ENGAGING PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The CSR concept as it exists does not capture the essence of the kind of partnership required by CSR in developing countries to make the needed impact. In the bid to make CSR more beneficial in addressing developing country needs, partnership among stakeholders has been advocated as the panacea for CSR. In an attempt to develop a suitable CSR partnership for developing countries therefore, the study analyzed some NGO/corporate partnerships and community/corporate partnerships currently being used for CSR delivery in Ghana. Benefits of the NGO/corporate partnership include the availability of expertise and funds for CSR projects while the community/corporate partnerships benefit from the close interaction between the key stakeholders and targeted funding from the MNCs. The major drawback of both partnerships is their inability to engage in CSR from a systems perspective thus excluding some key stakeholders, particularly the communities. The government of Ghana which is in a pivotal position for development has no clear polices regarding CSR implementation and rather plays an indirect role in facilitating CSR by granting licenses and approvals for development projects.

While NGO/corporate partnership and community/corporate partnerships met some CSR needs they were not effective in delivering the CSR that Ghana and developing countries require. I therefore posit the community corporate partnership responsibility (CCPR), a three stage concept that recognizes the key role of partnership among stakeholders for meaningful and mutually beneficial outcomes. The CCPR process involves community pre-entry processes, community engagement processes, and the CSR implementation processes and activities.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility; Partnership; Systems; Developing Countries; NGO/Corporate Partnerships; Community/Corporate Partnerships

INTRODUCTION

The interest in seeking alternative ways to the present the practice of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in developing countries is on the rise because the needed impact has not been felt. This has been attributed to the inherent differences in socio-economic conditions and CSR drivers pertaining in the developing countries being at variance with its western origins. In developed countries CSR is biased toward environmental issues and economic contributions geared towards creating an enabling environment for responsible business (Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Crane and Matten, 2007) and driven by government regulations and market forces (Visser, 2007). On the other hand, the different socio-economic profile and basic human survival needs that characterize developing countries do not make it possible for this CSR approach to make the same impact. This led Antonis, Konstantinos, Ioannis, and Walter 2011; Dima and Ramez 2007; and Griesse, 2007 to describe CSR in developing countries including Ghana as lacking a systemic, focused, and institutionalized approach. In Ghana, CSR is mainly

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philanthropic or voluntary in nature (Antonis, Konstantinos, Ioannis, & Walter 2011; Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011; Dima & Ramez, 2007; Griesse, 2007; & Ofori & Hinson, 2007). Companies are largely seen as integrating social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders as after thoughts (Dowuona-Hammond & Atuguba, 2008; Ofori and Hinson, 2007; *www.ghanaoilwatch.org; & www.csr-weltweit.de*). Even though CSR has become a topical issue because of the negative practices of multinational companies[1] (MNC) in their host communities, it is not seen as a priority of the government of Ghana. Activities which are termed as CSR have been given attention by companies particularly in the extractive industry, trying to improve their public image by involving themselves in social, educational and health-related programs as a result of the issues raised by the communities. In the recent past, in tandem with the interest CSR is gaining worldwide, other organizations have become involved in corporate giving either in response to emergencies or as part of the CSR bandwagon. The Ghanaian public however has not been convinced about many of these initiatives because they are perceived to be for economic gain or for public relations (PR) moves by the companies. This is particularly true in situations where the purported CSR activities do not compensate for the damage to the environment and the recipients are not consulted about their needs before the initiatives are put in place. These resulted in activities not being related to the needs of the communities in which they were constructed and the projects being poorly implemented because of lack of expertise. There was also little or no involvement of stakeholders like the community, government, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

CSR as practiced in Ghana and in many developing countries is beneficial mostly in the short to medium term at best and leaves in its wake a dependent community that is unable to sustain the project and leaves them worse off in the long term. Addressing the issues that hamper beneficial CSR projects and activities in the communities would therefore require effective partnerships between or among the CSR stakeholders. This means a partnership formed for the specific needs of all the stakeholders involved in CSR delivery. Partnership according to Lee (2011) is a relationship that benefits the participants in the collaboration who bring together unique and complementary resources and expertise. While these resources are ostensibly used to serve the common-interests, social issues and causes which are usually project-oriented, the beneficiary communities are left out of the very decisions that concern them. While it may be convenient for partners that have complementary resources and expertise, it does not meet the need nor capture the essence of partnerships that CSR in developing countries require. Partnerships for CSR purposes should fill in the gaps created by the existing concept of partnership which undermines CSR and capture the competing interests of all the stakeholders. A true or effective CSR partnership therefore, should be a relationship in which stakeholders contribute to and work together interdependently to achieve the objective of developing the community, the individuals, and the organization. A relationship in which the role of benefactor and beneficiary are not predetermined and all parties contribute what they have and use that as their position of strength for mutual benefit (Opon, 2015). It should also be seen as an interdependent relationship in which vulnerable groups are economically and technically empowered to support the operations of the corporation and to develop their community. It is my belief that a CSR partnership specifically defined for the needs of the developing world will make a positive difference to CSR. The need for this kind of partnership is important because a

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[1] A company that operates in more than one country and has a parent company in its home country with its majority-owned affiliates or subsidiaries located in other countries is a MNC. Their global business strategy is to target emerging markets with the most growth and profit potential for them.

single person or organization would not be able to cope with the existing challenges of CSR. Effective partnerships would not only bring together resources and capabilities of the partnering organizations for greater reach and impact on people's lives but would empower the communities make CSR initiatives sustainable. In developing an effective CSR partnership for developing countries in general and specifically for Ghana therefore, partnerships should be looked at from a systems perspective in which all stakeholders, especially the community work interdependently in the CSR process to achieve an agreed goal. In view of this, I propose to develop the community/corporate partnership responsibility (CCPR) concept, an approach that would be of direct benefit to the community, the most vulnerable and primary stakeholder, which has hitherto been marginalized and to the corporation as well. The aim of CCPR is to empower the community to gain the ability to participate meaningfully in the partnership for mutual benefit of the community and the corporation. Empowering the community will expand the CSR focus from tangible projects carried out at the convenience of the corporations to include intangible initiatives such as building capacity. It will ensure that internal capacities within the communities are built to support themselves and the operations of the corporations and for the development of their communities' to suit their needs and pace of development.

