International Corporate Volunteerism: Measuring Value

George Washington University Capstone Team
Annick Ducher
Cara Hayes
Noel Shadowen
Jessi Wolz

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## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>CDC Development Solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>corporate social responsibility</td>
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<td>FTII</td>
<td>Film and Television Institute of India</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIFT</td>
<td>Global Institute for Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>human resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMD</td>
<td>International Institute for Management Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICV</td>
<td>international corporate volunteerism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>information technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBS</td>
<td>London Business School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Masters of Business Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPO</td>
<td>personal performance objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>research and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRD</td>
<td>Software Institute for Rural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOW</td>
<td>statement of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TISS</td>
<td>Tata Institute of Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPENN</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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</table>
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An overview of international corporate volunteerism (ICV)

A definition of international corporate volunteerism (ICV)

“Any program in which employees cross international borders to provide services to local clients based primarily on the skills they utilize in their daily jobs.

Though not always volunteerism in the traditional sense since participants might or might not continue to receive their salaries, the employees are engaged in an activity that is outside of their normal assignments and responsibilities.

The projects they work on are non-revenue generating for the company, and are intended to provide economic/social benefits to the local organization and community.”

-CDC Development Solutions 2012 Benchmarking Survey

Why do companies engage in International Corporate Volunteerism (ICV)? Despite the economic downturn of the past few years, ICV continues to be an important and growing trend. In 2010, over 80 companies reported having “at least one formal international volunteer program,”\(^1\) whereas less than 60 reported the same in 2008.\(^2\) The resilience of ICV programs in a context of economic uncertainty may be an indication that it is viewed as an essential corporate strategy rather than a philanthropic afterthought. A 2012 benchmarking survey conducted by CDS asked companies to rate their reasons for creating an ICV program. The following are the reasons companies rated as “very important”:

- To improve the volunteers’ leadership skills (52%)
- To meet our corporate social responsibility objectives (46%)
- To improve our ability to innovate in the markets we select (27%)
- To better understand how to conduct business in the emerging markets we select (18%)\(^3\)

The design of ICV programs. While each company designs its ICV program to meet its needs and goals, there are several factors to consider:

- Lengths of assignments can vary from a few days to several months.
- Some companies choose to partner with third party NGOs to lighten the administrative and logistical burden of program management, provide guidance on program design, and assist with the selection of client organizations. Other companies manage their programs in-house.
- Program placement within the corporate structure varies from company to company. ICV programs may be managed by Human Resources, Corporate Social Responsibility departments, or elsewhere.
- Companies may deploy individuals or teams of volunteers, and may form teams that match employees from across functions and geographic locations.
- Selection processes are used to evaluate and choose volunteers. Typical processes include establishing selection criteria, such as supervisor buy-in and minimum organizational tenure, as well as employee program applications.

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Defining value: an overview of our study

Our team utilized a three-part definition of the value of ICV. Each component of our study corresponds to an aspect of our definition of value:

1. **A cost-benefit proposition.** Managers have limited resources to spend on the professional development of their staff. Our team explored the factors employees and supervisors might consider when choosing between a traditional university-based leadership development program and an ICV assignment.

2. **Benefits to companies and their employees.** Companies that engage in ICV can measure the impact of their programs on individual employees, as well as the impact of programs on ICV returnees’ teams and their companies. We investigated what companies are currently measuring through employee surveys, analyzed trends, and identified measurement gaps.

3. **Sustainable local impact.** During ICV assignments, corporate volunteers apply their skills and expertise to deliver pro bono services to local client organizations. Our field research focused on the long-term impact of those assignments two to three years after the volunteers’ departure. We explored whether or not effects of ICV assignments were still felt by local clients and, if so, in what way.

Component 1: Cost-benefit analysis

In order to cultivate strong leadership skills among key personnel, many companies send their employees to university-based executive leadership programs. These programs are typically one week long and take place in a classroom setting on a university campus. While simulations and other forms of hands-on learning are often included, programs that take place in classrooms are inherently more confined to a didactic teaching model.

ICV has emerged as a strong alternative to these types of programs by providing leadership development opportunities through volunteer, hands-on consulting scenarios. Companies employ ICV programs as a way to cultivate global leadership among their top talent and emerging leaders. ICV assignments place employees in foreign, resource-constrained environments where they must use their leadership skills to work collaboratively with a new team and adapt quickly to very different working conditions. It can be a challenge to create high-quality deliverables that are appropriate to the context. Many companies believe that the ICV experience can stimulate new insights and learning for their top employees in a way that traditional leadership development programs cannot.

Managers must consider the costs and benefits associated with both types of programs when deciding how best to spend company resources on employee development.
Methodology

Our team developed a cost-benefit analysis by comparing ICV programs and eight popular traditional leadership programs. All eight programs appear in the Financial Times’ 2012 Global MBA rankings. We included the top three programs from this ranking: Stanford’s Executive Course in Leadership: The Effective Use of Power (Stanford), Harvard’s Executive Education High Potentials Leadership Program (Harvard), and The University of Pennsylvania’s Executive Education Global Strategic Leadership Program. We also included three international programs from the top 16, the London Business School’s Essentials of Education Executive Leadership Program (LBS), INSEAD’s International Project Management Program (INSEAD), and IMD’s High Performance Management Program (IMD). Finally, we included two additional programs - MIT Sloan’s Transforming Your Leadership Strategy Program (MIT) and Northwestern Kellogg’s Global Leadership, Success in International Business Program (Northwestern) – that offer comparable classroom-based leadership training. Our team included the Global Institute for Tomorrow’s Global Young Leaders program (GIFT), which is a hybrid between a traditional leadership program and an ICV program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types and levels of benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to avoid bias in our comparison of university-based programs with ICV programs, we limited our information gathering to publically available program websites. Based on the information available, we identified a list of potential program benefits. They include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
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<td>Cultural competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We also analyzed to what degree a program offered a benefit. We defined three levels of benefit:

