesquisa têm áreas de atuação bastante variadas, na indústria e nos serviços. As áreas mais comuns, entretanto, foram a financeira ou de seguros e de serviços em geral. O gráfico mostra o cenário mais detalhadamente.

Operational Areas

- ■ Banking, financial services or insurance
- ■ Retail sector, food and beverages
- ■ Other services
- ■ Information Technology products and services
- ■ Health: pharmaceutical and equipment
- ■ Building and cement
- ■ Automotive industry
- ■ Telecommunition and television
- ■ Logistics and delivery services
- ■ Aparel retail
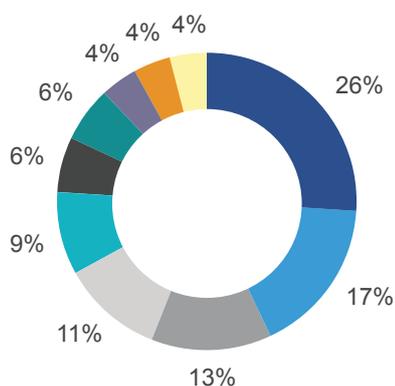
3.1.6. Reasons for volunteering: support and incentive

The focus areas of company volunteering action (shown in details in the graphic) remain quite similar to the ones observed in the previous research carried out some time in the past[2] and keep on connecting, each time a little bit more, with the company business. This narrative, which was seldom mentioned 15 years ago, is nowadays accepted much more naturally and seems to be originated from headquarters' discourse.
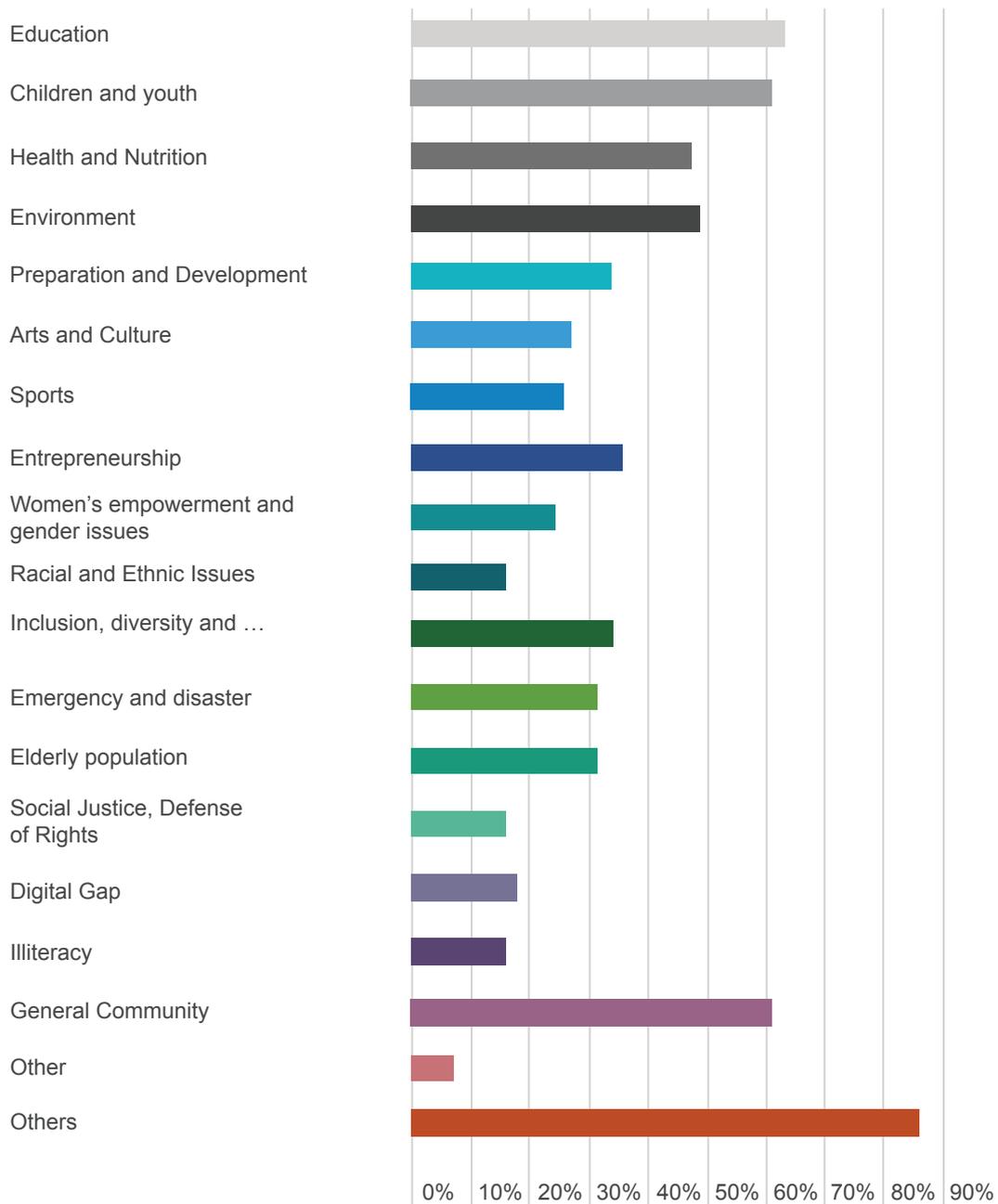
Supporting refugees seems to be intensified. Some companies mention this topic as a specific focus of attention, but others have described it as a theme which they have just started working with. Obviously, it is a problem facing the world today, and the companies are right when they consider their real possibilities, especially those that operate in countries with a high number refugee population.

2. Allen, K. Galiano, M and Hayes, S, **"Global Companies Volunteering Globally"**, IAVE, Washington, June 2011. Available in English, Portuguese and Spanish in https://www.iave.org/knowledge-development/. Accessed on December 8, 2018

Cross-border cooperation programs or transnational programs (volunteering programs in other countries) focused on specific questions, have their place and are part of the history of various companies. They result in great impact on technical, health and social development, and, although they don't get many employees involved, the other colleagues feel proud of these programs. Some companies that in the past did not have this type of programs are now starting them in partnership with other organizations.

On the other hand, the companies seem to be branching out a little bit more and making an effort not to concentrate only on programs abroad, but balancing it out with opportunities that will reach a larger number of employees, which does not mean that these programs will lose its importance or end up disappearing, but the opportunities are opening. Some companies have mentioned significant cost reduction when replicating the cross-border cooperation program within the nearest community, resulting in similar gains for volunteers and the public involved.

Disaster assistance/aid remains as one the main areas of attention, especially due to the number of natural disasters or the ones caused by human errors. Many companies seem to be adjusting their answers to this type of event, trying to be more realistic and putting effort into what they can really do, instead of giving in to the urge to rush into the disaster area, or send any type of material that is collected in the offices. That situation can result in more financial aid than in volunteering work – although preparing baskets with goods is still considered in many companies as a significant team building activity.

Youth unemployment, preparation for college and the development of the work force remain as primary options in the companies; in addition – mainly in the United States – veteran employment has become an issue to be considered.

The interviews make it clear that there are many areas of activity which just rotate over time. There are some differences, but we have certainly heard about them for the last 15 years. Is this due to the economy, changes in leadership, today world situation, growing employee awareness, due, in part, to the millennials? Could it also be due to technology, corporate fusions and to the world we live in with constant rumor of news and fear and uncertainty? Substantial resources – financial and personal – very seldom are destined to volunteer programs; companies have their own concerns, and we get the impression that the community, although of enormous importance, is left behind.

In the last answer, named 'Others', the interviewees explained their programs in more detail, instead of just mentioning other areas which had not been listed before. We were able to pick the following areas: to help create prosperous communities, to make better use of one's free time, responsible consumption of alcohol, financial education, social infrastructure, migration and inclusion, to improve production, mentoring, safe driving programs for adolescents, use of technology for social actions, war veteran support, professional volunteering. Common interest groups play an important role in many volunteering programs; slowly, but consistently, the connection between diversity and inclusion is established. It makes sense because the world is moving in the same direction.

3.1.7. The interviewees

The greatest majority of the people interviewed held top level jobs in the companies. Besides some volunteer program coordinators, we interviewed the following people:

- Director, Global Corporate Citizenship
- Senior Manager, Corporate Engagement
- Global Director, Employee Engagement & Global Community Impact
- Global Leader of Employee Engagement
- Director, Corporate Citizenship and Brand Management
- Senior Vice-president, Global Corporate Citizenship and Foundation Executive Director
- Social Management Director
- Philanthropic Contribution Manager
- Corporate Social Responsibility Manager
- Culture Manager
- Sustainability Regional Director
- Community Development and Involvement Manager
- Senior Associate, *Pro Bono* & Citizenship
- Corporate Citizenship Regional Chief

3.2. The interviewers

- Study Director with vast experience in global research and the author of many books in many languages: Mônica Galiano, Argentinian, living in Brazil.
- Five international researchers, living in four countries (Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, and the United States), with extensive experience on studies and research: Inma Rodriguez, Iraída Manzanilla, Raaida Mannaa, and Kathi Dennis and Sarah Hayes.

3.3. The questionnaire

The basis for the study were 3 instruments already applied in national and global Volunteer Corporate research: the Global Council of Corporate Volunteering (IAVE)[3] Questionnaire, Comparative evaluation of Latin American Initiative Questionnaire (Iraída Manzanilla and Thais Bonsanto) and Performance indicators questionnaire (Mônica Galiano and Kenn Allen). Comments made by the team were added, as well as technological questions about systems and applications, investigations on books, as well as information about management characteristics. Finally a list of about 40 evaluative questions were produced which were then refined until it became a questionnaire of 23 questions. The questionnaire was preceded by gathering contact data and basic metrics: countries in which the company operates, number of employees and volunteers, areas of operation, company department in which the program is located, support and support from top level management and directors.

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3. Allen, K Galiano, M and Hayes, S. **"Global Companies Volunteering Globally"**, IAVE, Washington, June 2011. Available in English, Portuguese and Spanish in https://www.Iave.org/knowledge-development/. Accessed on December 8, 2018.

Questionnaire used in the research

Policy, mission
1. Has the volunteering program a mission statement or a goal statement? Does it have a written policy?

Organizational Culture
2. To what extent do you believe the program reflects your company culture?

Areas of action
3. Which are the priority/primary areas you encourage your employees to volunteer?
   - *Education*
   - *Children and youth*
   - *Health and nutrition*
   - *Environment*
   - *Preparation and development of the work force*
   - *Arts and culture*
   - *Sports*
   - *Entrepreneurship*
   - *Women empowerment and gender issues*
   - *Ethnic-racial issues*
   - *Inclusion, diversity and special needs*
   - *Help in disasters/emergencies*
   - *Elderly people*
   - *Social justice/defense of rights*
   - *Digital exclusion*
   - *Literacy*
   - *General community support*
   - *Others*

Relation with business goals
4. Does the volunteering program reflect the company's business goals?
   In the case of an affirmative answer, how does it happen?

Community needs
5. How do you identify the needs in the community?

Partnership with an institution in the community
6. Is partnership with CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) essential to the efficacy of your volunteering program? Do you have good examples of successful partnership with CSOs in your volunteering program?
7. How do you chose the institutions in the community to establish partnerships?

Programs and projects
8. How do you chose, define and design programs and projects?

Innovation and inspiration
9. Which of your programs and practices do you consider to be the most innovative, and why?
10. If you had to share your most inspiring practices with other companies, which ones would you chose?
11. In which regions and/or countries is your program the strongest? The weakest? Why?

Technology and Training

12. Where is the volunteering program housed (HR, communications, Executive Committee, Department of Corporate Social Responsibility, or others)? Why have you chosen this specific area? Has it always been there? Or has it moved?

13. Do you operate with regional and local committees? Comment on the challenges and success of this kind of format.

14. Is there any type of formal training for employees who are also volunteers? Is it a general type of training or for specific programs and projects? Face to face or online distance learning? If the answer is affirmative, who provides these training sessions and how do they work?

15. Do you apply any technological system to the management of volunteer programs? Which one? Are you happy with it? What do you miss? Or what would you like the system to provide you?

16. Does that program allow the users to interact with each other, as if on social network, or is it only for registering activities and results?

17. Does your volunteering program make use of any of these instruments?
    - *Loyalty program/rewards*
    - *Donation*
    - *Grant management*
    - *Crowdfunding*
    - *Gamification*
    - *Artificial intelligence*
    - *Business intelligence*
    - *Chatbot (robot for automatized chats)*
    - *Hour log*
    - *Messaging*
    - *Voting*
    - *Polls*

    If you don't use them, would you be interested to do so? Which ones?

Evaluation

18. Does your company evaluate performance, results and impact of the program? How is it done? Which are the most relevant metrics to measure the success of your program? What type of indicators do you use? How the results are made public?

Executive and manager participation

19. Do you believe that top level administration is actively committed and recognize the value of company's volunteering program?

20. How do high level executives (senior directors and management) get involved in the program? What does the company expect from their engagement?

Final questions

21. What is the story that is being told about your corporate volunteering program? How do you disseminate information about it?

22. What worries you most about your program?

23. What is your greatest source of pride in your program?

4. Volunteer programs

4.1. Organogram

The volunteer programs differ a lot as to their placement on corporate structures:
- Eleven programs are inserted in the area of Social Responsibility and seven answer to Sustainability
- Six are in foundations: four of them are accountable to HR, one to the area of International Relations, one directly to the group vice-president.
- Five programs are subordinated to the area of Corporate Communication.
- Four of the programs are in Institutes, three in Public Relations, two in Corporate Citizenship.
- The other declared that they were in the Sales Department, in Corporate Affairs, in the Volunteer Association or to respond directly to the Administrative CEO.
- The global programs are in the Global teams of the Corporate Headquarters, in the Global teams of Social Responsibility, in the Global Social Impact teams or in the Global Marketing and Communication departments.

The Department of Human Resources holds an important position in the field of corporate social responsibility. Its attitude is usually positive, sometimes challenging. Professional development, and, nowadays, also personal development, or in other words, the search for a healthy balance between life and work, personal happiness, well-being, are issues considered by many the programs. The theme is still new for some, who only recently have established a connection with human resources, and for some who have not been able to define a question about the community in the annual research on human resources.

A tendency in the companies is that 'hours aren't the Saint Grail any longer'. They are focused on the number of partners (their employees) that lead projects and how much 'heart' (feeling, commitment) is put in the work and not on how many work hours have been registered. Many comments about this were registered; slowly, people become aware of the evaluation dimension.

4.2. Alignment to the Mission of the Company

"Connecting employees to the strategic and impact opportunities in the areas of volunteering, competence development and community donation in order to create a culture that impart excellency and support employee retention." This statement, collected in the research, exemplifies one way of understanding the mission of volunteer programs. Naturally each company holds different visions, and its policies and mission reflect this diversity.

For example, the global mission of **GSK** is to help people accomplish more, feel better and live longer. Their program PULSE is highly immersive and it is considered 'their Jewel in the Crown'. **Amway's** conviction (they want to be the biggest global volunteer program until 2019) is: *"We believe in putting into action the best of our business and the passion of our people to face head-on a global need"*; #AmwayVolunteers is an invitation to collaborators to be part of the program. On the other hand, the role of the **Discovery** program is to encourage *"the spirit of volunteering"* as a way to empower South African society. Their main objective for 2018 is to be the best global insurance organization and to be a force for social good.

If we take into consideration the largest global companies, in **Walmart** all resources to be used in social actions and volunteer work come from the subsidiary in Mexico. Their written policy states what can be done and cannot be done in the volunteer activities, as well as, general rules about how people should register in the program, and the type of expenses that will be approved. On the other hand, **Starbucks'** overall mission is *to inspire and nurture the human spirit - one person, one cup, one neighborhood at a time.* They want the 'the green apron' to be recognized as a symbol not only of great service in the stores, but also in the communities. **Nike** makes 'one promise and two offers' to their employees. The promise means that they will support them in their commitment in the community by means of their traditional Matching Gift Program (1 dollar x 1 dollar). If the employees donate to an organization that inspires children to practice sports, they will double the gift to 2 dollars x 1 dollar. Employees are then offered the possibility to join the "Nike Community Ambassador Program" and the "Nike Community Impact Fund". At Grainger, this equivalence extends itself to 3 x 1 (three dollars for each dollar donated by the employee).