To establish the basis for the CCPR approach for developing countries, the existing partnerships will be analyzed looking at the involvement of all the identified stakeholders from the inception to the completion of a CSR intervention. Since CSR in developing countries is mainly targeted at community development, the analysis of identified partnerships in the study will focus on community engagement and involvement, decision-making, and the extent to which the project choice is culturally suitable and sustainable. The analysis will also consider whether local CSR projects are a replication of the MNCs headquarters CSR plans, the extent to which the community is involved in project implementation and the monitoring and evaluation processes used to determine the usefulness of the initiative to the community. Also of interest is the partners' resource contribution towards the intervention and if any community empowerment programs were conducted in the process. To make CSR more beneficial to developing countries and Ghana, the government's input will play a key role because of the development bias of CSR in these countries. The next section will discuss the role partnerships play in support of CSR as practiced in Ghana as a basis for the new approach.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PARTNERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF CSR IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In discussing the role partnership plays in support of CSR examples of existing partnerships between corporations and NGOs and communities will be analyzed to identify the current CSR partnership situation in Ghana. This analysis will be preceded by an overview of the general practice of NGO and corporate partnerships and what gave rise to the practice. Even though the practice of CSR has been in existence of several decades, CSR in developing countries received legitimacy from the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals[2] (MDG) of 2000 and the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals[3] (SDG) of 2015. It is from

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[2] The eight international development goals that were established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. All 189 United Nations member states at the time (there are 193 currently), and at least 23 international organizations, committed to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. (//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium_Development_Goals)
[3] The Sustainable Development Goals, otherwise known as the Global Goals, build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), eight anti-poverty targets that the world committed to achieving by 2015.

these agenda that the UN's 193 member states draw their development agenda *(http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/overview/index.html)*. Both development agenda sought to achieve the development goals of reduction in poverty, and providing a healthier environment among others directed at transforming developing countries. CSR in developing countries being development biased is therefore the vehicle for implementing the development agenda of countries and multinational companies of UN member states and agenda (Cahyandito, 2012). The biggest identified benefit of CSR is filling in the developmental gaps where governments are unable to provide for their constituents. In spite of this benefit, the contention that CSR is a reflection of the peculiarities, priorities and concerns of western countries and does not meet the needs of developing countries still holds (Idemudia; 2012; Dartey-Baah & Amponsah – Tawiah, 2011). The westernized practice of CSR has therefore resulted in developing countries not benefiting much from the CSR activities in their communities because of cultural, geographical, and political differences among others. The dissatisfaction has led to the search for alternative ways of practicing corporate responsibility in developing countries to address existing gaps and issues caused by the existing anomalies in practice (Idemudia, 2011; Dartey-Baah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2011; Visser; 2005).

The nature of the CSR concept which lends itself to multiple definitions and different interpretations does not take the systems perspective into consideration in its implementation. This is a significant omission since the systems view is crucial to the success of any project because it posits that, all related systems should be identified and be made to work in an interrelated manner if any intervention to be effective. In carrying out CSR in a community therefore, the related systems are those to be affected by and those that will affect the system of interest, which is identified as the community. The CSR concept falls short of the impact it seeks to make because it focuses on the corporation as the only system within the CSR process. The corporation is made responsible for the development activities in the community without recourse to the other systems, thus neglecting the influence of the other systems on the targeted CSR initiatives. This manifests in the corporations providing for the communities based on what they perceive to be the needs of the community at the expense of their needs and building the capacity of the people to be responsible for their needs. This practice has created a benefactor-beneficiary relationship which the stakeholders are perpetuating, thus creating a situation of dependency among the host communities.

To change this perception of CSR to one of interdependence, CSR delivery needs to be improved through building effective partnerships among the stakeholders. An effective partnership requires CSR being viewed from a systems perspective by identifying all stakeholders, assessing their needs, identifying the roles each would play, and getting these roles players working in an interrelated manner. The systems mainly involved in CSR delivery in Ghana are the corporations, NGOs, government, and the communities. This interrelatedness, either formal or informal is what gives rise to partnership and can therefore be described as such. These partnerships are important to CSR because the effectiveness of a partnership ensures the implementation of a CSR delivery that adequately addresses the real needs of the community. This importance of working with other stakeholders in CSR has been noted by corporations and

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The new SDGs, and the broader sustainability agenda, go much further than the MDGs, addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people.
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdg overview/post-2015-development-agenda.html

as a result many MNCs in Ghana are involved in collaborations of various forms with NGOs and the communities in their operational areas which they describe as partnerships. However, in spite of the existing partnerships forged by these organizations for CSR purposes, CSR is still unable to make the needed impact in Ghana. To support the development of a CSR approach that will benefit host communities in Ghana and developing countries in general, the study will identify and analyze some existing CSR partnerships and draw on the strengths and opportunities presented by these partnerships.