- **Stated Purpose**: Listed on the website as a benefit of the course or experience
- **Indirect Benefit**: The information implied that something was a benefit without directly stating it (i.e., if it was obvious from the description that a course intended to improve cross-cultural knowledge or interaction, but didn’t directly state cultural competence as a purpose)
- **Not a Stated Purpose**: A benefit category was not listed/could not be inferred from program description

We collected information on two areas of leadership program cost: monetary cost and the opportunity cost of employee absence.

**Limitations.** We were limited by the availability and accuracy of the information available on the programs’ websites. It was outside the scope of this study to examine to what extent employees actually receive the benefits from these programs. This depends in large part on the quality of the programs themselves, which is something that we did not examine in our study. The cost-benefit analysis focuses on the breadth of benefits rather than the depth of learning. Some programs may focus intensively on one benefit and provide very deep knowledge on that topic, which was not captured here. The generalizability of our findings is limited by the small sample size of nine organizations as well as the inclusion of only two ICV programs.

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Findings
The benefits for the different programs are shown below. In general, we found that CDS’ ICV program had the largest breadth of stated benefits (eight) while the GIFT program, the University of Pennsylvania, and INSEAD were also comparable, with seven stated benefits each (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Program benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leadership Skills</th>
<th>Cultural Competence</th>
<th>Employee Skills</th>
<th>Loyalty to Company</th>
<th>Networking</th>
<th>Innovation</th>
<th>New Market Insights</th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Social Impact</th>
<th>Resilience/Adaptability</th>
<th>Skills Based Learning</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>CDS ICV</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIFT</td>
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<td>Harvard</td>
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<td>MIT</td>
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<td>Northwestern</td>
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<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanford</td>
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<td>IMD</td>
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<td>London</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSEAD</td>
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All programs offer employee skills, networking benefits, and teamwork either as stated purposes or as indirect benefits. With the exception of INSEAD, all of the programs we examined offer leadership skills as a stated purpose. Seven of the ten programs offer skills-based learning, which we assigned as a benefit if the program offered hands-on training or experience applying skills during the training. Skills-based learning is a particularly important benefit. Studies have shown that the way people acquire professional knowledge and skills is through a blend of methods, with 70% involving performing the work and learning via experience. Only 10% of learning occurs in formal learning programs. Only one program, CDS’ ICV program, lists company loyalty as a stated benefit.

5 See Bibliography for program websites
Table 1 below illustrates the wide variation in program cost. Time spent away from work ranges from two days to several weeks. The average for traditional leadership development programs is approximately five days plus travel, while ICV programs (GIFT and CDS) typically require a longer time commitment. Costs also vary widely, from $375.95 to $2,800 per day.

Table 1. Comparative costs of leadership development programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Total program cost</th>
<th>Cost per day</th>
<th>Time commitment*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDS ICV Program</td>
<td>$12,100 (based on 28 days)</td>
<td>$432.14</td>
<td>Flexible, 21-30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Executive Education High Potentials Leadership Program</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>$2,800</td>
<td>5 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford Executive Program in Leadership: The Effective Use of Power</td>
<td>$11,500</td>
<td>$2,300</td>
<td>5 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIFT Global Young Leaders Program</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$893</td>
<td>2 weeks + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIT Sloan: Transforming your Leadership Strategy</td>
<td>$2,900</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
<td>2 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern Kellogg Executive Education - Global Leadership: Success in International Business</td>
<td>$9,500</td>
<td>$1,900</td>
<td>5 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wharton Executive Education: Global Strategic Leadership</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>3 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMD High Performance Leadership</td>
<td>$14,657</td>
<td>$2,442.33</td>
<td>6 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Business School: Essentials of Leadership, Executive Education</td>
<td>$9,139</td>
<td>$1,827</td>
<td>5 days + travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSEAD International Project Management</td>
<td>$10,184</td>
<td>$2,036</td>
<td>5 days + travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for the CDS ICV Program is derived from an illustrative program budget. The cost for the CDS ICV Program does not include international or domestic flights. Program price can vary based on CDS clients’ program preferences such as location, team size, and assignment length. All other data was gathered from program websites. See “Works Cited” for a list of websites.

Figure 2 on the following page shows the costs per day for the programs compared with the number of stated benefits (not including indirect benefits) as well as the benefit-cost ratio (the size of the bubble). CDS’ ICV program has the highest benefit-cost ratio, with eight benefits and an average daily cost of $375.95 per day. The GIFT program is a close second, with seven benefits and an average daily cost of $893. The Harvard program has the highest per-day cost at $2,800, but also has a fairly high number of benefits (six).
Based on the criteria used in this analysis, ICV programs (both GIFT and CDS) offer strong advantages for corporations seeking to achieve these benefits. Although the ICV programs tend to be the most cost effective options, they do require a substantial time commitment of two to four weeks, which may not be feasible for some companies or employees. Depending on what a company hopes to achieve for its employees through a leadership development program, there are many options that provide varying costs and benefits for participants.
Component 2: Benefits to employees and companies

Our team completed an indicator analysis, using data from employee surveys. We felt that the area where we could contribute most was through analyzing how companies are currently measuring the impact of ICV programs and how this could be improved for future teams. The purpose of our study was to understand corporations’ methodologies, how they measure impact, and on which benefit areas they focus. Once we understood how they approach measurement, we were able to both develop a schematic framework and make recommendations for future surveys. These recommendations encompass how methodology can be improved in the future and ideas on how to focus surveys.