> *"We are trying to change the way the world moves in order to improve people's lives…*
> *We build more than cars and trucks, we build better communities."*
> *Ford Motor Company*

In Brazil, the **C&A INSTITUTE** is a learning organization which encourages citizen participation. The mission of the program is to promote and qualify volunteering action of C&A associates in the communities where the company operates. **Telefonica Vivo** has a global written policy, and in Brazil employees are granted 16 hours of paid work so that they can work as volunteers and 12 work hours for training.

> *"We have a volunteer manual: how it is done, how to participate in everything, step by step orientation on how things should be done and registered on film, because we want to show it on our channels. We also have a manual on how to build a team that will cause social impact."*
> *DIRECTV LatAm*

In **BAC** there is a regional volunteer guide that establishes objectives, measurement indicators, responsibilities of the different organizational levels; it also defines the various types of volunteer work and the causes which are supported by the company and, by doing so, it guarantees the standardization of programs in the countries where it operates. **SAP's** strategy for corporate social responsibility applies talent, technology and strategic partnerships in order to create the type of social impact which is sustainable in the long-run and improves the world and people's lives. **Johnson & Johnson** wants to build healthier communities, training employees all over the world to cause a positive and dramatic impact on society and environment. **Yamato** believes in making life easier by means of all their businesses and sees itself as a problem solver, while **Dell** has announced their commitment to build a Legacy of Good.: *To do the most good for people and the planet.*

> *"Everything was about 'pro bono', which means offering free counsel to people and also carrying out some nice research 'for the public good'. In 2015, the company created a policy with a serious commitment: to spend 25 hours on activities which would have an impact on the community or on the environment, per employee. The decision to establish 25 hours had to do with the fact that the lawyers already have to do 20 hours pro bono work, so they have 5 more hours to invest in the community, in volunteer programs, environmental, etc.*
> *Hogan Lovells*

RBC's objective is bigger than only having volunteers. They want their employees to be better citizens. "It does not matter if the position you hold in the company. We hope to make you a better citizen and allow you to have the opportunity to get involved in something you are in love with." **Softtek's** aim is that, in each of their headquarters, there is will be a volunteer committee. **PIMCO**, on the other hand, wants to train people to reach their full potential and **BD**, a large world corporation in the healthcare sector, focus on the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) which deal with health issues.

Let's read some more quotations:

> *"Our policy has three objectives: have an impact on the community, develop collaborators' abilities and have an impact on the reputation of the bank. These are guidelines for the project."*
>
> *"The annual program is called "Let's go x 100!". Its main objective is to reach the goal of 100 hours of corporate volunteerism, by means of the transference of abilities and community development."*
>
> *"When we give the introduction, we comment on the duties and rights of each volunteer based on these policies."*
>
> *"We have a volunteer development plan: the beneficiaries of our programs, how we are going to accomplish it, what we are going to do: the document will guide the work until 2019."*
>
> *"There is a regional policy called 'Me Uno' and a corporate social responsibility policy that we call 'Uniting People for a Better World' with four pillars and one of them is Corporate Volunteering."*
>
> *"We believe that the community is as important as our clients and team members. (…) We help clients keep their companies moving and we support the talent that helps communities prosper."*
>
> *"… it is a mechanism of participation in the process of social development of collaborators."*
>
> *"We have a policy of a free day for volunteering, of budget policy, specific policies for projects…"*
>
> *"Open School Model: the companies will not determine any type of pillar or focal areas, either for individual volunteering or in groups."*

In relation to its Corporate Citizenship policy, **Sompo Japan Nipponkoa** promotes community initiatives based on two perspectives: corporate citizen's commitment and individual employee's commitment. In the area of the corporate citizenship, they promote activities for future generations, focusing on visual arts, well-being and environment. They also support and encourage individual employees to participate proactively in community outreach activities, mainly through the **Sompo** Chikyu (Earth) Club, an organization of volunteer activities of which all employees are members.

4.3. Volunteering and the company culture

Most of the program actions reflect the culture of the company, which dedicates itself to encourage all projects which are committed to social issues. And that's the case of **Telefonia Vivo**, which stimulates innovation methodologies and use of technology to accomplish social changes.[4]

In **Softtek** the culture is to create value by means of technology for the clients, for the employees themselves and for shareholders. In the internal platform 'Make a difference" they create value not only for the volunteer – it is easy to find a need - but also for the organization – it is easier to accomplish what they need in a hands-on situation.

As a distributor of technology, **Avnet** is also interested in the area in which technology impacts on the life of people. They want to build a reputation in these areas and provide people with *know-how* and accessibility.

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4. See more examples in this author's book "Digital volunteerism": http://fundacaotelefonica.org.br/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/ volunt_digital_web.pdf . On page 56, about the use of cell phones for social activism; on pages 72 and 73m brief history of virtual volunteerism; on pages 76 and 79, examples of volunteer actions, some of them can be adapted by corporate volunteer programs.

Corona Industrial states:

"Let's be responsible with our society' is one of our corporate mottos. To identify the educational institutions close to the plants that need improvement, to paint them, to make murals, etc. are very easy activities for the volunteers. We don't invest too much money, our budget is small, but we use our people and our material to have a direct effect on educational facilities repair or maintenance work."

At **C&A**, the program is oriented by the company's social values. They promote social action as a way to be co-responsible for the community well-being. It has become a strategy that not only promotes social action in the "outside community", but also encourages their employees' development, mostly the young people, in the company "inside community". One of the most important lessons learnt with the program recent external evaluation is related to the volunteer action opportunities linked to professional development.

These were some of the statements collected:

"To encourage the development of a new generation of creators and inventors involved with technology. This is our business."
"From an organizational structure and point of view to philosophy: work for the well-being of the family."
"This is a service organization, which is not made tangible by means of products, but by means of processes and solutions: we take this to the volunteering experience with long-term actions to share knowledge; which is part of our culture."
"… Its aim is to bring happiness to children and their families and to strengthen communities and reflects the company values."

Walmart's robust volunteer program is based on a very strong service and identity culture. More than 2,000 events a year are supported by the coordinators of each store and by one single person at national level. On the other hand, **GSK** PULSE is a serious immersion program, carefully directed, open to only a few people due to its nature. At **AUDI**, we were informed that, in German, culture volunteer engagement in programs is very common, it is part of corporate culture.

Some companies have declared that people are their greatest asset – directors, high level executives, intermediate managers and general collaborators. *"Watching a director or an office-boy working together with a common objective is a rewarding experience."* By encouraging involvement, by strengthening the bond of trust between the institute or foundation and volunteers, they try to connect the actions which are accomplished to the personal attitudes considered important by the company.

Undoubtedly, the program is an expression of the principles and values of **Grupo Bolivar.** Its aim is to reach an alignment with the organization culture: the human being seen as inexhaustible source of knowledge and growth. *"It is a way to connect people to other realities, so that they understand that principles and values are not always about business."*

Each new employee at **Discovery** in South Africa - which wants to be the best insurance company in the world – spends one week in the integration program, with two days dedicated to his involvement in the social area. *"We are employees in the bank, we have the first social project in the country and we want to participate in it."* These were the words of **La Caixa's** employees in Spain.*"The employees were the ones who created the company culture and the values in the volunteer program."*

We heard other statements about specific corporate cultures: nourishment as a wider concept (body, mind and soul); company's involvement with relationships (volunteers, community, company); corporate values and principles (trust, commitment to the client, enthusiasm, courage and responsibility); program reflecting company's innovation, inclusive and sustainable character; life celebration, every day, everywhere; employees better informed about what goes on in their communities. **Starbucks** even says that the result of their sales are bigger when their partners are more involved. And the **Bank of America Merryl Lynch México** has declared:

> *"It is a culture that has been part of the bank for many years, more than 60. The bank mission is to support the community where it is anchored. And the employees have created a new culture of participation, donation, social responsibility and volunteerism. Quite often, retired or laid off employees ask to remain in the volunteer program."*

Processes of change in the culture have also been observed: the culture experienced in the volunteer work, which aims at collaboration, team work, innovation, brings back positive elements to the companies and everyday work. This movement has called the attention of coordinators and managers who are using the results of international research in the area to get Human Resources Departments involved in the issue.

What has become clear is that some companies – usually knowledge-creating companies, diverse technologies and services – are promoting long term actions in which knowledge can be shared, since volunteers are more interested in skill transfer.

> *"In my opinion, our program is 100% company culture."*

> *"In our Volunteer Program, the employees are making renovation work in different places in Latin America and we make films about the story of the people we are helping; we put the whole material in a series with the same name as the program (Piedra, Papel, Tijera [Stone, Paper, Scissors]) that is shown on our TV channels so that all of our clients can watch it."*

4.4. Alignment with business objectives

If we compare this study to the ones carried out previously in which we compared business objectives to volunteer actions, we can say that the narrative points out that companies are more worried about giving meaning and legitimacy to what is done in the social investment and volunteer programs, making an effort not to move too much away from its main activity. Let's have a look at some examples:

In Spain, the **EDP** Foundation, in collaboration with Caritas, carries out a volunteer program deeply linked to the question of energy poverty, which identifies families and institutions who need support with energy issues. They work with projects that make it possible for people to have access to energy and to information on how to use it, how to save it and, generally speaking, how to manage it.

On the other hand, the business nucleus of **Manpower** are Human Resources. In Argentina they hold more than 2,000 companies in their portfolio. And volunteering goes hand in hand with training at the School of Work. The volunteers who are in charge of workshops are, in its great majority, the ones responsible for selecting personnel: the focus is on training, on providing tools to improve employability.

At **Telefonia Vivo**, in Brazil, its corporate values, its operational excellence have been turned into actions: area leaders ask for volunteer programs as part of their activities. And **Nike** always involves their collaborators in their strategic planning so that they adhere to business focus. Well-known athletes go to the stores, which attracts the public and help to connect company, employees and consumers: for example, in Tokyo, due to the Olympic Games, there will be community programs strongly oriented towards sports.

"We aim at activities that could be identified with the value and identity of our brand" **says Cervecería Nacional.**

"For example, the activity of cleaning the beach is financed by one of our products, which is associated with the summer season. The volunteer activity is created with this brand, emphasizing the fact that the brand has a certain amount of social responsibility."

In the financial segment, especially in banks, there is a lot of volunteer activity related to their business objectives. The Mexican Banking Association (MBA), composed of 51 institutions, organizes once a year a large activity. Everybody is expected to organize themselves in groups to paint, clean up, and restore the centers for community attention. Afterwards, different activities are offered to the public: financial education courses, free courses for high school and university students, games for children, workshops, entrepreneurship for women. Books about the subject are also published. Other banks offer pro bono consulting and develop, simultaneously, volunteers' skills.

When banks support financial education, they are taking on an activity related to their responsibility towards society. There are laws which make them provide financial education not only to consumers but also to non-consumers. In public organizations, like government, education departments, health, traffic, we can observe the beginning of a new approach to dealing with banks: the possibility of finding common themes that will reach captive consumers like the population of street vendors, of mothers who are the head of the family and receive benefit, etc.

"As a business strategy, we know it causes an impact."

"The financial service, the core of our business, is cold and we want the 'magic' of the business to be stressed so that we are able to differentiate ourselves from our competitors by means of our employees' empathy. Volunteering is a successful empathy trainer and developer."

BAC, on the other hand, faces a bold and promising challenge: their aim is to strengthen small and medium-size companies. For the last 5 years, they have trained more than 60,000 companies and plan to train 100,000 more on the next 5 years. This training is led by volunteer employees. They also do very important work of financial education motivated by default rates and the erratic behavior of people who pay credit card bills one day and the next week don't do it any more, or neglect the mortgage credit.

We also found examples of volunteer action in segments apart from the financial sector because the employees want to do things which are different from their regular jobs. We can see this in the Group **Sura**:

"We don't have volunteers interested in financial education. They don't want to more of the same. We have designed volunteer work for the development of abilities, and we have done a lot of work with the areas of human talent to articulate volunteerism with the company's development models. I believe that is where we can find the perfect point of articulation in terms of volunteering and business."

The driving programs for adolescents, the logistic of big activities, marathons, etc. – carried out during employees' free time – represents a conceptual and operational alignment with **UPS** business objectives, whose main workforce is composed of professional drivers. Overcoming digital gap in the world is one of the great interests of **Dell** Technologies. The program *Technology for the Good* make use of TI talent to address children's illnesses, and the program *Youth Learning* now is stretching out to deal with digital gap and early engagement with children.

"To contribute in improving quality of life of Mexican and Center-American families" is the wish of **Walmart**. They organize and repair parks and gardens in the areas that surround the stores, the school on the other side of the street, paint cemeteries, everything that has something to do with the area where store employees and clients interact. The company focus specifically on a small producers program, in order to have fresher products and in order to help them overcome poverty. That's why Agriculture Productivity is the most relevant volunteer program in terms of hours, continuity and sharing of expertise.

Softtek, a technology company tells us:

> *"In marketing, we promote a strategy called 'Mind the Digital Gap' and this business objective is linked to our volunteer program."*

DIRECTV's business is to promote entertainment to families. Its volunteer experience is inclusive: employees, employees' families, former employees, clients and clients' families participate in the volunteer program. The **Telefonica Vivo** program is also linked to business, mainly in relation to digital volunteering, and the CSOs are very much encouraged to include technology for their sustainability, according to their own words:

> *"… business strategy: profitable growth, satisfied employees, satisfied clients and enriched communities. Everything we do should focus on these four elements."*

Instituto **C&A** values a context of relationships and participation opportunities which is more horizontal, very different from the hierarchical structures, routines and daily tasks of the company. The volunteer program dialogs with the business, making room for volunteers' social action to be connected to their professional expertise, as in the case of the bazaar, which is part of the company donation policy, which aims at strengthening partner's social organizations and actions of entrepreneurship in the area of fashion.

The **Bank of America Merrill Lynch Mexico** program is oriented by the area of Surrounding, Social and Governance (ESG) aligned with business. The activities which are offered are financial education, social entrepreneurship and sustainable project development. An example of what is done under financial education are the courses and workshops facilitated by volunteers, face to face or online, to elementary, secondary and preparatory school students.

As it has already been seen, many companies are making an effort to connect their volunteers' activities to their field of expertise so that the employees feel more confident that they will do a good job. For those who still prefer a more traditional type of volunteerism, using it as a form of 'distraction' or 'decompression' from their daily routines, there are more traditional programs – which brings a subtle distinct component between large cities and small villages, between national and multinational companies or companies which operate in many countries.

4.5. Level of commitment of top level administration

"Some feel deeply committed and some others not so much; I think it has to do with the person's own biography".

If we take into consideration top-level administration and senior management, the boundaries are diffuse. Nobody will ever say that top rank leadership does not support community programs, but the great majority of the people feel that, besides encouraging participation in CSO Councils, publishing special messages once in a while and producing a paragraph in the corporate social responsibility report, they don't do much. Although the right words are spoken in public (and some have been particularly inspiring in such a way that boosted greater involvement in the programs), there is still a feeling of disconnection. This can be specially noticed when we are dealing with global resources for the program. Some companies, as, for example, **Novo Nordisk**, have made some progress and have had some type of success, but they still face a grueling battle all the time.

If we consider middle-level management, we can say that companies seem to be more involved with the topic. There are companies which have faced the problem head-on (at **Johnson&Johnson** specific training for this management level has been added to the company official aims), but for many others it is a challenge they still have to face; generally speaking, managers feel the pressure of leaders' words and the business objectives set by the same leaders.

"Volunteers and beneficiaries are goals to be attained in the balanced scorecard. Each company manager is deeply involved and participate in the activities, which gives an example to the collaborators: people follow the leader."

"Yes! It's the DNA of the company, of any of the employees, even of the CEO."
"100%! Locally, the general manager is inviting all employees to actively participate on the platform."

"The volunteer council president is deeply involved in the program!"

"The executives give their support (some directors and managers), but the ones who are really involved are always the same: there are some leaders who do nothing."

In some cases, the company president is also the head of the Foundation – which is the case at **Walmart** – and volunteerism is one of the topics analyzed; the members of the council send their memos, go to the activities; they are the "ones who push". For example, at **GSK**, on Orange Days, during Volunteer Month, they assigned 20 senior executives, both at the United Kingdom and at the United States, to develop the project "Skilled Based Orange Day". At **Intercement,** leaders act as program sponsors, speaking in recognition events and at local units, they take a seat on the CIVICO committee (Volunteer Incentive and Community Interaction Committee), which establishes the guidelines and evaluates volunteer actions.