The most common example of partnerships formed for CSR purposes in developing countries including Ghana are those between the corporation and non- governmental organizations (NGOs) referred to hereafter as NGO/corporate partnerships or NGO/MNC partnerships. NGOs in this study refer to professional independent societal organizations that fight against poverty and under-development among others (Poret, 2014). Their activities "relieve the suffering, promote interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, and undertake community development" (Lekorwe & Mpabanga, 2007, p. 3). Requirements for their set up include being devoid of political power, being privately set up and independent of direct governmental control, as well as being a non-profit organization that supports development (Lekorwe & Mpabanga, 2007). The conditions of setting up the NGO make it imperative that they seek funding outside governments to run their organizations if they are to be considered independent and objective. This has led to the development of a relationship with profit making entities like corporations or business organizations that are positioned to provide them with the funding they need to run their operations. Corporations of particular interest to this study are the MNCs which because of their financial strengths and geographical coverage tend to have more developed CSR policies and practices which they implement through their subsidiaries with little or no modifications to these policies. Most of these MNCs because of the countries of origin are signatory to the UN's MDGs and SDGs, and therefore mainly engage in community development projects as their CSR initiatives. In Ghana, the MNCs in the extractive industry spearheaded CSR as a way of responding to the public outcries on their destructive activities. This led MNCs to engage in sporadic infrastructure development that had no bearing on the needs of the people. Even though there has since been an improvement in their activities because of continued public and media scrutiny and the collaborations with other organizations, more effort is required from them. In spite of being pacesetters of CSR in Ghana (Amponsah – Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2015; Idemudia 2011; Ofori & Hinsin, 2007) and having the financial resources to carry out development projects the MNCs' destructive operational nature and their history of unrelated CSR projects led to their being looked upon with suspicion when they ventured into community development. Their failed attempts at community engagement could largely be attributed to the lack of expertise and hence it became necessary seek the requisite expertise found in NGOs. It therefore became expedient for the MNCs to partner with NGOs with credibility and expertise that needed resources to support their activities in the areas of development that the MNCs lack. The mutual need of both the MNCs and the NGOs has given rise to formal and informal beneficial arrangements which they term partnerships.

These NGO/corporate partnerships in CSR are relationships in which the NGOs enter into an agreement with the corporation to carry out projects in given locations with funds provided by the corporation. It is also described as a formal or non-formal strategic collaboration among businesses and not-for-profit organizations in which each partner and the community benefit from the resources, time, and skills resulting from projects (Niveen & Anton, 2014;

Poret, 2014; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009; Idemudia, 2007). Du and Vieira Jr., (2012) described CSR partnerships between businesses and non-profit organizations as effective ways in which they achieve corporate social engagement because of the complementary roles they play in solving social issues. In Ghana, these descriptions of the partnerships apply and there are as many NGO/corporate partnerships in CSR as there are MNCs (Amponsah – Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2015; Idemudia 2011; Ofori & Hinsin, 2007). The large MNCs generally establish foundations which are separate entities from the business to be responsible for their charity or philanthropic work. These foundations thrive on partnerships because they are usually understaffed and are unable to reach their desired targets on their own. Vodafone Ghana, a subsidiary of Vodafone Group plc, a British multinational telecommunications company aims through its Vodafone Ghana Foundation to bring sustainable socio-economic development to local communities. Vodafone's CSR program is one of the largest and is spread throughout Ghana yet it operates with only two members of staff. It does this through making charitable contributions to its key partners in social and economic development in Ghana. Their partnerships include community based groups, civil society organizations, NGOs and other corporate bodies who share the Foundation's vision, mission and values. (*www.ghananewsagency.com.gh*). Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Ghana Limited, a subsidiary of Coca-Cola Company of the United States of America operates its CSR partnerships through foundations and operates in a manner similar to Vodafone. Coca-Cola Foundation in Ghana works with NGOs to prevent diseases and improve health care delivery to communities; provides assistance for youth development in Ghana; and in partnership with USAID provides access to safe, clean drinking water and toilet facilities to some parts of the country (*www.newsghana.com.gh;* Torkornoo, 2013). Unilever Ghana is an arm of Unilever PLC an Anglo-Dutch multinational consumer goods company co-headquartered in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and London, United Kingdom (*www.unilever.com*). Even though Unilever Ghana operates through a foundation, unlike Vodafone and Coca-Cola, its CSR activities in Ghana are closely linked to its specific brands and products instead of thematic areas (Grunert & Hinson, 2013). Unilever mirrors the company's global view of CSR as being part of its Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP).

Other MNCs involved in CSR on the other hand are without foundations yet operate similarly to those with foundations. Accra Brewery Limited (ABL), a subsidiary of SabMiller, a South African company, though has no known established CSR foundation in Ghana, engages in organized CSR activities in Ghana. Together with the NGO, World Vision Ghana, ABL constructs boreholes and implements sanitation and hygiene interventions. Barclays Bank Ghana also operates without a foundation and runs its CSR activities termed as citizenship based on the global policies of its headquarters based in the UK. Its flagship program, Building Young Futures is a partnership with UNICEF in which Barclays' staff volunteers their time and expertise to help deliver the training and mentoring of young people (*www.barclaysafrica.com*). While these NGO/corporate relationships as described carried out projects as solutions to perceived developmental problems identified by the partners, the following analysis will determine if these were partnerships that were of benefit to the communities.