Methodology

CDS connected our team with companies that have existing ICV programs and are measuring the impact of their programs through employee surveys. Of the five companies that we studied, four are CDS client organizations that used surveys based on a template designed by CDS. While CDS collaborates with companies to tailor surveys to their needs, similarities and question overlaps exist. As a result, some indicators are counted multiple times. We do not recognize this as a limitation for our study, as we restricted our analysis to identifying categories of measurement and the overall degree of measurement within each category and sub-category.

We conducted informational interviews with company representatives to gather information on their ICV programs and how their company currently measures the impact of those programs. We also reviewed existing literature to inform our study. We analyzed all surveys to which we had access. For most companies, we utilized one source of questions – a survey or survey series. It is important to note that we used three sources for Company D – a survey designed by CDS, an alumni survey conducted internally, and a one-time survey conducted by a university partner.

Our team reviewed the employee surveys for questions that measured the impact of ICV programs and combined them to create a database of indicators. For the purposes of our study, an indicator is a question that was included in an employee survey. In order to maintain a focus on program impact, we excluded any questions that measured the following areas:

- Satisfaction with the assignment, including questions that asked volunteers to rate the level of local partner support as well as accommodations, travel and in-country logistics, quality of assignment match and communication with their home team.
- Suggestions for assignment or program improvement.
- Other areas that did not directly link to the impact of the ICV assignment on employees, companies or local clients

Using an iterative process, we reviewed indicators and grouped them into high level categories and sub-categories based on shared characteristics. Figure 3 on the following page is a
Two sub-categories ("Knowledge of emerging markets" and "Loyalty") pertain to two high level categories, rather than one, because corresponding indicators exhibited elements of both categories. For example, "Knowledge of emerging markets" is an essential element of professional development for employees who must collaborate with and lead global teams. At the same time, it may serve as an important source of innovative new ideas for products and services. Similarly, loyalty has implications for human resources but also incorporates elements related to external perceptions and pride in corporate reputation. The “other” sub-category, a catch-all for seven miscellaneous indicators, is not reflected in the framework.

After assigning the indicators to categories, we conducted an analysis of measurement trends within and across companies. The results of that analysis are presented in the “Findings” section below.

**Limitations.** Although we were conducting quantitative research, many of the limitations we encountered are similar to those found in qualitative studies. Due to the small sample size, we cannot claim that our analysis is generalizable beyond the five companies that we included in
our study. We also used subjective judgments frequently when deciding in which category to place an indicator. When an indicator used vague language or was ambiguous, we had to make assumptions and use our best judgment based on what we felt was the spirit of the indicator.

Companies measure the impact of ICV programs through methods that our data does not capture. If a company wants to assess the impact of ICV on the frequency or nature of press coverage or the value of goodwill generated in target markets, for example, employee surveys are not appropriate tools for data collection. Therefore, our analysis of the surveys may not capture the totality of what is being measured.

Findings

**Professional development**

*Professional development* was the most measured category across all five companies, accounting for just over 70% of all indicators we collected. Figure 4 provides an overview of the composition of the *Professional Development* category. Given a persistent global talent crisis, companies’ emphasis on the cultivation of a skilled, dynamic workforce is no surprise. Pricewaterhouse Cooper’s 15th Annual Global CEO Survey in 2012 found that “[n]ot having the right talent in the right place is a leading threat to growth for many CEOs. One in four CEOs said they were unable to pursue a market opportunity or have had to cancel or delay a strategic initiative because of talent constraints.”\(^7\) It is important to note the complexity of the *Professional Development* category, which contains far more sub-categories than the other categories in our framework. This may be a reflection of the multiplicity of skills that companies desire in their employees. On the other hand, the level of detail within this category may simply be an indication that the measurement of *Professional Development* attributes lends itself to employee surveys as a method of data collection.

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Professional Development: sub-category definitions and illustrative indicators

Career development indicators measure the direct impact upon an employee’s career in general and prospects for gaining new opportunities and advancement. This includes being able to perform better in current role, gain more credibility in the company, assuming more responsibility, and being offered more or new opportunities.

- Illustrative indicator 1: [The ICV assignment] offers important and unique learning/development opportunities for my career
- Illustrative indicator 2: Participation in the [ICV program] improved or increased my: career prospects/ability to pursue more responsibility and positions

Cultural competence indicators measure the degree to which respondents feel comfortable in different cultural situations, how well they adapt to cross-cultural interactions, and general cultural awareness and knowledge.

- Illustrative indicator 1: I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures
- Illustrative indicator 2: I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures

Knowledge of emerging markets indicators measure the extent to which respondents gained knowledge or awareness of issues and needs in emerging markets, as well as the role of the company in that context.

- Illustrative indicator 1: [Participation in ICV] gave me insight and ideas as to how my company may serve people in similar circumstances in the future
- Illustrative indicator 2: Participation in the [ICV program] improved or increased my: awareness of social and/or economic issues in emerging markets

Leadership indicators measure how respondents share or implement their ideas and how they pursue new approaches or strategies. It also encompasses elements of risk taking, confidence in oneself, and helping others to develop their skills.