Generally speaking, the leaders are committed to the program because they created it, made it possible and support it. However, there are managers who have a less positive and aligned perception about volunteerism and, for that reason, tend to make things more difficult. In Brazil, the companies have already understood the importance of working with this segment and of having a volunteer project focused on leadership. **EDP's** project 'Do Good Challenge' motivates managers to participate and create a volunteer action with budget and team work.

In many companies, the 'CEO's Message", at the Volunteer National Week, is always special and summarizes the work of the year. At **Amway**, the majority of high-level executives are deeply involved: many of them organize a volunteer activity each year in their area of action and participate in it side by side with the volunteers. They also have an excellent Administration program: 60-70% of the executives take part in community or national forums and have started focusing on middle-level administration in order to establish objectives for them in terms of hours of participation for each division.

Some of the most important managers are very interested, though not necessarily personally involved, but they pay attention to what is going on. Some are really impressed by the impact of what the employees are doing at the communities. More and more, they give more value to the program which affects positively all the areas. Obviously, this fact is recognized internally.

The **UNACEM** Association has an administration council in which the directors of the group companies have a seat (plants and small companies). The company leaders use this opportunity to ask for advice on how to promote and implement volunteerism. Meanwhile **Manpower** Argentina states:

> *"The 'number one' is strongly committed to all the actions and we count on his support to mobilize the departments of Diversity and Workforce Insertion; he also supports the program 'Entwined': :every year, when we open the program, live at the capital and online at the provinces, the president is always involved. If there is a problem with somebody in one of the branches, the CEO himself calls the person and encourages him to participate."*

The **Bolivar Group** (Fundación Bolívar Davivienda) agrees with the previous statement.

> *"We totally agree! Our presidents in the culture alignment meetings say that we should all be volunteers. The Group President says that volunteerism is the best way to enrich life with integrity, which is the main purpose of the Group."*

Top-level executives at **Nike** are also deeply engaged. During the Olympic Games in Rio, the CEO visited a slum community which has been remodeled by **Nike** and spent a lot of time with the children. The majority of senior managers take part in non-profit organization councils and many of them participate in activities. At **Cervecería Nacional**, the leaders of each of the seven areas form the ManCom (management committee); more than half of these directors are deeply committed to volunteering activities: from sales areas, marketing, human resources and corporate issues. However, the more technical areas are usually not so connected with the program.

> *"There is no doubt. To reach millions of hours, they have to be aligned with and supported by the bank."* Bank of America Merrill Lynch Méjico

In places where there has been heavy investment on the part of the company, executive champions are called into action. In the series of videos about several changes in the company, the new CEO of **Avnet** repeatedly mentioned Avnet Cares and the involvement with the community. He arrived on July 2016 and after a service period of 3 months in October, there was an increase of 70% in employees' involvement in relation to the previous years. Now his managers understand the real importance of volunteer action.

> *"Definitely! When we talk to them about volunteerism, they say that you have to participate because it connects you with one of the company pillars, which is human talent. It doesn't mean that volunteerism works because they are there: if they weren't, there would still be volunteers."*

The volunteer program is often part of the Corporate Citizenship and Brand Management strategy because senior executives see it as an opportunity for attraction, retention and development. Moreover, they believe the program contributes to community empowerment.

> *"Absolutely! They get involved, participate, encourage, monitor. This is a family business which is not listed on the stock exchange with a strong characteristic of family values and principles. Members of the family themselves travel around the world to keep track of their volunteer activities."*

> *"The executives make me smile. We ask for one hour counselling session for the CSOs. Then, all of a sudden, you realize that they keep on communicating for two or three months or that they have never stopped helping out, by providing them with information and tools… There is a link that goes beyond what is asked for, and I would say that this is undeniable and fills my heart with satisfaction."*

When **Ford** was facing financial difficulties some years ago, employees kept asking the administration not to phase out the volunteering program, and, instead, they accepted that cuts were made to some of their benefits.

> *"Our general director for Latin America is extremely committed, participating actively in volunteering actions, always asking how we are doing, and what we are going to do. Globally, they are present as spokespeople, but not so much when it comes to hands-on practice; they are present in videos talking about purpose and objectives, but almost absent in action. On the hand, locally, the regional director and country directors participate and that's why we have such a high index of participation."* Marsh

There is almost a direct line with the director at **Hogan Lovells** on an international level to deal with any subject which has something to do with citizenship or pro bono work. Locally there is also an open line of communication with the manager who supports 100% any proposal or initiative that will improve the program. Some people say that there are two important and different ways to participate: the most fundamental one is by giving the example, the executive participates with his team in the actual volunteering actions; the other one is by giving total support to his whole staff to participate.

> *"All the CEOs of all countries value volunteerism; we never had any objection to activities which were carried out. Actually most of the area vice-presidents prefer to participate in team building in volunteerism to going out to have dinner with his team."*

> *"When it comes to the Zero Poverty Program, I became very surprised with the link that is was established between high-level executives, starting with the CEO, and the program itself; they wanted to be mentors, donate part of their program salaries, and supported us."* BAC

4.5.1. How do leaders operate?

The statements below reflect markedly what we have been observing for many years: the executives and directors speak well, give genuine support, encourage collaborators, and participate in some actions. However, at the following hierarchical level, usually the managers feel compelled to get and show each year a greater number of employees involved in the process, major impact on the communities and its effect in the public perception and in business results, even when it is indirectly achieved, as for example, in the case of a small increase in brand reputation. It is a problem that must be dealt with strategically.

It is as if the volunteering program emerged from the bottom (most of them) and moved towards the top, or from the top, directly towards the employees/volunteers. The missing link is a broader understanding, the support, the encouragement and middle management persuasion, on which rests the pressure for constant increase in the results and the available hours to leave work and act in the community.

In this segment, we will have the opportunity to get in contact with direct statements from the companies which are self-explanatory. We will start with examples of enthusiastic participation:

"Sometimes they tell us we should support a project and sometimes they even participate in a volunteer day."

"They participate in some of the working lines. They always know the results and the accomplishments."

"They participate and take in part in activity or program design. For example: a vice-president responsible for about 200 stores attends at least one activity a month."

"The CEO of the health business visited the service center in Cape Town, which has adopted an organization which trains young people as interns to work in call centers. By doing this, they give the young people an opportunity to get a job in the future. He felt he should be doing this all the time."

"They actively participate as volunteers. They go to the activities, socialize, they plan, and yes… they are deeply involved."

"Most of the time, they make/take the big decisions. Some participate in the activities. However, most of them don't really participate in the project."

"They participate actively every three months. They don't just show up to "see, applaud and congratulate", on the contrary, they are facilitators, interviewers…"

"There is a conference attended by more than 100 leaders every year. They should include a volunteer activity in the 3 day-meeting."

"The executives have a seat on CSOs. At the top level, they dedicate themselves to what they fall in love with, and connect themselves to programs and initiatives."

"The main executives are actively conscious and they value the type of volunteerism which the employees are involved. They are very emphatic in their congratulations. The budget is increasing, we are confident because of the support from the senior leaders."

"Yes. They know that for the program to be successful, they must participate like everybody else."

"Yes, by setting an example, by motivating others."

In many cases, the executives give the committees enough room for them to present their work, or organize moments of volunteer action during the meetings, or talk in public about the programs.

""The plant general manager participated as a volunteer, we made an interview with him at the end and he gave his testimonial. It was a big help for the diffusion of among the collaborators."

"The president and the majority of the directors participate and they empathize with the public we work with; they determine the workshop themes, for example."
"They participate in 'Empreende País' program, in the Executive Committee, in the Manager's General Committees and synergy meetings held by the group president with all executives, to which he brings the foundation and volunteerism message, presenting it as a culture theme."

*"Top-level executives at **La Caixa** get together once a month in Barcelona and each zone director is expected to attend the meeting. There are 14 territorial directors. The meetings are very important and many contents related to the business are discussed. To get a minute of attention in these meetings is very complicated. During Social Week, they used the morning to take everybody to a volunteer action with people with some type of physical disability and took part in a sport activity. Nobody took photos, it was not designed for photos. Many employees not even know about it. It was organized directly by the general director."*

"The new CEO and the General Council are totally committed and they have made a habit of the act of going out and serving. Most people at top-level management is committed. It's the role of intermediate management which is still challenging for them, mainly at headquarters. The leaders seem to be different, they frequently comment on how proud they are of the work done in the communities."

"When the directors are really committed to the program, they help the field activities and facilitate spreading out information and setting up work teams. They give us time during his meetings to inform about the activities."

"The Committee defines strategies, define policy, and help us to open certain doors. For people like us who come from the social sector, it is difficult to enter some areas in the same bank, and they help us. They also give us advice based on their knowledge about our business reality. (The Committee was formed 12 years ago when the Volunteer program was created and it was the general manager who called the area managers to participate)."

"They participate more in the professional volunteer proposals: many times we invite them together with the other employees and some other times we design exclusive proposals for executives, a type of management volunteering."

"The executives usually come to us in search of situations in which they can help us, to check on the projects they are already involved in, etc., because they have the same expectations as the rest of the team. We create local and international executive champion committees composed of senior executives or partners interested in all the following questions: policy creation, activity selection, budget approval depending on the activity, etc."

"We have a great number of top-level volunteers who come to the project to share their knowledge with small business professionals on a one-to-one basis. In professional volunteering, those who choose to participate are top-level executives, deeply committed to the project."

Despite the enthusiastic comments of many interviewees about the role of top-level leaders in the process, the data collected show that 40% to 50% of executive and directors point out that there is little interaction which middle management, or the indifference or lack of support to allow employees to leave work to attend volunteer actions:

"Seldom participate in the activities. They need to be involved in the project, involved in how the strategy is approached."

"The higher the role of the professional in the company, the smaller the amount of participation in volunteering action."

"We also heard: 'Well, obviously, our CEO won't be there painting fences'."

"Middle Management: that's one of the reasons why RH is so involved, so that they don't have this problem. It is beginning to be part of their objectives and goals. And the way they are going to be evaluated."

"…We would like them to participate a bit more in the activities, because we have realized that when they are present, the result is immediate: when the manager uses an e-mail to register himself and copies it to the whole group, then everybody does the same. When they don't it, then the others don't bother to do it. At the end of the year, the Volunteers of the Year are recognized, and that also helps, because they are present and value the volunteers' work."

"Some executive participates regularly and champion the program, some others just don't want to be bothered."

"It is the same for everybody, never mind the position – although there are people not used to it who go to the activity wearing a vest and a jacket to monitor what the employees are doing. It also happened in Chile and in Ecuador where some executives participated, but didn't want to be filmed."

4.6. Innovation in practice

We have noticed that professionals have problems in detecting innovations in their practices. They usually answer that "they do what everybody else does", listing the common challenges faced by communities - education, sewerage, environmental questions, unemployment - and more recently, because the problem is more evident in society, gender and abuse issues. However, in the middle of the discourse, it is possible to pinpoint statements that show that innovation appears in the way themes are approached and in the way problems are solved:

"Problems and consequences of responsible consumerism: it was considered and designed by taking into consideration all the practices in experiential learning."

"Our volunteering training is much diversified: their work as a volunteer is to offer company, even when they are silent, what you have to do is just be there."

"We try to apply business methodologies to volunteer work: if we use design thinking to business problems, we will also use them to solve problems or needs of the communities." "The individual volunteer culture, that mobilizes the individual himself and mobilizes others for a specific cause and which is financially supported by the company."

"We will share strategies: repositioning a brand is a specific decision for each company, and one or more human resources are dedicated to this."

"We believe that volunteering is based on abilities; in other words, acting professionally is the innovation in volunteering."

"The way every single company is managed can be quite innovating: for instance, the use of bicycles instead of motor vehicles to make deliveries with the objective of reducing pollution, the effort to visit elderly people on their delivery route, the challenge of teaching safe driving to students."

Some of the topics mentioned above are treated in a creative way, for example: o:

- **Gender violence: Manpower** reports not only the alliances that can be made, but also the internal training processes in the topic.

  "It is gratifying and at the same time very difficult to see the life stories of these women. At the end of the action, we keep thinking… how could they endure all this, and, at the end, still thank the opportunities they had."

- **Games for Good:** in **Telefonica Vivo Foundation**, technology is used on the platform that gives social action ideas and stimulates citizenship. In a ludic way, collaborators and families can perform citizenship actions, anywhere, besides suggesting missions and having the possibility of collective games.

- **Refugees:** in Germany, **AUDI** leads a project which started two years ago because of the refugee crisis.

  "We got together with a lot of people who represented different institutions: government, social workers, vocational training schools, economy chamber and other different protagonists, and we did one of the most difficult things to do, to make them talk to each other. That was our major contribution: **to create an enormous education program for refugees***, especially for those who are supported by the German state. For example, we have a special class for women so that they have a chance to empower themselves and become conscious of the possibilities that they have in the country as women. I think it is the only project in Germany that care about refugee women."*

- **Health:** Human Resource Management Challenge is a social global competition sponsored by **Johnson & Johnson** to find solutions to world health problems and help future generations to be healthier

The design of the actions encompass various formats which are by themselves innovative, either for the theme, for the creativity when it connects to the company's objectives, for the type of action, or management model. We saw driving programs for adolescents led by **UPS** truck drivers who not only deliver packages and correspondence, but also participate in the logistic organization of big community events, marathons, marches, which is also part of the courier expertise.

Piedra Papel y Tijera at **DIRECTV** is an innovative format of volunteerism.

  "I don't know another television company which supports volunteerism and transforms it into a television series now in its eighth consecutive season for eight years… that has free slots in its programming line-up to place a program about volunteerism which transforms places in the community and that also helps it to have more programming hours; that helps the community and leaves a positive message. As a matter of fact, the volunteer program has the same name as the television program."

The program Zero Poverty (Pobreza Zero) of **BAC** took attitudes which were highly innovative, as, for example, taking volunteers to organizations which focus specifically on hunger eradication to understand how the work is done and to spend one day in the field working with people who are really poor, learning and understanding the concepts.

The idea of a sale of clothes donated by **C&A t**o raise money for a partner organization (the project Bazaar) proved to be a central strategy for fund mobilization for partners, combining the resources and the competence of a retail company with the recurrent economical fragility of community organizations. In 2015, 67% of the company units were involved with bazaars, with an average of 1.6 bazaar organized by a unit during the year, and 74% of the unit carried out these events as a collaborative effort between stores.

LEAN is the most innovating volunteer program at **EDP** because it represents the value of sustainability shared with the communities. The objective is to increase security, well-being and energy efficiency of underprivileged families and of CSO centers with which the **EDP** Foundation collaborates. The company shares with the communities an entrepreneurial and try to apply it to the third sector, institutes, schools or cities, so that they become more efficient and sustainable.

Many companies mention volunteer project competitions among collaborators. Some are chosen by a jury panel and implemented. The results are usually positive because the volunteers not only support an activity, but also lead a project (However, sometimes, some problems pop up due to the competition and the rivalry that it may generate. **BCP** (Banco de Credito del Perú) endorses the social project competition proposed by the

collaborators themselves in coalition with a CSO; they finance them and counsel them for six months, giving them all the tools to develop their project. This is an extremely valuable experience, because there have been projects which at the end formed a new CSO.

> *"They were born with the bank; it's a business incubator of CSOs that eventually grow and are very successful."*

In Asia, we saw examples of much dedication to the community: at **Sompo Japan Nipponkoa**, for example, the employees are entitled to a short-term volunteering leave of absence (up to 10 days a year) and to a long-term voluntary leave (from 6 to 18 months), besides annual paid-vacations. The employees who take these leaves participate in a variety of volunteer activities, including Smile Caravan puppet shows (Caravana de Sorrisos) to support the recovery of areas hit by an earthquake and in an interactive artistic appreciation project.

And also in Latin America: the program SUMA, of **BCP**, is highly valued by the employees. Each semester, volunteers sign in to participate for nine consecutive Saturdays, five hours in a row. They keep track of the children's progress throughout their school life, making sure that they manage the best life-decision tools.