All the identified examples of partnerships did not take a systems view in their approach to CSR because the host communities which were the key stakeholders were not involved in the decision-making and implementation processes. The MNCs and the NGOs focused on their mutual needs of complementary resources and skills to form alliances that were convenient to achieve their ends. The corporations actively sought out NGOs that shared their vision disregarding the community and the existing local government structures and vice versa. As

regards the community engagement and involvement activities, there were no clear processes which the NGO and corporation partnerships engaged in. The communities were usually evident only during the handing over ceremonies surrounding the project which were media and public relations events. It was also noted that, the partnerships were driven by the MNCs directed thematic areas which were replications of their western headquarters CSR policies. The replication of projects without recourse to local conditions in some cases is culturally unsuitable and as a result the programs are not sustained. An example of a culturally unsuitable project is the Phoenics project in which a UK based NGO supported English speaking Ghanaian teachers to teach English to Ghanaian pupils. It is unsuitable because Ghanaian teachers are already English speaking and having to relearn new phonetics from the British will be unsustainable because of the different cultural linguistic backgrounds. Project implementation by the identified partnerships was based on the MNCs providing financial resources while the NGOs contributed the skills. The NGOs designed, executed, and monitored and evaluated the projects using their standards to determine the success of the projects. Resource contribution was limited to the MNC and NGO partners and the community was relegated to being a non-partner beneficiary. While this kind of partnership meets the general definition of partnership in which it is described as the sharing of skills and resources for community development (Niveen & Anton, 2014; Poret, 2014; Du & Vieira Jr., 2012; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009; Idemudia, 2007) it falls short of being a CSR partnership that developing countries need. Though short of developing country CSR needs, the corporate/NGO partnership arrangement has some strengths that can be leveraged to develop a more effective CSR partnership approach. Notable among the benefits are the assignment of clear roles and responsibilities of the partners; the expertise of the NGOs; and the provision of financial resources by the MNCs.

Another example of a CSR partnership practiced in Ghana is that between the community and the MNC to carry out development projects within the host communities of the MNCs. This kind of community/MNC partnership excludes NGO participation and CSR projects are implemented in collaboration with the community. These relationships do not have any identified formal structure and are carried out for either public relations purposes or based on what the corporations perceive the communities need or in support of the corporations business operations. Third party organizations are contracted by the MNCs for limited durations mainly for the construction of development projects or to build the capacity of the community members in specific areas of the MNC's value chain. Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited, a subsidiary of Diageo Ltd and Cadbury Ghana, a British multinational confectionery company owned by Mendelez International of the USA partner with the community by strengthening the cassava and cocoa value chains respectively. This is with the aim of creating jobs and improving livelihoods to ensure a secure source of supply for its breweries. They do these by financially supporting and building the capacity of farmers through the use of agricultural experts who train the farmers in farming methods for better quality produce and higher yield. Mining companies also enter into partnerships with the community because they usually live in the communities in which they operate. Their CSR agenda in Ghana is mainly in community development initiatives such as social investment support schemes, construction and establishing sustainable livelihood programs which are funded by well-established foundations. Favored among the community development programs by the large scale mining companies is the sustainable livelihood or the alternative livelihoods programs. These programs comprise small cottage industries which the mining companies believe to be re-skilling methods. They are conducted by independent organizations contracted by the mining MNCs ostensibly to enable the communities become self-

sustaining to reduce the communities' dependence on the mines **(**Amponsah-Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2015).

This kind of community/corporate partnership usually has no formal agreement between the community and MNC and is described as informal. An analysis of this partnership indicated that, as in the NGO/MNC partnership, a systemic perspective of CSR was overlooked. The focus of the partnership was on the corporation providing for the community and the community being a recipient and not on their working inter-connectedly. Even though the partnership targeted the community, the MNC sometimes involved other stakeholders like experts and contractors in CSR delivery. Local government, which could be a key actor in the support of CSR in the communities', was excluded from the CSR initiatives. For the most part in this partnership, in situations that did not involve infrastructure development, members of the community are taken through capacity-building programs to improve their livelihood using other stakeholders not in the partnership. The inputs required for implementing the new skills were provided by the MNCs to ensure that the beneficiaries used the skills imparted to them. Even though the communities were made the direct recipients of the MNC in this partnership, the MNCs stakeholder engagement processes were not evident. There is the need for improvement in the engagement processes to support the design of alternative livelihood programs that can build on the initial primary cottage skills taught. It would also bring diversification to the CSR programs that solely feed the operations of the MNCs. Capacity building should also include skills that could be used in the MNCs at all levels rather than those that keep community members living at the subsistence level. The strengths of these community/ MNC partnerships that can be leveraged to develop a more beneficial CSR delivery are the community being the direct recipient of the resources allocated to it by the MNCs; having a dedicated fund and program for community development; and using the expertise of contracted organizations only when required. The targeted use of expertise serves as a cost cutting measure since funds for CSR purposes would be disbursed by the MNCs only when needed.

A more formal partnership arrangement between the community and MNC is the Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) between the timber or logging companies and the communities from which they log. The SRA is an innovative tool for promoting benefit sharing in the commercial logging sector in Ghana's forestry legislation. Under this legislation, as part of the requirements for granting of timber utilization contracts, timber companies are required to negotiate benefit-sharing agreements with local forest communities**.** The SRA approach to partnership is a formal arrangement between the community, MNCs, and local government. This partnership is described as such because there is a signed agreement between the partners after a negotiation process. A key benefit of this partnership approach is the consideration of the system of interest as the focus. This is proven by the agreements signed between the logging companies and the communities, most of which were signed by the chiefs of the communities. In the few cases where the agreements were signed with the district assembly, the assembly had oversight of those communities. In assessing how effective this approach to partnership was, there was an indication of some level of community engagement prior to the signing of the agreement. Even though the corporation made the final decisions on what was needed by the communities, the community development committees were mandated to make some level of decisions regarding their needs which are mainly in infrastructure.

Community empowerment programs were not evident in the signed agreements, which was an indication of low level importance accorded this activity. On the other hand, the communities' involvement in the approved projects ceased at this stage and the corporation implemented the project with its own contractors. There was no indication of monitoring and evaluation processes and the corporation was the sole provider of the resources. The strengths of this model lie in the recognition of the government as an actor in the CSR delivery system and including it in the negotiation process. The signing of a formal contract with the stakeholders is an indication of a binding contract to hold the partners accountable. The provision for and the establishment of development committees in the host communities is a move in the direction of making partnerships more community-need oriented. Opportunities for developing this concept include improving the community engagement processes to include a wider section of the community; shifting the focus of community engagement from negotiation to discussing issues of mutual benefit; building the capacity of members of the community in scalable livelihood projects; and empowering the development committee and entrusting it to take on more responsibilities including monitoring and maintaining infrastructure developed.