- Illustrative indicator 1: Please indicate how often the following statements are true: I articulate a vision and motivate others to help reach that vision
- Illustrative indicator 2: I suggest new ways to achieve goals or objectives

Networking measures the relationship building and networking outside of a normal work environment.

- Illustrative indicator 1: Participation in [the ICV program] improved or increased my networking outside a normal work environment

Personal development indicators measure personal characteristics (such as resourcefulness or creativity), social skills, self-learning and self-awareness, engagement in community outside of work, and changes in personal behaviors.

- Illustrative indicator 1: Do you feel that what you have learned has changed you as a person?
- Illustrative indicator 2: Since participation in the [ICV program], I am more likely to: search for other ways to get engaged in international communities

Professional skills indicators measure the development of any employee skills unrelated to leadership, knowledge of culture, teamwork, or personal development. This category includes questions that ask about skills that employees may use at their job.

- Illustrative indicator 1: The assignment had a positive impact on my skills
- Illustrative indicator 2: What skills have you acquired, improved, or developed as a result of your participation in this program? FINANCE/BUDGETING

Resilience indicators measure flexibility and problem solving in difficult or new situations, confidence in ability to adapt and/or handle stress, and ability to look at issues from different perspectives.

- Illustrative indicator 1: When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it
- Illustrative indicator 2: Please indicate how often the following statements are true: I anticipate problems to avoid them and expect the unexpected

Teamwork indicators measure relationship building, ability to work with a global team, willingness to work cooperatively, and general teamwork skills.

- Illustrative indicator 1: [The ICV assignment] helped me to increase my ability to effectively work with a global team.
- Illustrative indicator 2: Please indicate how frequently you display the following attributes: In my work, I make an effort to understand and contribute to the goals of my team/department/organization.
Figure 5 illustrates the diversity in the sample companies’ measurement of this category.

**Figure 5. Professional development, cross-company comparison**

**Observations and recommendations**

- The professional skills sub-category is the most measured by all five companies. This may be attributable to the nature of questions asked within this sub-category. Most of the professional skills questions assess a wide variety of discrete employee skills, from marketing and external relations to supply chain management.

- While cultural competence is measured extensively by Company D, it is measured relatively little or not at all by the other companies. This is a surprising finding given the importance of cross-cultural proficiency in a global economy. A McKinsey study on the talent management practices of multinational companies found that the companies who "overcome cultural and other silo-based barriers tend to outperform those that don't," and that global mobility programs are an effective way to develop cultural awareness among talent.\(^8\) The potential for improved cultural intelligence is a hallmark of international volunteerism.

- ICV can be an important milestone in career development and all companies include at least one indicator in this sub-category. While tracking the career development progress of returned volunteers against non-ICV participants may have the appearance of a more

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rigorous approach than surveys, confounding variables would likely erode the validity of results. For example, ICV participants may have already been on the promotion track before the assignment.

• There is potential to further explore the networking sub-category, which is only measured by one company with one indicator. For companies that pair volunteers from across geographic locations and job functions, ICV is an opportunity for intra-organizational relationship building and learning. In addition, networking with important decision makers and gatekeepers in-country has the potential to bolster a company’s license to operate and create good will.

• Self-reporting on behaviors or skills improvement has limitations. In order to provide more comprehensive data, companies should consider asking supervisors and/or colleagues to rate ICV participants’ performance in key areas a few months before their assignment, and again at a designated time after their return.

• Many of the employee survey questions related to behaviors and skills ask respondents to rate themselves according to a scale. Companies may wish to ask supplementary questions that require returned volunteers to describe an instance during their assignment that they displayed or developed a specific desired behavior (e.g. resilience, leadership or cultural competence). In follow-up surveys, companies can include follow-up questions about how the returnee has incorporated the behavior into their work. In addition to capturing richer information about the impact of the ICV assignment, this type of question may have the added benefit of reinforcing the expectation that the employees are incorporating ICV learnings into their work.

**Human resources**

Human Resources indicators account for just under 16% of all indicators collected. **Figure 6** provides an overview of the composition of the Human Resources category. ICV may have important implications for human resources, particularly as a means of employee engagement. For example, the Corporate Executive Board found that “the employees most committed to their organizations put
forth 57 percent more effort and are 87 percent less likely to leave their company than employees who consider themselves disengaged. It should be no surprise then that employee engagement, or lack thereof, is a critical factor in an organization's overall financial success.⁹ A Deloitte Impact Survey 2011 found that, when compared to employees who rarely or never volunteer, employees who frequently volunteer with company programs are “twice as likely to rate the corporate culture as very positive” and “more likely to feel very loyal toward their company” (by margins of 28% and 19% respectively). These findings “suggest a link between volunteerism and the quality of employee engagement as well as favorable employee perceptions of organizational culture.”¹⁰

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**Human Resources: sub-category definitions and illustrative indicators**

**Employee motivation** indicators measure how employees are becoming more engaged in learning about the company, being more motivated to perform better or to strive for better performance, or are more likely to pursue professional development or opportunities.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** After my experience, I am more motivated to perform in my day job.
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** I feel energized by my work at [my company]

**Employee satisfaction** indicators measure the extent to which respondents report feeling that their experiences are valued within the company and that what they learned will be incorporated into their job, and satisfaction with the company as a place to work.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** Participation in the ICV program improved or increased my: satisfaction with my company as a place to work
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** I feel that [my company] values the experiences I have gained through my assignment

**Loyalty** indicators measure the levels to which employees’ own pride and/or ego is tied to external perceptions of the company and their personal investment in the company’s image.