> *"In elementary school, we teach mathematics in a fun way: in the morning they begin the day with a mathematics class and then they can join elective workshops…it could be dance, theatre, handcraft, and the well-known! Around the World."*

At **Diageo** Venezuela, there is a corporate volunteer program in which the employees themselves, aware of the impact of the drink they sell, educate consumers, potential consumers or the public in general about the effect of these products and teach them how to drink responsibly. Corporate collaborators and **Amway** Business Owners share their individual stories and go beyond it: they are considered, from a business perspective, successful in getting engagement and inclusion.

Another innovating trait in many programs is the role volunteers play in the process: as an agent of local transformation, who certifies the social action of the company in the communities where he is present. The volunteer brings the reality of the community into the Program. As a protagonist, he participates in the decisions about where social investment should be applied and about the priorities for volunteer action.

In secondary education, teaching financial education, in a light way, makes it possible for adolescents to administer their own money when the situation comes, and it prevents that the financial system is seen in a negative way. The workshops for the youth at **SUMA** are chosen free of charge on the first day of the semester (computing, entrepreneurship, leadership, dance, logic games, lateral thinking). For the volunteers, the interaction with children and young people represents a transformation experience in itself.

> *"Sometimes, all this make them think about their own life and decisions and to be aware of dreams they were not conscious of until now. Volunteer activity helps them connect to their true objectives and passions and motivate them to make them come true. It makes the collaborator happier and, if he is happy, he will work much better."*

4.7. The company's greatest source of pride in the program

"The people!". It's the first answer that comes to mind to many interviewees.
"The volunteers developed a very robust program which is immersed in our life culture."

Several companies are very proud of the support they have received, the collaborators' reception and the number of people they have reached with their actions. **C&A** also mentions the link established between volunteerism and the community and other benefits it generates, both for the community and for the company, improving internal climate.

The volunteers and their commitment are mentioned by almost half of the companies:

"They come from distant places to participate in the volunteer activities. They live far away from the plants and on the weekends, instead of resting, they wake up early to be on time. Sometimes, they come with their families and share this day with them."

"Our volunteers. The heart, the commitment. What we did was the result of team work, many people, much effort. To see more and more people trying to make this possible."

"The volunteers. Our greatest pride and fear. I think that the best feeling we have about the volunteers, in their blue shirt that carries the logo star, is what they have inside themselves. In Seville or Galicia, Madrid, Valencia or Bilbao, 85% of the people feel the same. This is the source of pride that makes a difference."

"The level of commitment of the people who get involved in the program help increase the participation rate, 49%. The company Executive Committee is intimately connected to the programs and to the idea of participation."

"Collaborators' commitment in a difficult environment. 99% of their volunteering work happens during their free time."

*"That the program originated from the volunteers' hearts; today **SURA**, the volunteer program is what the volunteers have built. It should always be like this."*

"The employees, no doubt. My boss always says: we use in our volunteer work the best thing we have which are our volunteers' hands. We get to know a person's dimension not known in the office and we understand the driving force behind the person."

"People's interest in participating, their commitment, and how much responsible they feel for things. I would say that a very high percentage take one extra step, they do more than what is expected from them."

"People's participation: participation rates are very high. It is a program that is part of the business, it is already part of the culture and the strategy and it was not like this before… I think that it is something that we have really accomplished: repositioning the brand and having people adhere to it."

> *"The fact that the company was open to all these issues. (…) The most important aspect is the level of commitment present in this organization in relation to social responsibility issues."*

Even though the coordinating teams were small, the greatest source of pride is usually passion and volunteer commitment:

> *"The students' mentors are very passionate and make innovating and creative things to generate impact on society and add value to the company."*

> *"In our program 'Heartful Friend', we recruit collaborators who wish to plan and manage volunteer activities internally, and about 200 members apply each year, at the moment they are trying to solve problems in the region in relation to 28 different issues."*

> *"We don't do anything that has no purpose or that is meaningless. The constant feedback is incredible."*

At **Amway**, two things make them proud: the inclusive aspect of the work, which involves both independent sales representatives and employees, not tied to one specific path to volunteerism, and the work done in partnership all over the world to fight nutritional insufficiencies, which they consider to be one of the most serious problems the world is facing today.

> *"We are proud of our program governance structure, because we mobilize more than 380 collaborators who work throughout the year in their respective cities to identify volunteering possibilities… In addition, we are pioneers of Gamification in Brazil and in the use of technology to stimulate solidarity actions."*
> *Telefonica*

InterCement is especially proud of the relation of trust built with the volunteers. Volunteers' ideas are always taken into consideration: if the groups GAIVAs (Volunteer Groups of Ideal Action) and CIVICOs consider an action to be more relevant than the other, the Institute will invest resources on the action of their choice, strengthening the partnership between the program and the Institute.

> *"It is the culture of the company that moves people."*

> *"Volunteers really want to do a well-done job and this makes us proud because it means that they are not only good people, but good workers."*

Taking part in a company project that transforms so many people, internally and externally, is a source of pride for many, as well as the capacity to attract and connect so many people to the same values.

> *"I am very proud to see the work done by our volunteers, and to know that they feel that the company believes in and is mature enough to have this kind of dimension, that it can donate their employees' time and make this investment with a feeling of transformation and change."*

> *"I am very proud to witness so much good energy, the happiness and the purpose that I see in people."*

"I am proud that the company doesn't follow the easy path, but offers its time and its work to generate concrete and real solutions."

"The mystic of our program and the fulfillment of its three objectives that could be seen separately: impact on the collaborator, impact on the community and reputation. The impact on volunteerism with quality projects."

"People's development, both for those who benefit from the project and the volunteers."

The happiness which I see on volunteers' faces, in each of the activities they get involved with.

"We are a company that stand for the value of helping people oriented by a vision for transformation. The CEO is the first one to join the action in the field."

"How gratifying it is to see these grains of sand that can change one person's life."

Evaluation taken seriously, beyond the metrics of isolated actions, is also a source of pride because it is a sign that volunteers are thinking about changes on the long-run, as well as about results and impacts, and also helping their partners develop their abilities instead of getting involved with one day events...

"If we start to carry out volunteerism this way, we will also find better ways to measure the work. I think it will give us a chance to measure in a more precise way the conquests and the results."

Another source for pride was the increase in participation in the program. For example, a company has mentioned that there was a 70% increase in participation rate in their program during Global Service Month.

"At the beginning, people didn't want to participate for no specific reason, but, little by little, they began to get involved, and now all regions are included."

It is positive to draw on what partners are doing, the different approaches they use to get other people involved, their alliances and partnerships.

"Proud of having developed some really excellent partnerships, and I have a chance to see the difference made by programs like the Academy of Teachers… or to see a war veteran entering a facility that has been totally remodeled for him."

"My greatest source of pride when I think about the program is that it bets on something that is very clear and new; it is incredible how much innovation can be found, for example, in the alliance with an organization like Barefoot College. We have committed ourselves to help them in everything for three years: from enhancing their visibility, to train them to handle their legal structure, education, resources, contact with clients etc."

The program internal evolution is also a source of pride. The way it changes from something light, attracting little interest, to something rather institutionalized within the company. **PIMCO**, for example, holds global personnel meetings twice a year and the Foundation and its community work is always mentioned, the same way it is mentioned on the letter the CEO and the President addresses the leaders at the end of the year. Let's have a look at some extracts:

> *"I believe in the evolution… The way we managed the program so that it remained aligned to the strategy, and generated more impact, and this led to professional volunteerism as part of the evolution… It seems to be very important and makes us feel very proud…"*
> *"We believe that companies have really to focus on volunteerism based on abilities or knowledge transfer, taking advantage of our greatest asset. These are the work groups where we have found the value of transfer and exchange between organizations and our employees."*

> *"That the program is a faithful reflection of what the company is, of its values, its identity, its culture. Culture which has not appeared today, on the contrary, it is part of its history, consistent with what Polar has always been."*

> *"What makes us really proud is that it is not the kind of 'let's help' program, like a musical success, which works fine once and that's it. It is a program that aims at the community sustainable development, which is exactly the mission of* **Softtek** *Foundation… If we send* **Softtek** *teachers, they will talk about work in a company, and tomorrow this will help the young people to find a job."*

> *"Due to our professional volunteering approach, we have started to see concrete results of the support given by our executives to our different causes. Impact evaluation can be seen in a more concrete way; we provide them with training, technical support, leadership mentoring and in everything else that is part of professional volunteerism. We can see very interesting results and people are very happy."*

The **Nike** Community Ambassador Program aims at empowering its best talents to understand why physical activity is important, and to go through experiences with children that will have a real impact on the employee, the children and the business. Bill Ford is actively engaged at all levels; he is the anchor of the program. Volunteering is institutionalized at all levels of **FORD** and protected by company culture.

4.8. Inspiring Actions

Although the answer to the question about "the most inspiring activities of each program" is based almost exclusively on the interviewer's opinion, they also illustrate some tendencies as, for example, about the importance of the volunteer inside the program itself: the transformation starts with the individual and then spreads out to the collective. The transformation begins with the individual and then shifts into the collective transformation. These inspiring actions were reported in several areas: disasters and environment, health, child labor, nutrition, management, company clients' participation in voluntary action, communication, professionalism, gamification, education and even country transformation.

The most important reports are below.

At **EDP Portugal**, in order to face fire devastation, 133 volunteers were sent to the area to help organizations and local communities answer to the challenges of the most urgent phase…

"talking to people and helping them reconstruct and identify houses which needed reconstruction, families that needed food or material goods."

On the second stage, with their technicians and volunteers, they got involved in house reconstruction projects. There were architects and engineers involved. There will be a third phase in which EDP volunteers will participate mainly in the reconstruction of the agriculture dimension.

"It was inspiring to see the way people answered the call for help and went to the field, organized themselves and the way the company stood out because they organized a structured answer, listened to people about what they needed, and worked hard with local city administration. The comments from the local people and from the volunteers were also inspiring."

DIRECTV invited partner companies to act together in the earthquake area.

"We invited other partner companies, Latin America made a donation of 60 airline tickets for volunteers from the USA to Argentina and they also took volunteers to do the work together. We shot a special documentary one year after the earthquake to pay tribute to the victims in which we told the story of 10 families who rebuilt their houses with the help of 100 volunteers and it could be watched both ON DIRECTV and on airplane platforms in Latin America. In 1400 daily flights people can watch the episode about two companies that get together to become involved in a volunteer project for a cause and detect a problem. At the end of the year, we will repeat the same procedure in Peru, with flood victims who have been sleeping in tents for more than 6 months, with no solution on the horizon (…). We keep on trying to integrate and make alliances."

If we focus on companies' health activities, there is a useful and original action with older adults in a very poor rural area, with a very large and very needy elderly population. During health campaigns, the older adult is accompanied by a volunteer from the moment he gets to the place. The volunteer stays with him throughout the day until he gets to the pharmacy to receive his medication; the volunteer explains again everything the doctor prescribed, and reminds the older patient when he should return. Programs as immersive as **GSKs** PULSE, strongly supported by the leaders and well considered externally, and some transnational programs carried out in collaboration with many health companies it also stands out in the narrative.

Manpower Argentina reports:

"One of our business interests is agriculture. During harvesting season, parents would take their younger children along with them; we cannot endorse this practice. We decided to work in the rural schools, with a health specialist, to make mothers conscious of the dangers of Chagas disease. We made sure that children didn't quit school and we managed to train these mothers in basic health care and balanced nutrition and other economic questions. It was a unique experience that separated what had happened before to what happened after volunteerism was embraced by the company."

Brazil's **Telefonica Vivo** believes that decentralized management model is inspiring. Its aim is to nurture the solidarity spirit in different people and help them become social leaders with the desire to contribute:

"We've got to listen to the volunteers, after all, we are interested in their own experiences. We want people to learn how to connect with different realities and to be bold enough to propose, to execute, to live and to evaluate."

"We have to be innovate because volunteerism is inspiring. Starting with management, we try to innovate and facilitate innovation, make life easier for volunteers so that they have all the possible tools in their hands to motivate the changes they are looking for."

For collaborators to feel committed to the different corporate volunteering programs, they need to understand the meaning of what they are doing in the company. There are programs which answer to a philanthropic strategy and there are others which answer to a business social responsibility approach, dejectedly connected with business.

"They have to know the origin of the programs, the way they operate, so that they understand that they generate not only social value, but they are also part of the economic value and the environmental value. That's why we talk about shared value, but also about sharing the value that has been generated."

During world celebration, the objectives must be attained by all the groups. For this celebration to be successful, they ran a three- month motivation campaign with the 300 Care Councils all over the world: between all of them, they had to plant 3,000 km of trees.

Starbucks considers their collaborators as local leaders and include the clients in volunteering actions, which sets them apart from many other companies. Some companies become anxious when employees and clients work side by side, but they are very open and great motivators and they don't see it as a high risk situation at all. The team of salespeople are in the front line working side by side with the clients to help identify opportunities.

"The best idea was to invite clients to get involved in volunteer work. I think it is a 100% innovating practice… We produced one episode of the TV program Piedra, Paper y Tijera (the documentary on the field work) and advertised it 'if you want to help, connect with generaciondirectv.com'. We received over 1,000 e-mails from clients who simply said, 'I want to be a volunteer'. This fact showed us that we are not using volunteerism as market strategy, but that we are doing something genuine and that we are telling the story of the true heroes of the community who nobody knows about. And having the chance to invite journalists to join us, to travel with us and to work together with us is also inspiring. They return home different people, with a wider understanding of the situation."

Both professionalization and education were mentioned as sources of inspiration. The promotion of professional volunteer work, the act of putting together interdisciplinary teams to solve corporate problems, developing capacities and transferring knowledge to both parties, is part of the legacy of volunteer programs in the companies.

"To some volunteers, having been able to train some communities in certain specialties, like planning, time planning, expense planning, leadership... That was inspiring…"

The transformation of the program into a game, as an incentive to volunteer activities, should serve as a source of inspiration to other companies. O Jogo do Bem, developed by the team from Fundação Telefônica Vivo in Brazil is a game, interactive and collaborative aiming at Education for the Exercise of Citizenship. There are more than 100 challenges based on ONU's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[5], related to education and technology, digital citizenship, urban mobility, social entrepreneurship, environment and animal protection, and it is set in a virtual city. To participate in the Game "do Bem" you should be a Grupo Telefonica collaborator, family or invited friends.

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5. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is a document with a list of 17 goals offered by the United Nations (UN) as an intergovernmental agreement on September 2015, and which will have to guide national political decisions and the activities as far as 2030. SDGs follow up and update the Millenium Development Goals (MDG). The targets involve themes like poverty, hunger, health, education, global warming, gender equality, water, sewerage, energy, urbanization, environment and social justice.

Finally, the volunteering program's capacity of really transforming the country was also considered inspiring.

> *"If we want the country and the people to start to change and the country to transform itself, the companies have and can build bridges to change this reality. The change of mentality at Walmart Foundation (which was philanthropic for many years, and now focuses more on development) is the reason why volunteers are attracted and committed to the program. It has to do with the ecosystem changes which affect the small producers and it means that when we change the companies, we also change the mentality of those who work in the companies… It is not the poor as a problem, but how we can contribute with the actions to reduce poverty. We have to be informed and we have to transform ourselves."*

4.9. Which are the main concerns of the companies?

The concerns conveyed by the companies were vast, of various types, each one with its history and culture, their local scenery, their regional characteristics. The tension to fit global standardization, when there is one, or remain with their own activities, is always present. As a matter of fact, one of the perceptions that emerged is that the companies are no longer being able to keep global standardization strong because they have realized that the interests and mainly the needs are specific. The interviewees report that their concerns have to do with these challenges:

- that when the number of volunteers increase, the interest remain the same and participation doesn't decrease;
- that volunteers may lose their interest in participating if they don't understand what is the strategy behind corporate volunteering;
- that the number of adult collaborators over 50 years old has increased;
- that the program fulfills the expectations of everybody involved, that what is accomplished be each time more relevant, that generates value; that connects people and be sustainable;
- that people can identify the offers that really answer to volunteers' interest and needs;
- that the eternal dilemma of corporate volunteerism has been faced: to find the balance between the responsibilities of the delegates (ambassador, leader, etc.) as employees and the ones they have as volunteers:

> *"I am worried about giving these 39 delegates the possibility and the resources so that both roles can coexist within them… The 'star' of the program are our employees and, if we lose them, we lose our uniqueness, we lose our essence."*

- that there isn't enough investment in infrastructure that will allow volunteers to be good leaders on social impact;

> *"Besides… how do we 'crack the nut of the reports'? We tried many things, we kept asking ourselves if the results could be presented through reports, but they are in so many different systems..."*

- that we lose track of the alignment to the nature of what we are doing;
- fear to miss the momentum;

> *'the month of Global Service is moving from October to another month".*

- that we are capable to identify the offers that really fulfills the interests and needs of the volunteers;
- that the issue of impact measurement doesn't advance the way we need;
- to really understand the needs of the community and establish more realistic objectives for the program;
- that the pressure business demands affect volunteer participation and the company's high turnover.