The benefit of the formal community and MNC partnerships is mainly in the provision of the developmental needs of the communities. Among the disadvantages of the formal MNC community partnership's CSR practice is the absence of empowerment and building capacity in the community to carry out development projects which are invariably in the areas of health, education, community and infrastructure development, and alternative livelihood skills (Ayine, 2008). Most projects in the said areas are carried out by the corporations based on their belief of the communities' needs with little or no involvement from the community. This is indicative of a benefactor /beneficiary relationship on the part of the community and misses the essence of partnership where the parties involved are to contribute complementary skills towards the project. Moreover, the provision of these amenities, ostensibly to provide for the communities' developmental needs serve a purpose only in the short term and long term needs are not considered. As noted by Ayine (2008) almost all the CSR projects under the SRA are tangible projects like infrastructure that are used as evidence by the corporations to fulfill industry requirements for CSR. Additionally, the recipients of the infrastructural benefits are ill equipped financially and technically to maintain them and they fall into disrepair when the MNCs leave the locality. This leaves the community worse off and subsequently breeds dissatisfaction. This state of affairs is an indication that the capacity of the recipients was not built to maintain projects and a testament to the fact that the project may not have been needed by the community in the first place. Even in situations where there were SRAs, the community representatives had little or no negotiating skills and did not have access to legal services. There was also no indication of replacing the trees cut or training programs to support the community in replenishing its forest cover. The ignorance of the communities makes them vulnerable and they end up not gaining a fair return on the resources they give out (Ayine, 2008). It can therefore be implied that the structures built and meager payment received by the chiefs were meant to replace the logs cut. Idemudia's (2007) statement that cash payments do not compensate for future loss of livelihood and neither can road or bridge construction nor the provision of utilities and the award of scholarships compensate for destruction of natural resources aptly described this.

From the foregoing discussions, the partnerships described were not sufficient enough in themselves to provide the kind of partnerships needed for CSR delivery in the host communities.

While the relationships between NGOs and corporations could generally be described as a partnership based on the general understanding of the concept, it does not meet the requirements for addressing CSR needs in developing countries. These partnerships while being collaborations between a profit and non-profit organization that brought together resources and expertise for development projects were not effective to deliver the CSR that Ghana needs. The CSR projects were implemented directly in the communities by the NGOs with the funds provided by the MNCs. Strengths of this partnership are its ability to assign clear roles and responsibilities to each partner; using the expertise of the NGOs; and the financial support that the MNCs bring to bear on CSR projects. On the other hand, this approach did not take a systems view of CSR and therefore the existing partnerships were between the MNCs and the NGOs and excluded the other stakeholders, particularly the community. It relegated the community to observer and passive beneficiary roles and in most situations the MNC additionally played an observer role. The informal partnership between the MNC and community was an approach in which both entities entered into a relationship in which the community projects were solely financed and implemented by the MNCs. In this collaboration, MNCs contracted experts to conduct interventions on a need basis in supporting communities to improve their economic circumstances. Capacity building programs were designed for sustainable living skills to improve the economic and social circumstances. In some relationships, a dedicated fund for community development to support effective CSR delivery was established. The strengths of this partnership were the use of experts when needed, building the capacity of community members to improve their livelihoods, and the setting up of a foundation to provide funds to carry out the community initiatives. The drawbacks of this partnership were the MNCs identifying the communities' needs instead of the communities being equipped to identify their own needs; the MNCs contracting the experts to carry out non scalable capacity building programs they think the communities need; and capacity building programs for improving livelihoods being targeted at feeding the operations of the MNCs. The formal community/MNC partnership, the SRA, is the agreement signed between the community and the MNC and details the responsibilities of the corporation towards the community from which it carries out its logging activities. The strengths of the formal community MNC partnership lay in recognizing government as a partner in CSR delivery; drawing up a formal agreement with the identified stakeholders; and encouraging the establishment of development committees in the host communities. Weaknesses of this partnership included the MNCs not building the capacity-building of its communities; the MNCs being the final deciders on the communities' needs; and negotiations being unfavorable to the communities because they lacked negotiation skills and as well as being ignorant about the value of their assets.

In all of the above, none of the partnerships formed for CSR delivery approached CSR with a medium to long term sustainability perspective which is what Ghana needs. The CSR projects that the partnership approaches engaged in did not support the communities to become self-sufficient. The projects were usually short term measures that did not empower the community but created a culture of dependency which perpetuates the cycle of poverty and sometimes leaves them worse off. The projects manifested in one-off infrastructure developments that the communities were unable to maintain after the MNCs handed over the projects to the communities. Capacity-building programs for the community were not geared towards progressive advancement and either focused on feeding the business operations of the MNCs or were designed for subsistence living. Identifying the issues and gaps in the existing partnerships provides opportunities to create a unique partnership approach that will serve the

needs of the communities to support development in Ghana in the MNCs operational areas. The greatest opportunity for developing an effective partnership approach to make a CSR meet the needs is for the actors to take a systemic view of CSR and involve all stakeholders in its delivery. Improving the community engagement processes and empowering and building the capacity of members of the community to make them independent is another opportunity. CSR initiatives should take a sustainable perspective which includes empowering the communities to decide and participate in obtaining their needs; and establishing and empowering the community to be competent enough to manage and sustain projects. Benefits that the partnerships can leverage to meet Ghana's CSR delivery needs include the use of experts when and where needed; building the capacity of community members to improve their livelihoods; and the setting up of a foundation to provide funds to carry out the community initiatives. Other strengths are the recognition that government could be a useful partner in the CSR delivery and the use of a formal agreement among the partners in CSR delivery. Establishing development committees in the host communities for the empowerment of the community structures would support the needed partnership. Assigning partners with clear roles and responsibilities increases the willingness of partners to work as a partnership thus making it useful for beneficial CSR delivery. The expertise of the NGOs and the financial resources that the MNCs contribute towards CSR delivery are resources that would augur well for a partnership approach that will address Ghana's CSR implementation needs.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN CSR IN GHANA