- **Illustrative Indicator 1:** I demonstrate concern for [my company’s] image
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements: I am proud to work for my company

**Recruitment** indicators measure how likely the respondent is to recommend employment with the company to prospective employees.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** Since participation in the [ICV program], I am more likely to: recommend employment at [my company] to others
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** I would recommend my company as a great place to work

**Retention** indicators measure how well corporate values align with personal values, perception of the company, and interest in remaining with the company.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** Participation in the program improved or increased my: likelihood of staying with [my company] within the next 2-3 years
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** On a scale of 1-7, how closely do [the company’s] values align with your personal values?

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**Cross-company comparison.** Figure 7 on the following page provides an overview of what the companies are measuring within the Human Resources category.

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Observations and recommendations

- Recruitment is measured by Company A alone. The literature suggests that ICV programs may be valuable differentiators for companies seeking to attract new talent. A Pricewaterhouse Coopers survey of over 4,000 recent graduates found that “94% of new college hires expect to work across geographical borders, and 88% will seek out employers with social responsibility values that reflect their own.”\(^\text{11}\) This trend may even effect the recruitment of young hires who never end up applying for an ICV program. The 2011 Deloitte Volunteer Impact Survey found that 61% of Millennials who “rarely or never volunteer...would consider a company’s commitment to the community when making a job decision.”\(^\text{12}\) Company A asks only two questions about the likelihood that respondents would recommend the company as a place to work. This may not capture the potential magnitude of ICV’s impact on recruitment. A more rigorous approach may be to integrate a question regarding ICV within companies’ online application platforms. This approach would increase the sample size, mitigate selection bias, and facilitate data collection.

- Only companies A and D measure retention. Determining the impact that ICV has on employee retention could have large implications. Data suggests that the financial cost of

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employee turnover ranges from 50 to 200 percent of salary. While companies can ask questions that measure employees’ subjective likelihood of staying with the company or their willingness to stay in their current job, it is difficult to measure retention through this type of survey. A way to capture quantitative data for ICV’s effect on retention may be to use retention data that companies are already recording. Companies could compare retention rates of top-performing employees who participate in ICV versus those who do not, using a paired-sample control group to reduce underlying variation. Another option would be to use a longitudinal design to compare retention rates of top performers in the company before ICV programs began with rates now that top performers are sent on ICV experiences. As minimum length of tenure is a typical application requirement, ICV may be a useful retention incentive even for those who have not yet participated. One company mentioned to us that they have been tracking retention rates and have seen a positive link between ICV programs and increased retention.

- Three of the five companies measure employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is inextricably linked to loyalty and retention, and thus merits close monitoring. A recent Taproot study found that “70 percent of the participants in Deloitte’s pro bono program stated that pro bono is a core component of their job satisfaction.” In addition, a 2007 Accenture survey found that middle managers—a segment of employees that ICV aims to engage in particular—generally tend to be unsatisfied with their current employment. The survey of more than 1,400 middle managers notes that, “on average, just four in 10 (39 percent) of respondents said they were “extremely” or “very” satisfied with working at their current organizations. Furthermore, one in five (20 percent) is specifically dissatisfied with his or her current organization.” Although ICV cannot address all of the issues surrounding dissatisfaction, it can provide a means of engaging employees in meaningful work. ICV is also a way that a company can show employees that it is investing in their professional development and that it values their experiences and skills.

It is important to note that ICV programs may have an unintended consequence of affecting employee satisfaction adversely. For example, volunteers may return from their ICV assignment to positions with which they are no longer entirely satisfied. Companies should consider using employee surveys to moderate this unintended outcome by asking returnees to identify a personal performance objective (PPO) that explicitly incorporates new ideas or lessons learned from their ICV experience. This may help make their ICV experience directly actionable and salient to their current role and mitigate harm to employment satisfaction.

**Innovation**

Figure 8 at right provides an overview of the composition of the *Innovation* category, which accounts for just over 6% of all indicators. The questions asked in this category reflect companies’ interest in the degree to which ICV can deepen employees’ understanding of new markets and inspire new ways of doing things. Cultivating a workforce that understands the needs, opportunities and challenges of emerging markets is imperative. In fact, the 2012 Pricewaterhouse Coopers survey of CEOs noted that “half of CEOs based in developed markets believe that emerging economies are more important to their company’s future, as do 68% of CEOs who are themselves based in emerging markets.” An ICV partner in Mumbai highlighted the need for greater understanding of emerging markets, noting: “Often our experience is that people who work on issues of developing countries are making decisions without really understanding context.”

It is important to note that emerging economies offer more than the potential of untapped markets. They are a potential source of game-changing ideas. As a 2011 study by Accenture notes, “anyone who still believes that innovation is the exclusive province of developed markets has somehow missed the rise of nanotechnologies and biotech in Beijing, digital media and genomics in Seoul, biofuels in Brazil and automotive technologies in Poland.”

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**Innovation: sub-category definitions and illustrative indicators**

**Knowledge of emerging markets** indicators measure the extent to which respondents gained knowledge or awareness of issues and needs in emerging markets, as well as the role of the company in that context.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** Participation in ICV gave me insight and ideas as to how my company may serve people in similar circumstances in the future
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** Participation in the ICV program improved or increased my awareness of social and/or economic issues in emerging markets

**New ideas** indicators include new ideas for products, services, or process improvements. Also included are new insights, ideas, or learning that can be applied to create positive business outcomes.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** The ICV experience sparked new ideas for products, services that I could apply to my work at [my company]
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** I am confident that transferring my ICV program learnings to my work at [my company] will ultimately lead to a positive business impact for my company.