Global harmonization is certainly challenging. The new focus is more strategic in order to obtain results with more impact. The companies could try to put pressure on the targets and, unfortunately affect the employees' genuine interest in their involvement. The employees may have their own agendas, and make everybody row the boat together may be a problem. At the same time, the companies have their own concurrent priorities. For instance, now **UPS** makes deliveries on Saturday, which reduces the available time for the employees to get involved in volunteerism.

Frequently, the magnitude of the necessary actions versus available resources – stretched to the limit of action capacity – push the programs to the anxiety level of having to fulfill expectations of those in charge at the company. Because the company may start to take notes, to check on the possible benefits and may transform volunteerism into one more element in business development.

> *"We have always to be careful about conflict of interest and compliance (respect of rules)."*

Human beings always want to find new and exciting programs, and may not be taking advantage of the relationship they have already established at the company and build on from there.

> *"It can be a dangerous experience..."*

At **GSK**, no specific concern has been noticed; PULSE is well established and has excellent partners at the CSOs that usually send good project proposals. However, there is nothing worse than the situation of an employee who returns after six months and say "That was horrible". For that reason, project coordinators are very careful about apps and CSOs they work with because there is always a chance of something going wrong. Their volunteers work for six months in very different environments, so their well-being and their health and safety are their primary concern. For example, there may be some kind of civil confrontation in Kenia due to the oncoming elections.

> *"This is something that we have to take into consideration in relation to Orange Days and other community activities."*

They are **GSK** ambassadors, and, as a consequence, they have to be representative.

> *"It's a question of trust and integrity."*

Another concern mentioned is the constant drive to keep on innovating, offering qualification and attention so that the volunteer feels stimulated and recognized. The attempts on the part of some areas or of a specific high-level executive to use the force of volunteerism to sell products or advertise the business may create a delicate situation. Top-down approaches can be a matter of concern; any action must be supported by the community. Mid-management keep demanding results from the bottom line, but it is always worried about the capacity of a small team. The non-engagement of mid-management, the absence of paid staff responsible for the program in the global offices, the fact that volunteer work can sometimes be slow, as well as the demand to monitor the needs of the community to orient the actions, all this can sometimes lead to volunteers feeling fatigue.

> *"I worry that we get so involved in reports and the issue of alignment with the Sustainable Development Objectives that we get lost, that we miss the focus of our objectives… If we base the work on what is asked from the outside, internationally, we will not be able to undertake any substantive work, we will end up doing brand image marketing.; we want to carry out substantive work because we are an energy company and energy is essential to people's lives." EDP GROUP*

"What should we do so that it expands globally to the point when people understand that it is part of their culture?"

"With the growth rate the company is experiencing now, will we be able to have processes and systems that encourage commitment and keep it authentic? That's the point why the objective of 1,000 hours until 2020, although exciting, is a cause for concern."

"Being able to evaluate the competence we have acquired: we know volunteerism helps in the development of leadership, but how many volunteering actions you have to attend for it to become a competence, or how many hours you need or what role you have to play in an activity organization so that people recognize you have acquired the competence just by volunteering?"

The authenticity of what is done, the program credibility, are fundamental issues for many companies…

"The critical point of each activity that we carry out is to keep the credibility and the respect of the people that participate in it, as well the respect of volunteers and the society that benefits from it. That the company never falls within the field where you can think that we do it for pure hypocrisy."

The companies that manage the program through committees report that they have grown a lot with them, but it is almost impossible to manage so many groups with a small group of people, according to the respondents. And finally, some extra testimonials.

"It is a situation of more demand and less supply; there is a whole population of people in need, and, with the model we have in our hands we will never succeed in meeting all the demand."

"Measuring and evaluating: we want to measure more and better. I think the program generates a lot of impact internally and we need the data to prove it. We also need standard metrics to measure success."

"And they really have to try and restructure what the measure of impact is for them, now that they are not directing the actions towards one specific focus area."

"That the platform works… We need people to internalize a little bit more the culture of volunteer participation in such a way that we don't have to go promoting and promoting endlessly…"

"It is hard now here in Mexico because of the problems the country is facing; culturally speaking, it is a gigantic challenge to get people to donate, to get rid of all the problems we have,,, we are facing a very serious social problem and a society that is tired or indifferent to the needs of others."

"when we are not sure how to change if you are involved with the action. What really worries me is how to protect the brand and the process, but, at the same time be flexible enough to make the necessary changes."

"What can we show in five years? We depend on people's commitment to share knowledge."

"I feel that the people who get involved are always the same, in other words, 'povo do bem', who want to help and do good deeds. I think it is really challenging to convince other people who have never done this."

"That, eventually, people ask for different activities. Sometimes, people who have participated in many events, similar or the same, ask us to do something different. But if we want our program to be huge, we have to present massive activities."

"Part of our volunteerism is knowledge transfer with organizations like Endeavour and Ventures, but it is specific for people who have specific knowledge."

"We can't make silly mistakes that will harm business or reputation."

5. Volunteering Program Management

Some management strategies are shared by many companies: division in local committees, virtual platforms, alliance with other partners to increase impact or cut costs and, at the same time, increase repositioning and branding in the community, Volunteer Weeks, shared program governance. Innovative practices in management could be school of leaders, with focus on training and on professional qualification of volunteers who are in charge of the program, and other qualification initiatives. Company employees are encouraged to propose activities with social entities with which they have had a relationship throughout the year. This kind of strategy may result in the multiplication of the number of voluntary actions: more alternatives, more participants.

5.1. Who coordinates the program?

The small size of the coordination teams was surprising; it repeats the tendency which has been on for more than 20 years. With the exception of the great global companies which lead volunteer operations programs in 100, 200 countries, the other companies, usually, have lean teams, with one coordinator, or one coordinator and two analysts, or up to 5 or 6 people. The companies which have been interviewed tend to repeat the pattern. We received some generic answers:

> *"We have a general coordinator in each country, at the Sustainability Department, as well as a team responsible for Corporate Volunteering, and volunteer leaders who mobilize and motivate volunteer participation."*

> *"The managers are supported by volunteer trainers, one per unit, selected each year to train the other volunteers and to lead internal mobilization."*

> *"There are voluntary delegates in each region. They are professionals hired to work in the 'workshops of technical volunteerism 'which give support to the delegations on operational and management questions."*

> *"There is a team that supports volunteer ambassadors/champions".*

The teams are small; in some of them there is not even one person dedicated full-time to volunteerism. In companies where there is **one person** in charge, he/she usually holds alone the responsibility for volunteer global direction, which has to be developed alongside other assignments, or a corporate social responsibility senior specialist, with 20% of his time reserved for volunteers. Other companies explain that they have a coordinator, or a person from the area of Corporate Matters, or a coordinator of the corporate social responsibility program, who is also responsible for the relationship with CSOs and the coordination of social projects.

When the number of people is expanded to **two**, we can find the following settings: one team to manage the whole **EDP** Group program; or a Sustainable Development Manager plus a coordinator; or a manager for strategic vision and an execution analyst. A National Coordination with the support of two assistants and volunteers of transversal committees in the states are usually teams of **three people**; or the only coordinator with two more people; or three people, including the Social Responsibility coordinator backed up by people from social communication. In **Manpower** Argentina, there is a manager for Diversity and Inclusion in the market place, and two more people responsible for the program Intertwined (besides other responsibilities). **Grupo Bolivar** has a Volunteer and Project Director with a team of 3 more people and 21 volunteer regional leaders.

> *"Without them, nothing could be accomplished".*

At **C&A** Institute, the team of four people is formed by a director, a manager, a senior analyst and a junior analyst; and there is also the case of a manager and two analysts in Communication and Volunteer Management. Meanwhile, at Nike global headquarters, 4 people work with the manager and have different responsibilities: the first one deals with Employee Insights and Digital Engagement, the second one is manager for Community Ambassadors and the third is a manager for Nike Community Impact Fund, and the last one is a Team Coordinator.

There are also teams with **five people:** a superintendent and a director, plus two more analysts and one Social Investment Manager; or employee engagement leaders in each geographic area, North America, the EMEA region, China, Pacific-Asia and Latin America; the **PIMCO** Foundation has a team of 5 in Newport Beach and in New York. Globally there are companies which have Volunteer Councils in each of their offices, made up of 2 to 8 people, depending on the number of employees. At **Intercement**, there are Community Development Committees (CDCs), the CIVICOs and the GAIVS. The number of members will vary according to the place and those volunteers will implement the program.

When we talk of **large companies**, we notice that there are more elaborate Governance Patterns. They have a formal network of volunteer ambassadors, and one of them incorporates more than 37 countries, with more than 100 motivated employees. Another company has Volunteer Committees in each office in the United States, who get together once a month, to plan and approve events and activities. Another one has a Governance Council that gets together twice a year with a dedicated team of six full-time employees split into Great Britain and the United States, besides additional support for internships and scholarships.

One of the global programs is situated in Global Public Relations with a team made up of a Director, one person in Latin America, one in Asia-Pacific and three at the EMEA region, and "one and a half" (one full-time and one part-time) in North America. In each region, there is a top level executive committee who supervises decision-making. There are also country committees and, in each office of the world, there are employee committees. **Novo Nordisk** has a manager for the Take Action Program who reports to the chief of Corporate Brand and Reputation, under Communication and Corporate Relations and Sustainability. The Company works with two different networks: a large network of volunteer program representatives from all over Denmark and a network of ambassadors who organize activities in their respective countries.

Corporate Citizenship is under the umbrella of the brand **Northrup Grumman**; however, within this denomination, there are employees from Corporate Office, employees from Mission Systems and employees from Aerospace Systems; they are all assisted by a team from Business Citizenship who belongs to the corporate office. At **Amway** there are global affiliates in many countries who spend approximately 10% of their time to manage volunteerism, being responsible for recruiting and monitoring activities, either of ABOs (Amway Business Owners) or employees.

Throughout 2017 **Avnet** has been under a renewal process to become "a new Avnet", which obviously affects all aspects of their business, including corporate social responsibility and employee engagement. This fact forces the coordination, which has global responsibility over donations and employee volunteerism (Avnet Cares in Global Marketing and Communications) to depend on team leaders in most of the cities and on the committees that develop the activities. They also have ambassadors (usually from RH or Marketing and Communications).

At **Starbucks,** on the other hand, the employee (also called partner) is responsible for action development; the coordinator offers the tools so that the partners can better serve local communities. The company relies on the partners all over the world to establish a good relationship and to design activities related to the needs of their own communities, which may not be what Starbucks established as the company's main focus areas. In the United States there are 14 regional directors and the managers are the point of contact for their region in the United States: they are in charge of 14 to 120 stores each and community issues are their work priority.

Therefore, we can say that although volunteerism seems to be important – either as a supporting element to attain the business objectives, or to expand its mission, or to improve employees' development, or to develop surrounding communities – team resources still need attention.

5.2. Committees

It would be impossible to organize and run a volunteer program spread out into a vast national, regional and, even less, world extension if there weren't small local cells in charge of stablishing the connections with the central program and the link with the volunteers – their peers – and the local partnerships with institutions. The greatest majority, perhaps more than 85% of the companies which were interviewed, organize themselves in committees.

More than 50% of the companies declared that they operate with local committees with shared characteristics. Local committees usually work in a system of shared management and have between 6 and 10 collaborators. Usually they are grouped by region. However, the way these committees organize themselves and act may vary. There are regional committees (in which the vertical axis are countries or places) or committees organized by areas of activity, with specific leaders for each type of project, for example, environment committee, diversity, community investment, or issues internal to the company: finance, sales, human resources. We also had a chance to observe the structure of donation committees – and not of volunteer committees, but this format is less common.

However, what we call 'committees' can also be called "groups of ambassadors" or "groups of champions", or groups of local counselors, made up of regional managers (for example, store or plant managers), governance councils or executive committees, made up of representatives of different areas of the companies. In the case of multinationals, these groups set up networks that encompass many countries. The 'ambassador' networks – sometimes called by different names (community network, network administrator, etc.) - are getting more and more important both in global and even national image. Very seldom these ambassadors are paid, frequently they have other jobs, which unfortunately, has been going on for a long time. In many cases, the executives in certain regions pick and supervise these ambassadors who act like a buffer, and help with the communication between central offices and local affiliates. Volunteer leaders apply freely for the position and form or begin to organize the committee performance in some cities. Usually, they organize decentralized actions, observing what happens locally and keeping in touch with regional organization. The committees are a way to promote volunteers who wish to do more than mere activities. This gives the volunteers a certain idea of career path. The ones who actually execute the activities are the local volunteer committees: they are extraordinary, they are people that, out of conviction, out of desire, out of motivation, organize, design and carry out the activities strengthened by an extraordinary mysticism and commitment.

The way the committees organize themselves and work vary a lot, but they usually somewhat reflect what is done in the company's business structure and culture. This great diversity can be observed, for instance, in the periodicity of face-to-face meetings between volunteers, leaders or ambassadors in order to discuss strategic alignment and to get updates on specific themes: one or more than one annual meetings, or an annual meeting followed by virtual meetings, or even an annual meeting of volunteers with the governance council and consulting or regional committees that would get together two or more times a year. The annual volunteer meetings can involve representatives from many regions of a country or they may even be an international conference, in the case of multinational companies.

Distance communication usually happens by telephone or in teleconferences and its periodicity may vary, depending on the specific politics and the roles established for leaders and ambassadors and from local committees. In some companies, this type of communication happens necessarily once a week, so that everybody gets updates on topics related to the work. Other companies prefer to have monthly meetings.

Generally speaking, most of the education of the committees happens remotely, with the exception of volunteer annual meetings. In some cases, there are virtual meetings each two months, but its objective is to exchange information rather than training. When the members of the Committees from different places know each other and have a chance to get together, they consider it a satisfying experience. However, we have observed that, when they return home, under the pressure of the normal rhythm of life, they don't share the experience with their teams.

5.3. Type of training given to volunteers

When questioned about the type of training offered to volunteers, only 5 companies answered they did not have any kind of training sessions. 32 companies mentioned they have face-to-face qualification courses, more than 20 on the workplace, and the others in CSOs specialized on the themes and the public the volunteers will approach. The volunteer local committees are usually the ones in charge of the face-to-face training sessions. Nine companies carry out exclusively online training.

When volunteers participate in a program, they receive specific training. In the instructions before each activity, relevant information and the roles expected from each volunteer are presented. Some companies (a few) give training sessions by means of *toolkits*, based on tools, or by means of a Training Guide with information about how to coordinate a volunteer event. Generally speaking, there are previous meetings to coordinate actions, answer questions, and align information. Many companies have a news portal where people can find general information: whom they should get in contact with, the type of activities.

Periodical qualification sessions are offered in order to develop and improve abilities and competences necessary to work in social mobilization. These qualification sessions can be offered specifically to committee leaders (groomed to be the volunteer leader) or they may deal specifically with themes related to the development of the projects or they may focus on issues of internal management.

"We don't have ad hoc training for them. What we can offer is specific pre-execution training for every volunteer activity. Since each one of them is carried out with a different group, there is always a pre-training session so that they get rid of potential fears, socialize information and solve problems. It always happens immediately before the activity. We give out a lot of documents about the project, what they are going to do, and, in situ, they receive more specific training from the people responsible for the CSOs. It facilitates the process and commitment."

"Locally, each office works in a different way. Face-to-face training each two months with people that are here to explain everything we do: what happens with 25 hours, why I have to do it, where I can present my projects, etc. We send them to make courses online about how to manage volunteerism, for those who are interested in specific topics."

"For non-specialized volunteerism, there is no specific training. The general instructions about how to be a volunteer are shared in messages."