Government is a complex system made up of many interrelated parts which serves as the ruling body in a country and has the responsibility of providing for the needs of the people within the country. Government could benefit from CSR in addressing the social demands of the people it governs because steering of societies has gone beyond capability of governments alone. It is now the responsibility of several societal structures working together through new governance arrangements (Steurer, 2009; Moon, 2004). In the developing countries, the CSR agenda is utilized to achieve government's developmental goal. This is particularly because CSR is accepted by many governments as the business sector's contribution. to meet policy objectives related to sustainable development and environmental protection, and foreign policy goals such as human development and development assistance (Steurer, 2009).

Since CSR falls within the domain of development in developing countries, it is in the government of Ghana's interest to identify the CSR domains and processes that it can use to leverage corporations' capacities for development (Okoye, 2012)**.** The importance of government's role in policy development to promote CSR practice is key, particularly in developing countries as evidenced by the Director General of the WTO and former European Commissioner for Trade, Pascal Lamy, statement that, "The societal benefits of corporate responsibility practices will remain limited unless they can be incorporated into broader strategies, and public policies certainly have a role to play in this respect" (p. 849).

For CSR to develop in the developing world, particularly in Ghana, the government needs to play a more active role than it is doing is presently doing. The government of Ghana comprises central government made up of ministries, departments and their agencies and the regional and local governments and their decentralized agencies and departments. As in many developing countries, Ghana has witnessed a slow rate of progress in the development in CSR because of a number of factors. The concept

of CSR in Ghana not being clearly defined is one of the factors which has resulted in actors misunderstanding the concept and implementing it ways that suit their purposes. Additionally, is the absence of a comprehensive legal framework or streamlined process to guide the practice of CSR (Amponsah-Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2015; Anku-Tsede & Deffor, 2014; Mzembe, 2012). Ghana plays an indirect facilitating role in the practice of CSR with the use of a few existing disjointed yet relevant laws and guidelines that are in place to ensure that corporate organizations engage in responsible business operations to guide the practice of CSR. These laws that guide the practice of CSR comprise constitutional provisions, local government laws and requirements contained in different Acts of Parliament (Torvienyeku, Hinson, & Adom n.d.; Anku-Tsede & Deffor, 2014**;** Amoako, 2014**).** The law on the environment enjoins each organization whose operations would have an effect on the environment to conduct an environmental impact assessment. Government also supports CSR through the provision of incentives to companies undertaking activities that fulfill development needs, especially in deprived areas. Government structures in these areas grant the necessary licenses, permission and technical support for the construction of infrastructure. Government supports the social and environmental improvements through these organizations and their charitable contributions to needy institutions by granting them tax incentives (*www.modernghana.com; www.giz.de)*.

Government of Ghana's indirect role in CSR evidenced by scattered legislation has led to the absence of a clear understanding of the CSR concept and a comprehensive CSR framework in Ghana. These lapses have made it possible for the MNCs and NGOs in Ghana to practice CSR to suit their interests. This liberty in the practice of CSR has brought about the skewed focus on infrastructural development in health and education sectors by the MNCs and the ineffectiveness of CSR delivery. The attention on a few development areas, the ambiguity of the CSR concept, and the absence of a CSR framework which have affected the effectiveness of CSR delivery in Ghana can be rectified if government plays a more active role in CSR delivery. For CSR to become effective therefore, government will have to play a more defined role that will drive CSR. Government can play a more effective role in CSR by harmonizing and streamlining the CSR activities and legislations in Ghana towards national development (Amponsah-Tawiah & Dartey-Baah, 2015). Government should clarify and promote the CSR concept to stakeholders such as government, corporations, communities and civil society organizations (CSOs). Business and professional codes of ethics and modalities for the enforcement of the dictates of the document should form part of this policy document to contribute to effective CSR delivery **(***www.giz.de*). Defining a framework to influence and encourage businesses and different levels of government to participate in CSR and lead by example will improve the delivery of CSR. Empowering state organizations to implement sanctions on organizations that go contrary to the CSR government codes and legislations will ensure compliance. Aside government playing facilitator and legislation roles, a more structured intermediary role between MNCs, government sectors and stakeholders such as companies, consultants, industrial associations, citizens, consumers, investors, and stakeholder groups (Albareda, Lozano, Tencati, Midttun & Perrinin, 2008) would support CSR delivery. Government could drive CSR by appointing a minister who will be responsible for CSR as is done in the UK. Granting tax incentives to encourage philanthropy from local actors who understand the culture of the Ghanaian people would

contribute to make CSR more need oriented in Ghana. Government being involved in multi-sectoral partnerships at the community level will keep it abreast of issues of CSR and will serve to direct and enforce policy in this relationship. The key to CSR effectiveness is dependent on effective and true partnerships and this requires government to encourage partnerships that will make the host communities a key partner of community development. The government should therefore develop a comprehensive Ghanaian CSR policy to include guidelines for the sustainable involvement of communities in CSR delivery. Additionally, government would need to play the multiple roles of a facilitator, an enforcer, a driver, a legislator, and a partner for sustainable and effective CSR delivery in Ghana.