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Cross-company comparison. Figure 9 provides an overview of what the companies are measuring within the Innovation category.

Figure 9. Innovation, cross-company comparison

Observations and recommendations

- We were surprised to find that knowledge of emerging markets was not measured more thoroughly in employee surveys. One interviewee remarked that their company uses ICV as a way to break into new markets through relationship development and improved understanding of host governments. Another interviewee told us that they deliberately choose to send ICV participants to countries where they do not currently have significant market share. Given its potential importance as an area of impact, companies should consider placing greater emphasis on knowledge of emerging markets in their surveys.

- The new ideas sub-category underscores the recognition that emerging markets can be a source of ideas for new products, services and ways of doing things. There is reason to believe that much of the potential for new ideas lies in the resource-constrained environments of ICV assignments. The same 2011 Accenture survey mentioned above notes that a key component of “workaround innovation” (sometimes referred to as “reverse innovation”) is the “innovation mindset that is pervasive throughout emerging markets—a
mindset born of scarcity and expressed in levels of ingenuity and resourcefulness that are harder and harder to find in the West.”

- The degree to which companies are measuring ICV’s impact on new ideas may not be fully captured by employee surveys. At least one of the companies in our study is carefully tracking the ideas that emanate from returned ICV volunteers separately. The company frames this process as “social R&D.”

**Corporate Reputation**

Lastly, Corporate Reputation accounted for as little as 5.5% of all indicators collected across the five companies. Figure 10 provides an overview of the composition of the Corporate Reputation category. Corporate reputation is an increasingly important contributor to a company’s bottom line. A survey of 575 senior executives in companies with revenue over $500 million estimated that “60% of a company’s market value is derived from its reputation.” Our interviews with local partner organizations suggest that ICV programs can have a positive impact on a company’s reputation. One local client representative stated that “[b]efore, I knew [the company] as an IT company…and I had heard about their volunteer programs…a little bit. But post the volunteer assignments, I started looking at [the company] as somebody who was leading [the] thinking on merging…corporate leadership development with the volunteer sector.” Another local partner reflected, “You think of [the company] as people who make machines, who work on profit. I think when you see these types of men and women coming down to work with groups I think you see a different side of [the company].”

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19 Anonymous, interview by authors of this study, Feb. 8, 2012.
21 Mr. Shalabh Sahai, Interview by authors of this study, March 13, 2012.
22 Prof. S. Parasuraman, Interview by authors of this study, March 13, 2012.
Corporate Reputation: sub-category definitions and illustrative indicators

Corporate citizenship indicators measure how respondents feel about the local community involvement, impact on people or client organizations, trust level, and perceptions of the company as a corporate citizen. The corporate citizenship sub-category mostly includes indicators that capture an external audience focus.

- **Illustrative indicator 1:** I feel sure our [company’s] volunteer’s work benefited the non-profit or NGO and the communities they serve
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** My experience positively changed my perception of my company as a corporate citizen

Loyalty indicators measure the levels to which employees’ own pride and/or ego is tied to external perceptions of the company and their personal investment in the company’s image.

- **Illustrative Indicator 1:** I demonstrate concern for [my company’s] image
- **Illustrative indicator 2:** Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements: I am proud to work for my company

Figure 11 provides an overview of what the companies are measuring within Corporate Reputation.

**Figure 11. Corporate Reputation, cross-company comparison**
Observations and recommendations

- Companies are uniformly measuring corporate citizenship relatively little through employee surveys. Many of the questions in this sub-category focus on respondents’ perceptions of the impact of assignments. These questions may have more to do with volunteers’ feelings of efficacy about their assignment than the actual impact on local partners or trust generated with communities, which can be captured through partner surveys and other methods of data collection. Companies may also consider tracking the number and nature of company mentions in traditional and social media. Tracking media hits before and after assignments, particularly in ICV countries, can provide companies with information about to what degree ICV programs affect public opinion and perception of the company as a corporate citizen.

- The loyalty sub-category contains questions that illustrate what Balmer and Grey refer to as the “psychological income” employees attain by working for a well-regarded company.23 For example, loyalty questions may ask respondents to indicate to what degree they are proud to work for their company. Balmer and Grey also highlight the role employees can play in “both formally and informally...communicating the firm’s identity to the outside world.”24 Indeed, some questions in this sub-category ask how respondents feel about and respond to criticism and how likely they are to tell others about their company. Though not measured extensively, the loyalty sub-category underscores the recognition that employees who feel invested in their company’s reputation can play an important role as informal brand ambassadors.


24 Ibid
Recommendations

Our team developed the following recommendations based on our research and analysis of the indicators. Companies should:

**Align indicators with corporate values and business priorities.** Companies should identify the core values and priorities they hope to achieve through ICV and build questions around these areas. If companies measure strategically according to their priorities, the results could allow them to make a stronger business case for the importance of ICV programs.

**Conduct pre-trip baseline surveys.** If companies adopt a methodology that includes pre-trip surveys as well as the typical post-trip surveys, a more rigorous analysis and longitudinal comparison of volunteers would be possible. These pre-trip surveys would provide valuable baseline information which would inform a company’s understanding of the impact of the ICV experience.

**Survey line managers and team members.** Self-assessment employee surveys can be limited in their objectivity. Companies could benefit from employing line manager and team member surveys to provide additional information on employee and corporate impact. By incorporating the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, companies could triangulate information to construct a more complete view of the impact of ICV programs and the value that is generated for the company.