"Each action we want to develop or the ones that are presented to us are discussed in the three annual virtual meetings and the volunteers themselves indicate the kind of training they need."

There is a campus for online qualification in one of the companies, with different training modules: about the Foundation and its social work, about volunteers' rights and responsibilities, about their abilities and competences. They are self-explanatory and autonomous, and they can be watched on the tablet, cell phone, computer. The next step is face-to-face training, but it depends on each region.

*"There are training modules in e-learning at **UPS** Portal. Some other companies have pro-bono, based on abilities (skill-based, etc.)."*

"We are trying to teach employees about the meaning of impact."

"People from regional committees and local teams receive an introduction with all the explanations: general view of the mission, our axels, the policies, the tools, the programs, what we are looking for. If some kind of training is necessary, it is done virtually."

*"At **Manpower**, management is responsible for designing training sessions for new employees and we also have a Virtual University. Through this network, we capacitate them in terms of activities and workshops, the knowledge about the population and local organizations."*

The global e-learning are changing because the system does not interact with the type of language and communication necessary today, because it is not interactive enough, with scarce dimension for games and game dynamics.

"We have some instructive videos so that not everything has to be done face-to-face, especially specialized information. Volunteer face-to-face training sessions are considered volunteer hours, but that is not what happens with leaders' training."

"Many training programs about corporate social responsibility are prepared and produced for the newly-arrived every year. They integrate to CSR in operations abroad by means of many different approaches, including meetings to discuss the importance of the questions about social responsibility and future objectives."

In the case of specialized volunteerism, like mentoring, training is carried out by allied social organizations and consulting groups with experience on the subject: both distance training and live training, usually, for one or two days. The training is always practical and focus on workshops and participation in projects.

"In the case of specific projects, like, for instance, house construction and tree planting, volunteers are offered on-site training."

"Corporate social responsibility work groups are given annual training sessions."

"There is no official training program. However, after the newly-inaugurated 'DENSO Pro Bono Program', we sent two people from the company to a training program offered by an external institution (NGO) which promotes pro-bono."

The **BAC** projects, for example, present a high-level training component, especially those with technical content, and some require special training: to work in the Zero Poverty Project **(Programa Pobreza Cero)** volunteers participate in a 16 hour training session, with one full training day to be able to understand what poverty is and how it is measured; they also spends a whole day on a field trip to the local government organization that works with these themes, plus half day to learn about the tool used on the research in order to understand the needs of the families. This is a specific program, very technical, that demands much capacitation. On the other hand, the program *Woman Step Up* **(Mulher Acelera)**, which aims at empowering small businesses led by women, offers a morning training session of about 4 hours, focusing on counseling and coaching principles and measurement instruments, with a baseline of indicators and performance measurement.

The volunteers at **GSK's** PULSE go through a program of formal training after being approved in the tough application process, and having received clearance from their manager. The training is also offered in the country of the PULSE program by the local CSO with which they will be working.

The themes presented in the training sessions may vary: evaluation, leadership, values, group work, empowerment, coaching… and some other specific themes for each task: evaluation training to understand results, leadership training, forum/conference directed to champions in order to discuss social issues, etc.

"The volunteer leaders participate in two general capacitation meetings a year (a full day): teamwork, communication, trust building (…), we have also given courses on leadership, coaching, value recognition and we establish the link with the activities we carry out in order to inspire, to influence other people. This year we will focus on empowerment and teamwork."

*"In a more generic form of training, we talk about the Foundation context, about volunteerism, about the Financial Education Program, about the project itself; afterwards we give technical training on content, methodology, logistics and facilitation ability development. We also discuss road safety and mentoring in relation to the program **Empreende País**, and when we work with disability issues. We have carried out training sessions on group management abilities."*

5.4. Community Needs and Project Planning

The great majority of the companies ask the volunteers to identify, detect and inform the needs of the community. The team leader or the committee goes to the community to check the needs with the leaders of the area, with the neighbors or with clients. The mapping out can even be made with the help of studies conducted by local universities. After that, they submit the results to the volunteer program coordinator.

"The projects come to us, we go through them and decide which ones we will support. For example, there were initiatives to help animals (dogs) on the roads surrounding our plant; then we came up with an awareness-raising program that became an education program on responsible pet care."

"In the case of production plants, we carried out a diagnostic survey of nearby communities which served as a guide for the corporate social responsibility and volunteer strategy. We learned that in Guayaquil, the main problem is the propensity for the use of drugs, and in Quito, the main issue is the elderly population lack of opportunity on how to occupy their time."

"Each two years, we carry out research with our employees to find out about organizations and projects with which they would like to work. The actions must be correlated with their preferences for them to feel committed to the project."

Many companies concentrate their actions on the volunteers, on what they are interested in, on how they wish to contribute and participate, and allow them to make their choice. Then they connect the employees' decision with the company's interests so that this type of volunteerism will contribute to the employee's personal and professional development. In other cases, the company decides about the type of collaboration that can be established, and on how much determinant the work of the volunteers will be in the attainment of objectives. These are the companies which stand out in the professional formulation of their objectives. Each local team is responsible for sorting out the proposals that come to the company: the idea is to listen to all of them, check them out and choose the ones which can receive volunteers, where employee volunteers will be offered good work conditions and will have a chance to express themselves.

"Then, we check it out: here, can 50 volunteers actually work for three days, is there enough space and are the conditions acceptable? And we set up the project."

"If there is no risk, we decide where we are going to act as a good neighbor and reach out to them. We try to design a strategy that will help improve the surrounding neighborhood and prevent it from turning against the company."

"The program should actively involve our collaborators and budget, as long as we can cover the expenses."

"In Europe they don't want to do anything because they say they already pay taxes and, for that reason, other people should take care of the problem. The Asian countries had a long experience either with communist culture or with a centralized one; for that reason they haven't developed a sense of culture of solidarity. In North America, culture of solidarity is intrinsically linked to churches. Our challenge is how to concentrate ourselves on the most relevant questions and raise resources from the company and from the employees, identify an action and carry it out. Volunteerism depends a lot on the company. It is up to the company to organize and mobilize people to make the activities happen."

Many companies prepare their volunteers to have a critical eye, to make professional evaluations based on not only on how serious the problem is, but also on the real capability of the group of volunteers to act positively.

"We developed committees with the necessary competence to map out projects and the necessary autonomy to define a plan of action, execution and strategy."

"We expect, on the one hand, that they are focused on the questions we want to work with. On the other hand, we expect them to cause a real impact on the beneficiary and, as to the internal impact, on our own volunteers, we expect that there is enrichment, and knowledge transfer. We offer professional and traditional volunteer opportunities. Our employees' talents and abilities are offered to CSOs and to the community, so that knowledge is shared and organizations are empowered as competences are mutually developed."

"We have a program to help identify local demands, qualify volunteers, offer support to action accomplishments, and offer counterparts like, for instance, training space."

5.5. Partnership with companies and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

The art of partnership: more and more companies are relying on local partnerships, initiated and fostered by local offices, which end up by being much more important than the great international or national partnerships – though this is not really that obvious. Those alliances can be established with other companies (for example, supplying means of transportation and money and the other offering the work of volunteers. They can also be established with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that already operate in the area. The team leaders establish a dialogue with the communities, visit institutions, talk to the local government and to the CSOs which operate in the area, and may be invited to work as partners: the CSOs know better than anyone the kind of problems that everybody will face.

"About 95% of our volunteer activities are carried out alongside social organizations: the volunteer activity is part of a social organization project. We need this kind of relationship."

"We are financial and insurance companies. Since the beginning we have been looking for partners from the social sector. We have never been to a community alone. We always wanted to establish long-term relationships and work together with an experienced social specialist, with a specific population, in long-term projects, in which we can enter, but from which we can also leave."

"We value working together. The CSOs have already established a relationship with the community and it is much better to enter and bring something new where an organization has already made an impact than to carry out an isolated activity, In a situation like this, alliances work fine, we build the activity together and the impact is much bigger."

"We have already a route mapped out by pro bono clients: we know many CSOs or social companies and they work fine because we more or less know their projects and try to join forces with them."

"We search for partnerships with organizations that are well-known and their impact is great."

"We can't do anything if we are not associated with other groups. We need social partners, or companies or government offices to transmit the message in favor of alcoholic drink moderate consumption."

In answer to catastrophes, the majority of companies work in partnership with the Red Cross, the Salvation Army or any other organization like these. But if we think of programs on a day-to-day basis, then local connections are much more important. Here we have to stress two distinct views: alliances with CSOs which embrace the work of volunteers and/or those that give than training, and alliances with national or global institutions that also involve financial resources donation on the part of the company. The institutions often mentioned were Junior Achievement, CARE, and Red Cross. Less mentioned: Ashoka, Youth Service America, for example.

"We are partners of WPF (World Food Program that deliver food using drones in war zones or difficult-to-access areas), with CARE, with the Red Cross and Red Crescent."

However, the contact with the CSOs can be delicate, depending on how these organizations position themselves – for example, charging for the work offered for free by people.

"There is no doubt about it, working with CSOs is an essential part of our volunteerism. However, they see it from a business point of view: 'I invite you to participate, but you have to pay for this and for that'… and we don't donate, we offer free legal services."

"All of a sudden, you work with some organizations which charge us to be volunteers. That's a limitation to our choices. We can mention the example of a foundation with which we worked in Argentina (even its founder work as a volunteer) so that when you have to choose places and partners, you can pick this type of foundation, not to give money to a well-known foundation which will charge you for the period the volunteer works there."

5.6. Management technologies and social network

The majority of the companies interviewed doesn't make use of any specific system for managing volunteer programs: most of them reported that they use simple spreadsheets (Microsoft Office Package or GoogleForms Online spreadsheets), both for registering activities as well as analyzing the results. The majority of coordinators and volunteers interact by e-mail, telephone and WhatsApp. Many use pages in common social networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) to spread information about the actions, which can only be commented by volunteers.

"It would be interesting. For now, we use e-mail."

"We don't use it in Latin America. Yes, we would like to have something simple for the administration and for the people who use it so that it could be done frequently. We have never found anything that seemed appropriate and practical."

"We use an Excel file in which we manage everything. We state the indicators we are measuring and are related to corporate volunteerism. The global instrument is quite complete. Sometimes we are required to give more information than we are able to, because it is new (we started implementation this year) and we are adapting ourselves to everything we have to report and do."

"We collect information manually and then fill in the virtual form (in Google Forms). We would like to have a platform articulated with our volunteer programs, offering the chronogram of activities and the number of volunteers needed for each one of them. This would allow us to analyse participation, generate reports, process and quantify information."

However, there are companies which have already started to professionalize the system of registering information and of analyzing results: 19 companies use their own systems, created internally or by an external supplier, or use online platforms. Five companies use or have used the system of social mobilization V2V (http://www.v2v.net): four of them based in Brazil and one in Argentina. Other companies are considering adopting the V2V or they use other systems found in the market (not all of them are geared exclusively to management of volunteer programs):

- Volunteer Match
- Your Cause
- Hang Out
- Salesforce: Volunteer Management
- Benevity
- Workplace
- Volunteers Rewards
- CyberGrant
- Yammer
- Catchafire
- Make a Difference
- Gifts, Optimy, Give to Asia, Resource Foundation and MicroEdge (to receive and manage donations)

The systems can be used for administration or for relationship: depending on their functionality, people will be able to register activities (type and workload and number of beneficiaries), communicate with other volunteers (just like they do in any social network), communicate with coordinators, share photos, implement motivational campaigns, even give training sessions (by means of webinars) and coordinate events. They can also serve to register donations (of products or money). One function repeatedly mentioned is the publication of opportunities for volunteer actions, which give the volunteers a chance to sign in automatically. Result reports can be generated individually or in groups. The systems may interact with the area of human resources of the company, pre-filling information about the employee.

"The virtual platform is our most innovating practice. It is a social network of volunteers which enable people to communicate, receive feedback, share results. This will help us build long-term relationships and register the story of each volunteer."

"It has not become a social network, but for each activity there is a gallery of photos. We are very happy with the system because it was designed according to our requests and we haven't had any problems. We told the experts in informational systems what we wanted and we built it together. We make together all the alterations we want to implement. It is done 'a la carte'."

These "volunteers' social networks" are successful: they are exclusive apps for volunteers to sign in activities, to communicate with central office, or if they are going to show up with a friend… The app notifies when there is an activity in the area that might interest us, invites people to upload photos and to communicate with the rest of the volunteers.

"Not many companies have invested on a tool that allows their volunteers to have access to all information, making his life as a volunteer much easier. It is a tool that allows him to manage his life as a volunteer directly from his pocket."

Geolocation information can also be used, in these systems, to include the market of the communities close to the stores on the decisions about what the neighborhood area needs the company to do. It connects the client to the store, and the store with the client to the community.

"The volunteer main role in these productivity programs is the link with the market to facilitate the approach and the connection with the store and to guarantee that the product reaches the shelves and is sold."

More than 30 companies have declared that they don't have a platform with a social network option, so that the volunteers could communicate directly with other colleagues, in a decentralized way, without the interference of managers or committees. Other companies say they use internal Facebook profiles, and some of them say they use Your Cause or Volunteer Match, which are good for management actions, but would never allow this kind of interaction. No doubt, this is the most serious technological challenge: free communication between employees by means of a specific platform oriented to volunteerism. The politics are usually very restricted in terms of social media. Some companies have intranet and some other internal means of communication, but they acknowledge that they need to do a better work on internal and external promotion. Some organizations value this functionality and wish or are considering migrate to system that will allow volunteers to communicate with each other – which may even represent a way to listen to their ideas.

"There is no interaction… we have communities of practice, but not in real time. The tool we have in real time is WhatsApp, the telephone…"

However, most of the companies complain about the systems they use for not answering to their needs, for being outdate, for not being intuitive or for not being able (in the case of multinationals) to have a global system. One of the things that cause frustration is the amount of money spent on the maintenance of specialized systems, which led some companies to order customized systems for projects, or even control the activities by means of commercial software already available (but not specialized) like, for instance, the Office package. The high cost also hinders the migration to systems that will allow the use of cell phones.

The fact that volunteers don't register the activities (either because they don't know the functionalities, or because they don't have access to the internet) make management data incomplete, because the insertion of data has to be done manually by the managers (especially to generate correspondence between hours and donations). Data safety is also a matter of concern for companies. Because of that, they are updating the system with this objective, including corporate intranet hosting – internal safety politics many times prevent functionality implementation.

"Technology is particularly challenging to us: in some areas, electricity goes down or the Wi-Fi signal is irregular. We depend on the team's connections, which is not reliable. During the process of project application, the CSOs send projects through a platform and the employees have to register through another system, and the two of them need to connect at a certain point. They are trying to improve it."

"Based on our 25 hour pro-bono policy, we designed a tool on the global internet page, called Time Keeping Tool, where we can check the number of hours which have already been covered and the ones which still remain. We designed this tool by ourselves, and people can register their donations, (We don't use the tool in the United States and in London because their donation culture is bigger)."

"I would like to know a little bit more about the impact of volunteer work, which is not very clear. The program cannot measure the effectiveness and impact, but, at the moment, I would like to have a program that would, at least, give the systematized data."

6. What does program evaluation mean in your company?

"Without data, you are nothing more than a person with opinion. However, good data by itself does not guarantee good decisions; only good analysis and correct interpretation add value to the strategic process of decision making."

Evaluation is challenging, even after more than 40 years of corporate programs. Input and results are pervasive and evaluation of impact keep presenting the same difficulties as always.

Companies with specific ability transfer transnational programs involve a few employees who use their time intensively and could demonstrate some impact due to this volunteering effort. But for the other activities of the programs, they still count the number of volunteers, of projects, of people who participated in an important day of service, of activities like workshops, meetings, training sessions, classes, and of people who participated in them. Once again, we have in our hands the results of the activities, but not the evidence of changes that those results may have had in the lives of people affected by them.

It seems that there is more interest in helping consolidate institutionally the CSOs, although it is a slowly growing trend. It may not be possible to measure the impact of some programs – unless we take into consideration anecdotally the impact on the hearts and minds of employees involved in the programs. People still favor projects which present some kind of quality that can be measured, even if it means only counting things.

The volunteer program itself is usually evaluated each two or three years, by an external group, in a tiny proportion, from 5% to 8% (two companies). But the results of the actions are evaluated by the majority (more than 80%).

"We measure participation, specifically hours and activities."