DEFINING A NEW APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIP

While each of the partnerships described above has their strengths they are ineffective on their own in addressing the needs of CSR in Ghana. At the same time the government of Ghana which is in the unique position of driving the implementation of CSR to make it service its country's needs does not have a focus where CSR is concerned. This situation indicates the need for the stakeholders to build a partnership that would make CSR more attuned to the needs of the host communities effective. From the partnerships cited in the study, defining a new approach to CSR in Ghana would build upon the formal SRA partnership model identified between the community and the MNCs. I posit that formal community /corporate partnership type is the best choice to improve CSR in Ghana because the community and its people are most negatively affected in the implementation of CSR. This is because its members of the community lose their livelihood and their natural resources. As a key stakeholder the community is the most vulnerable because it does not have the capacity to negotiate for itself. The CCPR concept is an approach to empowering the community not only to become economically viable but to be able to run its own affairs and that of the corporation in the long term. It is recognized that implementing this concept will not be without its challenges. In Ghana, some challenges would be the low level of formal literacy on the part of the community members because of the absence of development in those areas; empowering the community to become involved in negotiation and decision-making, getting the corporations to recognize the community's interest in their operations, and involving them in its affairs. Addressing these challenges will go a long way towards implementing CCPR which will form part of the larger research path that I intend to follow.

Community corporate partnership responsibility (CCPR) is a term that clearly recognizes the key role of partnership among stakeholders for meaningful and mutually beneficial outcomes (Opon, 2015, p. 33). CCPR aims at ensuring that both the community and MNC are better developed than when the business organization began operations in the community. CCPR is described as "businesses and stakeholders working in partnership for mutually beneficial outcomes in interdependent relationships devoid of benefactor and beneficiary roles and where community members are empowered to support the development of the community and the business and ultimately manage the affairs of the business operations within the community" (Opon, 2015, p. 33). Implementing the CCPR concept will require the MNCs going through a multi-stage process after the legal issues in-country have been concluded. The process will involve

community pre-entry processes and will begin with the MNC assessing its readiness to engage in CSR at the local or subsidiary level; community engagement processes; CSR implementation to include empowerment and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and passing on responsibility.

The MNCs community pre-entry processes comprise activities the MNCs need to engage in before they begin operations in the communities. It would begin with an assessment of the MNCs business operations to determine its readiness to implement CSR in a subsidiary. This is because the MNCs would be implementing a developed country CSR policy in a developing country therefore there would be the need to assess the suitability of how the subsidiary MNC was set up to implement CSR. A way an MNC can assess its readiness for CSR is to model its business processes to determine how it would successfully include CSR in its operations since most organization are set up before including CSR in their operations. While this can be done in various ways, Bridgeland and Zahavi's (2008) business modeling approach based on four business model disciplines would be helpful. The first discipline is the business motivation model to help describe the MNCs CSR goals and its goal accomplishment in relation to the MNCs values. The second which is the business organization model would depict the units and departments and working groups within the MNC. It will also indicate the interactions and the roles the staff will play in implementing CSR within the MNC. This is essential because CSR departments of the MNCs identified in Ghana are understaffed and therefore the personnel are unable to effectively implement the CSR polices of the organization on their own. Mapping how the MNC is structurally organized and how these different sections and their staff interact will help the MNCs plan adequately for the projects intended. The business process model would be responsible for laying out the sequence in which tasks are to be carried out to avoid duplication of effort, to cut out excesses, and to allocate the needed resources in a timely manner for CSR implementation. The fourth discipline, the business rule model would describe what shapes and guides the behavior of the MNC and its employees in implementing CSR. It would help set the guidelines for interacting with the communities in the course of implementing CSR. Using Bridgeland and Zahavi's (2008) business modeling approach will help the MNC in Ghana identify a clear purpose and map their processes for CSR. This process model is particularly important for MNCs working in Ghana because their CSR polices are directed from their headquarters which have motivations and drivers that may not be suited to Ghana's situation. The modeling process will serve as a guide for the subsidiary MNCs in Ghana to understand motivation for CSR, the way it should be organized, its processes and to set rules to guide the behavior of its staff in interacting with the community so as not to violate their culture.

Another pre-entry process is for non-indigenes to learn the culture of the host community especially in the particular location where their operations will be carried out. This is because Ghana has over a 100 languages and almost an equal number of cultures, some of which are very different from each other. Learning the culture would provide an entry point to community engagement that would lead to a more mutually beneficial relationship from the onset. This is because most cultures in Ghana have collaboration as the bedrock of their community living and CSR processes could build on what exists. While certain cultural beliefs, thinking and behavior may be viewed as being inconsistent with sustainability (Doppelt, 2003) it will important to understand them so that CSR

delivery is respectful and mindful of how the issues are approached. To ensure that a systemic view of CSR is considered and all stakeholders are taken into consideration, it will be necessary to conduct a stakeholder assessment using organizational development processes. The processes would identify and segment the existing stakeholders that are embedded within the system of interest and those that interact with it. Stakeholder segmentation and categorization would avoid the situation where they are handled as one generic unit instead being recognized as groups with unique interests and needs. The assessment would also gather information on occupations, community profile, alternative livelihood interests, and any other issues of interest. This aspect can be done by NGOs if the MNCs do not have the capacity to do so.