**Measure important indicators over time.** ICV is a young field. Years from now companies may be interested in how their ICV impacts have changed or grown over time. It is important to bear in mind that if surveys change from year to year it will be difficult to compare results across years or cohort groups. Therefore it is essential that companies decide now which core indicators are important for them and begin to consistently measure these. There is room for some flexibility in changing indicators along with moving priorities, but having core indicators over time will allow for a more complex analysis later on.

**Share data.** We discovered that even data about ICV can be a closely guarded company secret. This may be an impediment for the ICV industry as a whole as they attempt to quantify the impact of their programs. By sharing data on costs and employee impact, companies can contribute to the ability of the ICV industry to flourish and scale. The Global Impact Investing Network database, which provides a platform for anonymous data sharing, may be a useful model to explore.\(^{25}\)

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\(^{25}\) For more information, see [http://www.thegiin.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home/index.html](http://www.thegiin.org/cgi-bin/iowa/home/index.html).
**Component 3: Local impact**

The third area of impact we examined for value was at the local level, among partner organizations. A recent survey indicated that ICV volunteers have worked with public, private, and non-profit organizations in over 60 countries - a geographic coverage as widespread as many international development agencies and illustrative of the potential impact that ICV can have over the long run. We traveled to India to gain an in-depth understanding of the local impact that host organizations are experiencing as a result of hosting corporate volunteers.

**Methodology**

Our team interviewed staff members of nine partner organizations in Mumbai, Pune and Bangalore that hosted volunteers in the past two to three years. We reviewed CDS impact surveys that each organization completed at the end of the ICV assignment. The impact surveys measured outcomes in areas like fundraising, HR management, and monitoring and evaluation. Based on the categories in which partner organizations indicated an initial impact, we created a survey to determine if they continue to feel an impact in that area. We also developed a semi-structured questionnaire to gather additional data (see Annex C).

All interviews were conducted in person, with the exception of one interview over Skype with a partner in Bangalore. When possible, two of the interviewers took notes during the interview to triangulate the data, and we recorded all interviews with the permission of interviewees. Following the first day of interviews, we adjusted the wording of some questions in response to confusion over word choice from interviewees. After transcribing interviews based on our notes and the audio recordings, we summarized key points and quotes and emailed interviewees for confirmation of the data. We received confirmation from seven of the interviewees.

**Limitations.** While reviewing the impact surveys with host organizations, we learned that staff members did not fully understand some of the terms used, e.g. "Monitoring and Evaluation" and "Environmental Compliance", and thus may have unintentionally indicated an impact that did not occur. We also did not have access to impact surveys for all organizations. For interviews when we could not use the impact survey we simply used the semi-structured questionnaire as the basis for our questions. All but two of the organizations received volunteers from the same company, and thus our findings represent a narrow spectrum of possible scopes of work and assignments. With a few exceptions, we were only able to interview one staff member from each organization, which may have limited our understanding of impacts across the

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26 CDC Development Solutions, *Results of the 2012 ICV Benchmarking Survey.*
organization. In addition, some staff members who worked most closely with the corporate volunteers were no longer employed with some of the organizations. While the presence of CDS' country director during the interviews may have affected responses, we found that many NGOs were still willing to share their thoughts on how to improve programs. Her presence also provided us with a greater understanding of the ICV assignments during interviews. Lastly, a slight language barrier may have affected the way we received and interpreted information.

Findings
This section examines the impact that the ICV programs of three companies had on the nine local partners in India: five in Mumbai, three in Pune, and one in Bangalore. All of the partner organizations hosted volunteers between 2009 and 2010. The following analysis examines the trends that emerged. Illustrative case studies are provided in Annex D.

Overall Trends

New perspectives and expanded networks. Several of the partner organizations indicated that access to professionals outside of their normal network brought fresh perspectives into their operations. For example, staff members at The Avert Society expressed that hosting corporate volunteers led them to think critically about their operations and exposed them to the best practices of a successful multinational company. Similarly, a YASHADA representative said that the ICV assignment provided staff with unprecedented access to an international perspective, which proved to be very beneficial for the team.

Access to pro-bono high caliber talent. A number of local partners noted that the greatest value of the ICV assignment was access to pro bono high caliber expertise that they could not have afforded otherwise. Similarly to US NGOs and public agencies, local partners indicated that they struggle to recruit and retain high caliber staff. Hosting volunteers from some of the world's leading companies was a rare opportunity. As a staff member from The Avert Society explained, "NGOs can never afford corporate guys, especially in the [developing world] . . . but their volunteer services to organizations can definitely make a huge difference." SIRD's founder said the volunteers helped the organization to reach a higher level of product development at a pace that would not have been possible with current staff capacity.

Time and money saved. Hosting corporate volunteers saved several of the organizations time and money. Three of the partners indicated that had they not hosted the volunteers, they would have had to contract out the work at estimated costs of US $4,800, $10,000 and $49,000. Other partners estimated that contracting out the work would have required double the time or longer for an equivalent project outcome. Several organizations indicated that they might not have completed the project at all, and one partner stated simply, "[I] can't put a price on it . . . we can't hire people of that caliber."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saving time and money</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Following the advice of its volunteers, The Avert Society updated their IT hardware. Staff estimate that this has reduced operating costs by 30 to 35 percent and quadrupled the number of people who can simultaneously use the server.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Volunteers introduced SIRD to project management tools that staff estimates have improved efficiency by 15-20%.</td>
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</table>
Human resources development. Pratham’s representative indicated that hosting volunteers boosted staff moral and helped him develop his leadership capacity. Staff at Envirofit felt a similar impact, noting that teamwork increased and staff turnover decreased as a result of working with the volunteers. Several organizations expressed that interacting with corporate volunteers increased their staff’s professionalism. MITRA’s staff learned to approach corporate stakeholders in a more professional manner and develop organizational strategy based on empirical study rather than opinion. Pratham’s staff developed more respect for punctuality.