"We have indicators, but they represent efficiency and performance, not necessarily impact."
"We base the indicators not so much on the number of volunteers or hours of volunteerism, but on how many more people could be affected by the action."

"Data survey, interviews, testimonials, in order to measure the logistics as well as the volunteers' satisfaction."

"If we detect a problem with the employment of young people or with high school abandonment, we press for changes and we expect that the indicators go up on the long-run (three to five years, minimum period of time for changes to happen)."

"We have started measuring if people acknowledge having developed abilities after participating in the activities and if there is transfer of capacity within the organizations."

"We carry out an annual research with the employees to 'feel the pulse': where do they stand as to their support of the activities?"

However, if we analyze the concepts carefully, we will see that the interviewees use the word evaluate meaning "to count the number…" what was "registered", "what happened". With a few exceptions, the great majority doesn't mention the basic concept of evaluation: interpret evidences, draw conclusions, make value judgements, compare evidences, articulate values and examine presuppositions, see contradictions and inconsistencies. Or, at least, they carry out empirically some of these analysis, but I haven't seen in the written material that has been published any critical interpretation. The problem is that evaluation means identifying the nexus between results, strategies and objectives, which produces a high level of exposure and that demands maturity, the maturity we need to expose ourselves in front of the public and the other companies with our successes and mistakes.

Many groups declare they evaluate impact, but they refer actually to action results. Less than 10 companies said they worry about changes – by the way, this word appears in just a few of the narratives – mainly in the acquisition or strengthening of volunteers' abilities, or in the changes in the CSO after or in relation to the activities of volunteerism. In more than 35 companies in this study, evaluation is usually quantitative, related to numbers: and about 20 companies carry out a more qualitative type of evaluation (many mentioned both types).

But why isn't evaluation carried out correctly? Maybe because people don't know what they want to reach? Why didn't anybody establish aims? Why weren't the expected results declared in advance? Why weren't people interested in designing consistent objectives?

It is important to remind that an 'objective' is a clear statement of the purpose behind attaining a certain end, and it should always express an intention of change. "Impact" is the change that the results obtained by the actions produce on the subject/cause /public who are the beneficiaries of the action.

However, the narrative is beginning to change. From five to seven years ago, only a few people would knowingly mention the word "impact", meaning changes. Many mentioned impact, but referred only to result indicators, quantities, percentages, etc. Today the concept is more appropriate, more solid, and more companies understand its scope. We believe that the pressure of society on the last years for the 'resignification' of these concepts may have helped in its understanding and acceptance.

When we ask about data collection instruments and the indicators use to reach to the conclusions, we receive two types of answers: a) metrics or b) qualitative indexes as detailed below:

Metrics:

- Rate of participation of employee volunteers (absolute and relative)
- Horas spent (sometimes they separate into planning and actual implementation of activities, especially those who work in committees)
- Number of CSOs which benefitted from the program
- Number of people (public served/affected/reached
- Number of projects accomplished
- Type of themes chosen (by the company and/or by volunteers)
- Number and amount of material collected
- Two companies mentioned media coverage
- One company mentioned economic valuation of the hours spent
- One company mentioned 'cost versus impact"

Qualitative Indexes:

- Perceived changes in volunteers: more than 20 companies
- Volunteers' satisfaction: more than 15
- Beneficiaries' satisfaction: more than 10
- Perceived changes in/by CSOs or public affected
- Development of competences and abilities: more than 8
- Meaning for the Company: 2
- Shared value: 1
- Logistics and action organization: 2
- Indicators of efficiency and performance: 1

When we analyze those findings, we can see that the impact on the community is measured only by means of indicators of result. "What has happened?", "How many people were affected? and "what happened to the result of the actions?" But nobody asks the question: "What kind of impact did the result of this volunteer work cause – what kind of change –on people/situations? Obviously this type of question demands more time for the public affected to experience changes (this question cannot be asked at the end of the action, in the heat of our enthusiasm). Then, we highly recommend that at least 6 or 12 months later a research is carried out and these questions asked.

Data collection method

The greatest part of data collection was carried out during research mainly by volunteers. (this fact was mentioned by more than 20 companies, of which about 15 do it before and after the action). A few companies carry out research with the CSOs before the actions and from 8 to 10 do it after the actions, and one of them do 6 months after the work was finished. A few companies declared that they listen to the public affected after the action, but sporadically.

The method that was most frequently used was the research questionnaire, on paper or online, sometimes before but more often at the end of the activities. 40% (16 companies over 40) use only counting, compilation of numbers, while 60% (24 companies over 40) declare that they evaluate or analyze other aspects.

External methodologies used

- Two companies declared that they use the tool True Impact to measure ROI and SROI (Return on Investment and Social Return on Investment); one of them also uses the tool from the CCC Group (Center for Corporate Citizenship of the University of Boston) and the University itself.
- Three other companies declared that they use one of these two tools: Energize World Volunteering Service, Voice Indicators and Endeavor.
- In Japan, one of the companies use SROI analysis (dividing the social value or total benefit that an initiative produces by the cost of implementing it). This company is a pioneer in the region in the use of this methodology in the area of biodiversity conservation.
- Another company uses LBG methodology (London Benchmarking Group)
- One company declared they fill in the CEMEFI evaluation form (Centro Mexicano para a Filantropia)

When we analyze the answers, we realize that now there is a strong tendency to evaluate levels of satisfaction (of volunteers and of the public), as well as levels of employee competence development, and levels of satisfaction of the community with the transfer of knowledge. Then we can understand much better why numbers only are not real "indicators". They tell us about the 'size' of the results, which doesn't mean much without some kind of analysis.

We haven't advanced much in the evaluation of the impact of the actions inside the institutions or on the public, because changes of behavior are expected, as well as knowledge level, acquisition of new habits, proactive and positive attitudes in relation to health issues, dimensions which don't have social technology installed in the companies, and, many times, not even in the groups with which we work. Besides that, in the formulation of projects, we don't start from objectives concretely verifiable in terms of change.

Three points can serve as main targets for those who coordinate volunteer programs at the moment of evaluation:
- **Strategic corporate positioning:** chosen cause, productive partnerships, integration with corporate citizenship or sustainability.
- **Culture of engagement:** system (technological) to facilitate collaborators' involvement, strategies to encourage and promote collaborators' enthusiasm, systematic approximation to supervisors and intermediate managers and how to participate: information easily available to all collaborators.
- **Various metrics:** significant, appropriate, which contain what we want to know, besides the beneficiaries' statements (always and when we analyze the relevance of these metrics for the business engagement and positioning).

Conclusion: evaluation is always good … but we have to be careful not to make the following mistakes:

- Measuring many indicators without establishing priority and hierarchy
- Measuring in order to control (goal control instead of focus on improvement)
- Measuring to cut costs, instead of improving performance and quality
- Measuring only what was laid down in relation to what was accomplished (deadline control, production schedule)
- Measuring to discover errors (with the goal of punishing)
- Measuring without focus on people's satisfaction (with the main focus on the product or on the process)
- Measuring without considering progress or improvement in a systematic and integrated way
- Measuring incorrect data and/or ignoring fundamental data

Next we will mention some different topics that the companies reported to us:
- There is a diagnosis of **shared value** that encompasses all the activities of the Institute; we measure how volunteerism impacts on the generation of shared value and on the social license to operate.
- The volunteer program goals are **linked to senior leadership performance plans**. There are regional differences in the way evaluation is carried out.
- **Economic valuation:** we have a differential element: we quantify only volunteerism in terms work schedule which is approximately 30% of total hours; we are migrating to a format that we will allow us to measure the contribution of volunteerism to **competence development** of volunteers.
- **The program undergoes external evaluation** since 2008, in intervals of 2 to 3 years. The projects and actions of volunteers are not evaluated and they have no indicators.

Now we will present extracts of the interviewees' statements about quantitative evaluation. The indicators which were used vary a lot: number of volunteers, number of hours, number of direct and indirect beneficiaries, number of participant countries, number of participant cities, number of partners; donations (how many and to whom); level of satisfaction of employees, productive indicators, income increase. And, in some cases, external media coverage.

The percentage of participation is very important in order to know how many people were involved. Since some business objectives are related to people, the focus is on the level of commitment of the employees. In one of the companies, the rate of participation in all countries where they are located was measured. On the last five years, a network of 'reporters' was built, by means of persuasion and reward; literally, there are hundreds of these reporters all over the regions and in all the departments and probably they have more than 80% of all information.

> *"The main indicator is the number of hours and the causes in which we work. We base all our reports on the causes, the hours and on staff participation…"*

> *"The quantitative indicators are: number of volunteers, hours and activities, number of beneficiaries. We measure by listening to the delegations and discussing challenges with them…"*

"C&A assesses the results in metrics: number of volunteers from the company and from the community, beneficiaries, hours of activities, hours of planning, economic estimation of trade-offs and partnerships, photographic record, testimonials."

Questionnaires are usually applied to those who participate in the activities. They are asked if they are satisfied with the content of the program, especially the impression they had, contents that should be improved, etc. which will become the basis for the next implementation.

Research is also carried out before and after with people and CSOs. With this material they create stories of success, and, in certain situations, stories of clients. All partnerships and programs which receive donations and investments over a certain limit have to establish their level of results/impact.

GSK's PULSE program is very closely evaluated: many research forms are filled in by volunteers, before, during and after they enter an assignment PULSE. CSOs are also investigated after the action and then six months later.

"We don't have an impact evaluation. Only results. This evaluation is basically numerical and about the satisfaction of volunteers and beneficiaries. The program is never evaluated as a unit and neither are the actions, with their indicators."

"The largest part of what we have is quantitative, then we know how many hours, how many employees are involved in projects, how many social institutions. But, obviously, this doesn't say anything about quality. Then we listen to what the intermediaries tell us, to what social institutions tell us and how the employees feel."

"We don't measure impact. We have a voluntary research instrument which is applied at the end of the year and in which the level of satisfaction of volunteers with the development of the program is evaluated. We haven't yet deciphered how the measure of impact is done, we only have result indicators; … the change in school environment is clear. We know that to measure this impact demands a great effort in time and money to generate indicators that will show the change."

And what about qualitative evaluation…

When we talk about qualitative evaluation, the word 'impact' immediately comes to mind, which has become the 'mantra' of the last 10 years. However, we have noticed that the word has been used without much theoretical accuracy because many interviewees still say, "let's measure impact: the numbers of…"

- *If we focus on impact, the fact that 5 or 100 schools were painted doesn't mean much. Actually, what we want to know is if this activity was mobilizing enough to generate employee* **commitment***.*

On the virtual platform, the committees fill in some qualitative evaluation forms about the action: **what has been learned**, what they would do differently, the challenges and solutions that were found. Specialists in monitoring and evaluation work together with the *champions* to create evaluative tools, helping them to attend to the needs and expectations of the projects.

- *At the end of the year we make a comparison between what was spent on social responsibility and the amount of impact (on how many people). With this in mind, we get a* **cost per impact** *that we present every year in order to protect our budget.*

Internally, people are already asking for impact measures: less focus on activities, on coverage, workshops, personnel … and more about the **changes** that should be happening to people.

> *In financial education, instead of offering workshops open to the whole community, we focus on the population who want to buy a house, then we will have some indicators, like* ***percentage of desertion*** *after they were oriented and accompanied by volunteers. To the volunteers it's a blessing to know about the conquest of these families when they complete their house purchase process.*

> *We measure if our employees felt their level of* ***relationship*** *with the company has increased, if they report that their* ***abilities*** *and* ***trust*** *have increased because they have participated in volunteer activities or if due to their commitment or their contact with the communities they* ***understood*** *better concepts such as, equality, human rights.*

Corporate **reputation** surveys indicate that the community appreciates very much what volunteering does. We don't look for many indicators that, at the end, don't add value to information; it's more important to search for the best indicator to know if the set of activities meant something to the company. **Generating value** should be the focus of the campaign and, as a consequence, unnecessary data should be disregarded.

The hours are no longer the Holy Grail. The **number of projects** led by the employees are much more important than the number of hours; they are creating impact, showing their commitment to the community and high level of engagement with the company.

> *We try to base our indicators not on the number of volunteers or hours spent on volunteerism, but on* ***how many people can be affected*** *by what we are doing, how many people I can reach. If we restore or build a multifunctional classroom for autist children, the CSO will be able to help 30 new children. We also measure the impact of these TV programs: the rate, the impressions, everything is measured…Piedra papel tijera is always top 10.*

One of the companies stated that they are especially focused on quality volunteerism. They prefer employees helping a child three times a week than hundreds of employees doing something only once a year.

> *We do surveys. We measure the* ***logistics*** *and the* ***satisfaction*** *of employees. We monitor the execution by means of the tool Voice Indicators.*

If employee satisfaction is low, the coordination team doesn't receive a bonus.

> *In the case of long-term programs, like SUMA, measurement of the* ***impact*** *on children is done with the* ***same company*** *that designs the methodology. In the bank, we want to build stories that inspire, and tell the stories the best way we know so that the press considers them attractive and publish them.*

The indicators of impact are related to the previous analysis done at the community: for example, we detect a problem with youth employment or with high school dropout rates. We search for changes that will help these indicators move up in the long run.

- *We have just started to measure if people acknowledge that they have developed **abilities** after participating in the activities and in the organizations, that is, if there is **transfer of capacity** and signs of change in what we are doing.*

- *Together with human resources, we designed a program of team building for the **development of abilities** in the work groups… The work is done before and after the action: the actions in each project are adapted to the needs of the teams…. Beforehand, with the help of the team leader, we detect the abilities that should be developed; then we plan the volunteer action that will help develop this capacity and, after the activity, we get feedback from those who participated and from the team supervisor in order to check out what has been accomplished.*

However, some coordinators already have a narrative closer to the concepts used today and on the path to understanding.

- *The impact of the programs is a little bit difficult to assess because you cannot define an object (like benefit 7000 youngsters by helping them prepare for a job) if don't have the people that will implement it. I am going to commit myself to something which may not be feasible. Then I measure what I have in my hands without concrete objectives, which makes **the impact to be scattered and, as consequence, cannot be measured properly.***

- *Our indicators are, above all, of **efficiency and performance**, and not **impact**. We evaluate the changes brought by the training, for instance, if there is an increase in the number of people hired, or an increase in sales or if there was an increase in profit, and how much of this depend on us and the support we have given and which percentage depends on them and on other factors.*

7. What is the story that the world is told about your program?

The companies take out of the programs what they consider to be the best elements, and, for example, talk about the use of methodologies, of innovation, like in the "Game do Bem"; of the employees who are proud to work in a company that gets involved with its community and by means of volunteerism end up producing better citizens, socially conscious.

> *"We have a story for almost all the activities, because we have very different lines of action. But the story that connects us is the following: **together we do more.**"*

> *"**Changes!** More strategies, keeping a model open to the personal passion of employees. They are even thinking of designing a new story."*

Many companies say that their volunteers can share their knowledge with the community, while they help the community, they develop themselves as people and as professionals. At **Audi**, the involvement of employees is highly valued, even when it is a private effort, in their own free time. With the new refugee project, they publish stories about the involvement of a specific person each two weeks.

We have noticed that at **Amway** employees are encouraged and inspired to be volunteers in their communities by means of #AmwayVolunteers, both their own individual employees, and the ABOs, sharing their own stories. And the company goes beyond that, looking at the situation from a business perspective; it is good for the company that those ABOs feel included and, as a consequence, for the communities where **Amway** people are doing business all over the world.

There are older programs sponsored by the companies which have been reached: 8, 10 year programs or even more. **Intercement** volunteer program has been on for a long time in the history of the company, since 2009, with a strong action called Day of Doing Good (Dia do Bem-Fazer) that happens uninterruptedly until today. In some cases, there are volunteers who have been participating since the beginning, or who used to participate, then left the company, and eventually returned to participate again, showing real and genuine commitment.

A good number of the companies don't do marketing with their program, they don't expect a substantial investment return, nor do they expect to be praised or known because of that. In some cases, there is a commitment:

> *" People who are part of our culture, committed employees and potential clients. Everything is done organically. This is the narrative we are working internally and externally."*

Advertising is improving little by little, but in some environments people believe that the volunteer program is *"the best kept secret"*. It is obvious that we cannot advertise things that haven't happened or that can't be controllable. The moment the results appear, then the stories can be built.