The community engagement process would commence with stakeholder dialogue with the different segments of stakeholders to elicit the actual needs of the stakeholders. If dialogue is to make CSR work for the community the MNCs must not drive the dialogue, decide its objective or who and in what ways participation should be engaged. Dialogue would be both generative and strategic and facilitated by a neutral entity such as the government or an NGO. The focus of the dialogue would need to shift from compensation and giving back to the community or what the MNC can do for the community. The dialogue would center on how both entities can work together and to find possible ways of working together for mutual benefit. A developmental objective and plan should be agreed on between the MNC and the communities to guide implementation. The CSR implementation process would begin with empowerment and capacity building programs to ensure that the community is capable of contributing towards the agreed upon development objectives. This would ensure that community can participate in the growth of the MNCs business and develop the capacity to build and sustain community projects. The objective of the empowerment and capacity building from the onset is to teach the community members to be self-sustaining in the long term. The community empowerment and capacity building would be progressive and built at different production stages of the MNC. The programs would cover the short, medium and the long terms to prevent the development of dependency among the community. Infrastructure development should not be the focus of the CSR activities because when the people are empowered they will have the ability to develop their community in dignity, at their own pace and in their own way.

Building the capacity should follow the operational cycle of the MNC. In the short term, the community would provide the raw materials to feed the MNC's production and be trained to take on non-skilled positions. In the short to medium term community members' capacity should have been built to take on skilled technical positions and small industries should be developed from the output of the MNCs. Support services for non-core business activities of the MNCs should have also been established. In the medium term to long term, the MNC should be able to source most raw materials from within the community and more skilled positions and some key positions should be filled by community members. In the long term, the community should be able to manage the operations of the MNC and would not require an expatriate to be at the helm of affairs. The measure of an effective CSR delivery would be the community members fully running the operations of the firm in the long term.

A systems perspective of CCPR will have the community and the MNC as the principal partners who would invite government, NGOs and other expert actors to participate in drawing up their developmental plan. The government and other stakeholders will be part of the partnership depending on the need of the principal partners in the process of implementing their CSR initiatives. Whilst all the stakeholders in the CCPR will be considered partners, their

inclusion will be at the instance of the principal partners. Therefore, instead of the NGO going into partnership with the MNC to carry out the intended interventions in the community, its services will be used in specialized areas at the behest of the principal partners. The benefits of the partnerships earlier identified would be leveraged in implementing CCPR for a true and effective partnership for CSE delivery. The use of experts when and where needed as in the case of the NGOs and government and building the capacity of community members in a scalable manner along the MNCs value chain would improve their livelihoods and make for a true partnership. The MNCs providing funds for CSR delivery through dedicated foundations would support the partners to effectively implement CSR activities. The use of a formal agreement will define the roles and responsibilities among the partners in CSR delivery and would facilitate monitoring and evaluation to keep the partnership focused on the CSR objectives. Another benefit is the recognition that government could be useful partner in the CSR delivery in addition to the facilitator, driver, and monitoring role in the communities to ensure that the agreements are adhered to in the short to medium term. In the long term, for CCPR to be institutionalized government will be required to take a strategic position in moving the CSR agenda forward by providing the legal framework through which the partners can operate.

CONCLUSION

CSR as practiced in developing countries focuses on short term benefits and as a result the host communities of the MNCs in many cases do not gain from its delivery. This is because the communities are merely recipients of development infrastructure that the MNCs think they need. Community engagement processes are poorly done if at all and empowerment and capacity building programs are neglected which makes the community unable to sustain projects entrusted to them. The major role CSR plays in development globally and particularly in developing countries has placed it outside the preserve of governments. Therefore the issues surrounding effective CSR delivery are cross-cutting and too complex for one sector to deal with. It requires several societal structures working together through new partnership arrangements since the existing ones have failed. The new partnership approach calls for arrangements that do more than collaborate with complementary resources and expertise for common interests. Partnerships for CSR in developing countries therefore require a relationship in which stakeholders work interdependently to develop the community, the individuals, and the MNC. The more interconnected these stakeholders are, the more effective the partnership. Presently, the marginalization of some stakeholders, the imbalance in the existing relationships, and the absence of interconnectedness have resulted in creating issues of partnership which negatively affects CSR delivery in developing countries. To develop an effective partnership for CSR purposes in Ghana, an analysis of three examples of existing partnerships in Ghana was conducted. In all three examples, the MNC/corporate partnership, the formal and informal community partnerships have similar drawbacks to their partnerships in the CSR delivery. The partnership approaches indicated that the partners did not take a systemic view of CSR in their interventions and therefore left out some key stakeholders. Community engagement processes were inadequate and therefore the community was excluded from participating in a manner that would help with their development. Capacity building programs where they existed did not empower the communities to take responsibility for their own development. Benefits of the partnerships included organization of capacity building programs for community members to improve their livelihoods, MNCs contributing funds for CSR delivery, the use of a formal

agreement among the partners in CSR delivery at the community level, and the recognition that government could be a useful partner in the CSR delivery.

While the government of Ghana has the opportunity to make CSR more effective, it presently facilitates projects by granting approvals for sporadic development projects by the MNCs. The government needs to make CSR more effective by defining the concept of CSR to set the direction for the kind of CSR that will be effective   in Ghana. Since CSR effectiveness is dependent on true partnerships government should encourage partnerships through a comprehensive Ghanaian CSR policy to include guidelines to make the host communities key partners in community development.

CCPR is the effective partnership approach I introduce that advocates for the stakeholders in CSR delivery to work in an interconnected manner to support the business operations of the MNCs, the community and the individuals. The three stage process that I proposed to help make partnerships more effective for CSR delivery were the community pre-entry processes which includes business modeling the MNCs, stakeholders analysis and learning the culture of the community. The next stage is the community engagement processes involving stakeholder assessments and stakeholder dialogue. The third stage is the actual CSR implementation which begins with empowerment and capacity building programs. In practicing CCPR, a systemic view is considered with the community and MNC as the principal partners. The government, NGO and other actors are partners who would be involved in CSR service delivery at the instance of the key partners based on needs identified by the partnership.

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