People are encouraged not to overestimate communication. Some type of balance should be kept.

> *" We are focused on documenting the experience: we went through a stage in which we weren't very successful, so, now, we are closing a stage of documentation with the help of our team at the Foundation that will allow us to have the history of volunteerism and what we learned about it."*

More than half of the people interviewed confirm that the programs look for quality projects which gives the volunteer a chance to transform himself as he participates in the actions.

" We need real engagement from everybody to be able to lead 2,000 volunteers all over the country with a staff of three people. To be able to find a formula that works, without a big team, is quite an accomplishment."

To many people, the corporate dream is to unite people to build a better world. The volunteers are being assigned to activities associated with some of their brands. For instance, when the company about children and young people, they emphasize that this brand is carrying out a certain activity with company volunteers and civil society. *"This is the story line."*

Let's have a look at other stories told by the companies:

*"Quite recently, there were numerical reports of the actions: what was done, how many volunteers, for how long, how many people participated. The greatest effort was getting the volunteers to participate, for instance, with encouragement messages and invitations to participate… Now they want to share the relevance of what they do: how they were able to change people's lives, the opinion of those who have participated in a project. **Now it's time to tell the stories from the perspective of different actors…"***

*"It is more than gratifying to see volunteers during their working hours get involved with actions that may help society. Incorporating somebody from the courses into professional life gives them a sense of fulfillment. **The volunteer adds value internally for being able to know, mingle, and intertwine different roles with the spirit. It's the heart of our program."***

The mission of the Spanish company Caixa, as a foundation and as a bank is the following:

"To transform society for the better. We facilitate the work with tools, resources and knowledge so that more people can be volunteers and transform society together with us. The ones who are on the front line are our employees who know our culture, our values and carry on the chest the 'star' [Caixa's visual symbol]; they are the ambassadors of our star…"

"We are members of CLAVE (Latin American Corporate Volunteer Council) in which we also try to give visibility to actions, but, above all, we promote volunteer impact trough innovation… The objective is to make the business grow in a sustainable way and build the reputation of the brand by means of responsible marketing practices: the empowerment of our communities, the development of our talents, everything is under the scope of the same strategy."

EDP is an energy company born in Portugal. Its well-articulated story deserves to be read with attention:

*"Our energy is in fact transforming the world. Be it person to person, community to community, we are making the difference. Based on this premise, the great global campaign called **Parte de Nós** becomes more and more part of our energy; more and more volunteerism is connected and aligned to what we do, each time is closer to the communities, each time more aligned to our competences, to our businesses, continually challenging the employees to share their energy, the things they know how to do and the things they do well. We tell these stories internally to mobilize other employees by means of the internet and our corporate television. More and more volunteers are telling their experiences, producing internal blogs; in the interviews, you can see on their faces and expression how moved they are to share what they have experienced. We are putting a lot of effort on this dimension of testimonials and stories of transformation."*

As to communication, we have an interesting example from CAIXA:

"A communication team shares every month the impact on the press and online. In the digital area, they help us with Facebook and Twitter and reach hundreds of millions of people, not only volunteers. Each month, we can see on the media from 150 to 200 examples of volunteer impact. Each month we choose 8 to 10 different stories which are related to an activity, or to a specific volunteer, and we offer the news to the media. We work basically locally because it is too expensive to post something on national media and it may get lost in the midst of too much information; a local newspaper is not that expensive, we prepare the release together with them and the visibility is much greater".

8. Interviewers' observations

We have had the opportunity to conduct an interview with the interviewers who worked in this research in order to get their impressions about the process of data collection itself. We now present a synthesis of their observations.

Which was the positive impact that you noticed in the process of data collection?

- The companies which have embrassed the development of the communities and, in some cases, even adjusted the way they talk about the mission of the company in order to include the commitment with the needs of the communities:
  - **Ford:** "Building better communities'
  - **Grainger:** "The community is our client"
  - **Dell:** "Doing good for people and the planet"
  - **BD:** "Our mission is about social investment in the communities"
  - **RBC (Royal Bank of Canada):** "We want our employees to be better citizens"
  - **Yamato:** "Direct relationship between the community and clients is part of the daily work of our employees"

- The majority of the companies are interested in working with volunteerism based on abilities. Many have realized that the best thing they can offer is their experience and contact network, and they are trying to build programs with this type of perspective. It can be an interesting precedent for volunteer actions that promote sustainability.
- The interviewees' generosity in sharing information and in being available to answer the questions.
- The involvement of senior management, which was very positive in some aspects and much evident in some cases. The senior leadership at **UPS** (United Parcel Services) holds an annual retreat in which the Volunteer Program is discussed and the participants get involved in a volunteer project as part of the meeting. The company leaders at **Grainger, SAP** and **Dell** send messages regularly to all members of the company about the program.
- The way they take advantage of all their resources, expanding pro-bono work at various levels; donating services and products to expand their operation and the involvement of employees.
- The involvement of employees of supply chain companies, from the companies that make automotive parts to **Ford** dealers that sell the cars. The work with "Transformational Opportunities in Volunteering" and the special leadership objectives for millennials to keep employees working at **Ford**.
- The construction of corporate citizens: the employees are very much involved throughout **RBS** (Royal Bank of Canada). They are now redesigning the whole program: they are working hard to remain "relevant" to the interests of employees.
- Long-term commitment: the employees at **Yamato** were very much engaged as volunteers after the earthquake of March 2011 in Japan and remain committed to the region. In addition, the employees are involved with the communities through their daily work: the company is committed to reducing its carbon footprint, with smaller cars, and to working with the communities served, visiting and talking to elderly people.

There was almost no feeling of disappointment on the part of the staff: only the lack of communication channels that prevents a global program to effectively know what is happening everywhere, scarce training for volunteers, and the "fragility" of research tools. According to the interviewers:

> *"There are just a few global companies which really have a structure that allows them to know what is happening in all branches around the world. Definitely there is a lot of work to be done about structuring in a more general level and a great need to establish channels so that communication becomes centralized, but, at the same time, fluid, and that it understands the specificities of each context."*

"There is very little training for volunteers at companies; there are basically tool kits or manuals. Some companies use external organizations to train their employees in specific aspects, and, usually, they are CSO partners in the action or experts in the subject. While volunteers usually don't receive any extensive training, many companies offer training to their ambassadors and regional leaders."

"The majority of the companies use research done with their employees to test the efficacy of their Programs. This is the limit of their evaluation."

Companies that impressed the interviewers most:

The culture of **UPS** promotes volunteering, beginning at the top, with the CEO, who is the president of the volunteer council. They also offer the CSOs collaboration with the logistics of events, their expertise. Employees participate in the volunteeri actions on their days off. But now they have less days off because Saturday has been included as a working day. Then they have less time to try to attain their objectives until 2020.

Softtek (Mexico) impresses people positively because they do an excellent job: it combines what they know how to do with what they can do. Their efforts, originated in Latin America, are now spreading out into the world. Their global practices are very interesting.

BAC Credomatic, a Costa Rican bank, calls our attention because of the vision of their programs and their objectives as well as their acute professionalism and experience as a leader, which can be easily noticed; their presence by the general managers in each country is inspiring and acknowledged by volunteers.

SAP is satisfied with the impact of their transnational program on the communities and on the employees, but they soon realized that it wasn't scalable. Then they decided to build their cross border program locally and their first pilot test was in Philadelphia in 2016. The employees were dismissed for as long as it took to work in community needs "close to their homes". SAP soon discovered that the impact both on the employee as well as on the community corresponded to that of their transnational program, but at much lesser cost.

Walmart (Mexico) has made great impression because of their efforts in search of programs that would make a real impact on the fight against poverty: volunteers who trained producers and agricultural manufacturers, by means of tutorial sessions, on how to improve their production practices, so that they do business and sell their products in such a way that they get to the final stage of exhibition and sale in supermarkets, or get exported.

In most of the companies, the ambassadors, members of the affinity groups, or members of the community involvement committees are extremely committed employees who organize opportunities of quality volunteerism. **Energia de Portugal** e **Polar** (Venezuela) are flexible enough to put in the hands of groups or committees, in each region or country, according to their resources and local needs, the power to define and decide about the activities that would be carried out. This model has been applied by many companies.

The company **La Caixa** (Spain) is adjusting their priorities: they aim at the type of volunteerism that will cause more impact, but they don't want to put aside philanthropic initiatives. The proportion of activities and budget varies: 80% is given to transformational volunteerism and 20% is used to attend to the specific needs identified by the leaders of each community.

Johnson & Johnson believes that their community programs shouldn't be 'aligned' to business, but 'related' to it, which is a more realistic approach that can be adopted by other companies.

At **GSK,** the levels of partnership are well designed, interesting and useful in the construction of different types of collaboration.

So far we have seen many examples of companies, programs, strategies, actions; they are all convinced that their employee volunteer support programs are worthwhile, useful, enriching for many actors.

We sincerely hope that, more and more, the commitment and concern for others of those volunteers spread out all over the world and help us overcome difficult times, and make the planet a fairer place.

9. Glossary

1. **Articulation:** it results from the effect of finding points of convergence between organizations in order to carry out joint actions of social responsibility, from the identification of social actors who share the field of organizational influence and the dynamics that encourages them.

2. **Value** chain: process by which a product or service reaches the stage of being consumed. It has to do with the relationship between suppliers, channels and consumers.

3. **Social causes:** causes which deal with defense of rights, of awareness, assistance (non-profit) to promote common good, by means of individual or community well-being. Social causes may include economic development, environment, education, disaster response, hunger, gender issues, diversity, inclusion and others.

4. **Intersection collaboration:** the practice of a company that works with non-business institutions (government organizations, non-profit organizations, media, schools) in their community or volunteer participation programs or others.

5. **Community:** concept that refers to human groups who live together and share space and common codes. These spaces can be physical or virtual, and codes refer to a common language and several cultural aspects.

6. **Contributions in kind:** goods, products, services or equipment which are donated to an organization or cause, but which shouldn't be considered as financial contribution. For example, the donation of computers which are not being used by a company or the purchase of food for a community event.

7. **Core business:** the company's main activity. It's the heart or soul of the company. Social responsibility actions must, necessarily, be articulated in such a way that it will converge with core business, so that organization contribution will be consistent with what the company wants to do.

8. **Organizational culture:** concept that involves everything that a company does as well as how it does it. This includes practices and knowledge, the uses and customs of those who belong to it, as well as style and procedures, formal and informal, among many other factors.

9. **Sustainable development:** it is the kind of development which can be sustainable over time.

10. **Beneficiaries:** they are the targets of community action or volunteerism.

11. **Employee (also called collaborator, associate, and partner):** a person on the payroll of a company, as a full-time or part-time employee. It includes temporary and seasonal employees, as well as those who are on medical leave, maternity/paternity leave and others, and those who are on paid vacation. The data excludes the owners, freelance employees, unpaid family workers, farmworkers and domestic workers. People who are in a notice period, on unpaid leave, and on strike, aren't counted as employees.

12. **Civic engagement:** the common thread of participation and community building. It means improving life quality, making a difference, and developing a combination of knowledge, abilities, values, trust and motivation among people... Elements of civic involvement include community service, group participation, as well as being connected to information and current events, and to individuals and organizations and to political involvement.

13. **Philanthropy:** when a company makes a financial, or in-kind contribution to a cause, organization or individual.

14. **Management:** It is the action and effect of administrating. They are the mechanisms or techniques used in planning, organizing, directing and controlling resources to obtain the greatest possible economic or social profit.

15. **Impact or business results:** significant changes in the performance of a certain business function, such as (but not limited to) changes in employees' engagement, sales, brand repositioning.

16. **Impact:** intentional or non-intentional changes, positive or negative, linked to the level of achievement of program goals, but which can be beyond one's grasp.

17. **Indicator**: management tool that facilitates quantification, in a precise manner, the achievement of strategic goals. It also helps people visualize results, expected or not, in order to take corrective measures.

18. **Input:** measures of the investment in money or non-monetary done to a program, including budget, staff work hours, hours of volunteerism.

19. **Private social investment (PSI):** responsible, proactive and strategic use of private resources. Its expected return is the well-being of the community and its long-term development.

20. **Public leadership:** when a company takes a leadership position over a special social cause, promoting public awareness or change of behavior (for example, by means of public service announcements, TV appearances, presence on radio, on social networks), supporting political changes, at a world, national or local level.

21. **Cause marketing:** marketing effort which also aims at increasing the level of awareness, and at raising money and/or consumer involvement in an issue or social cause, also known as cause-related marketing.

22. **Civil society organization (CSO):** social organizations with different levels of formalization with the objective of promoting human rights, focusing specifically on social needs, complementing the state and the market.

23. **Community partners:** organizations with which a company signs a specific agreement to share time, talent, financial or in-kind contribution.

24. **Interested parties:** interest groups linked to the organization activity. Depending on the company own activity, it may include shareholders and employees, the community, the consumers, the chain value, among others.

25. **Strategic planning:** process to develop and keep a strategic direction that align the organization aims and resources to the context opportunities, from plan development and implementation to attain specific objectives.

26. **Communication plan**: it is a set of communication actions determined on the basic objectives and strategies established beforehand, depending on the public to be reached and on the channels or media that will be used.

27. **Corporate volunteer plan (CVP):** a corporate volunteer program is defined as a plan which aims at motivating and qualify the employees to serve the needs of the community effectively with the help of the company. The programs also called volunteer programs at the workplace, volunteer programs supported by the company, or employee volunteer program, are one of the components of the company social responsibility program, of the community participation program or of another program which deals with corporate social cause involvement.

28. **Community issues:** social challenges that prevent the 'well-being' of those who live and work in a specific geographical or demographical area. Examples of community issues may include, besides others, housing shortage, infrastructure, unemployment, access to education and to health.

29. **Achievement or results**: measures of the work which indicate progress in relation to results/social impact or business without showing the significance change that impacts or results represent. Examples of achievement include volunteer hours, individuals attended and tutorial sessions executed, for instance. This evaluation term is also known as products or outcomes.

30. **Business social responsibility (BSR)/ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** at the beginning of XX century, the expansion of the influence of the big companies in the process of sustainable growth generated criticism and resistance in different segments of public opinion that demanded equal conditions. In answer to this demand, the companies began developing social responsibility actions based on a diagnosis of their own organization that detected negative impacts of their actions on the community and called the interested parties to talk, and mapped out expectations in order to give answers.

31. **Social results/impacts:** significant changes on the well-being of individuals or communities, such as improvement in the level of education, food safety or financial literacy, among other types of change, some immediately measurable, other intangible at the moment, but which could be measured in the future with an adequate plan of evaluation.

32. **Civil society:** also known as third sector, it is the organized part of society outside commercial and governmental structures: It is made up of "non-profit organizations" or "non-governmental organizations". It includes a great diversity of manifestations which reflect the multiple social interests articulated in it.

33. **Volunteerism:** attention to social needs, mainly from low-income sectors, based on coordinated action of different groups of volunteers. Volunteerism starts with an individual decision to participate in a program, however, it is expressed by means of diverse organizations that make it possible.

34. **Volunteerism based on abilities:** Volunteer activities using volunteers' abilities, knowledge and talent to help institutions and provide services to the community.

35. **Volunteerism of employees:** programs and policies of a company which encourage and mobilize their employees to get involved directly in a cause or in a non-profit organization.

36. **Volunteerism supported by the company:** volunteer activities in which the company invests resources, allowing their employees to use part of their workhours to participate or supporting their spontaneous initiatives; sometimes it even hires facilitators or non-profit organizations to set up the activities. The company provides other types of support, such as, financial, of materials, knowledge transfer, etc.

37. **Pro-bono volunteerism:** a type of employee involvement which can be considered as service based on abilities, pro-bono service use the basic abilities of an employee to provide knowledge to organizations that serve the public good. It may include but it is not restricted to providing service in information technology (IT), marketing, graphic design, human resources consulting, legal support and others. Pro-bono service is characterized by three criteria: it is a formal commitment, an employee carries out a professional function; the beneficiary of the action is formally acknowledgeable. The action has an assistance objective and never distributes profit. In most of the cases, pro-bono will benefit directly the non-profit organization, for instance, extending internal operations and qualification, and not their final beneficiaries. This statement is consistent with the requisite that pro-bono work should be a direct application of the basic work description of volunteer employees or it is a type of free service given by the company.

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