Some of the organizations’ staff developed critical skills while working with the corporate volunteers. For example, volunteers at YASHADA taught staff members the Unicode skills necessary for translating website content into regional languages; previously only one staff member had this capacity. Similarly, one of Americares India's volunteers helped senior staff members better understand issues around legal compliance and how to more efficiently manage finances.

Brand building for local partners. Two of the organizations noted that hosting corporate volunteers directly or indirectly helped them increase visibility and improve reputation. SIRD's founder said that when he takes the organization's product to market and mentions that employees from a major multinational IT company guided product development, potential customers are more willing to listen. One of the volunteers with Americares India helped the organization conceptualize a high profile, flagship fundraising program.

Value of lasting relationships. Over half of the organizations said they have created a lasting relationship with their former volunteers. MITRA’s director stayed with one of the organization’s former volunteers while traveling in the volunteer's country, and employees from SIRD, The Avert Society and FTII have stayed in touch with their former volunteers via email and social media. A few of the partners noted that volunteers continued to follow up on loose ends and share ideas after their assignments had ended.

For Americares India, the relationship with former volunteers continues to bring value to the organization. Following two major disasters in 2011, the pharmaceutical company that sent the volunteers contributed over an estimated US$100,000 worth of medical supplies to Americares' response efforts, and the company's employees raised money to equip a hospital. Americares staff believes that these donations were a result of their relationship with their former volunteers. Additionally, one of the volunteers now serves on the organization's advisory board.

It was clear from our interviews that local partners highly value the relationships they have formed with volunteers. Nearly all of the organizations indicated they would like more corporate volunteer teams and they would like them for a longer period of time. In fact, one of the organizations already had ideas for a new scope of work.
Challenges
While most of the organizations indicated that the scope of work was appropriate, one partner expressed a mismatch of the assignment and volunteer skills. The Avert Society hosted a volunteer team to help them improve a series of manuals on operating procedures around procurement, sub-grantee selection, and accounting. As a USAID grantee, Avert had to comply with complicated procurement requirements and the deliverable produced during the assignment did not meet their needs. Some partners noted that the deliverables produced by volunteers were not used. For example, Envirofit benefited in the short-term from a communication and marketing document that volunteers provided, but after a shift in strategy the deliverable was no longer useful.

Several partner organizations expressed that having corporate volunteer teams for a longer period of time would improve assignment outcomes. Most suggested that volunteer teams stay for at least two months, allotting two weeks to familiarize themselves with local staff and the project, and the rest of the time to execute the scope of work. While companies are understandably reluctant to lose critical employees for a longer period of time, solutions to address this tension are critical for achieving the greatest local impact. One partner suggests that if corporations are unable to send volunteers for a longer period of time, they should match teams with a local volunteer who can carry on the work once international volunteers have left.

Conclusion
The field of ICV is growing, and the ability to measure its impact continues to evolve as companies launch and expand ICV programs. Measuring the impact of ICV is not merely an academic exercise. The collection and analysis of data can help ICV program managers ensure that their programs are effective and reveal the need for adjustments to program design and delivery. Insofar as ICV programs deliver results in terms of professional development, human resources, innovation and corporate reputation, hard data on their impact in these areas may provide ICV program managers with the evidence they need to defend their programs against shifts in corporate strategy and budget cuts. With a view towards the advancement of ICV impact measurement, we offer the following options for future action:

- **Cost-benefit analysis.** In future analysis, researchers might examine larger samples of university-based programs and ICV programs. Researchers may also wish to go beyond the benefits promised by these programs and compare the degree to which benefits are felt by participants within core areas of competence, such as leadership or teamwork.

- **Benefits to employees and companies.** Future research teams can collect similar data from other companies and third party NGOs. This would provide a more complete picture of what companies with ICV programs are measuring through employee surveys. In addition, recommendations for improved data collection through such surveys are on page 15.

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• **Local impact.** While measuring the impact on local partners soon after the completion of a volunteer assignment can be useful, examining longer-term impacts can provide a more complete assessment of the quality, relevance and sustainability of volunteer support. To the degree practicable, ICV programs should commit to a longer time horizon for local impact measurement. A one to two year timeframe may be ideal. This amount of time allows for longer-term impacts to emerge, while mitigating the potential loss of data due to staff turnover.
Bibliography


Annex A. Definitions of indicator sub-categories

**Career development** indicators measure the direct impact upon an employee’s career in general and prospects for gaining new opportunities and advancement. This includes being able to perform better in current role, gain more credibility in the company, assuming more responsibility, and being offered more or new opportunities.

**Corporate citizenship** indicators measure how respondents feel about the local community involvement, impact on people or client organizations, trust level, and perceptions of the company as a corporate citizen. The corporate citizenship sub-category mostly includes indicators that capture an external audience focus.

**Cultural competence** indicators measure the degree to which respondents feel comfortable in different cultural situations, how well they adapt to cross-cultural interactions, and general cultural awareness and knowledge.

**Employee motivation** indicators measure how employees are becoming more engaged in learning about the company, being more motivated to perform better or to strive for better performance, or are more likely to pursue professional development or opportunities.

**Employee satisfaction** indicators measure the extent to which respondents report feeling that their experiences are valued within the company and that what they learned will be incorporated into their job, and satisfaction with the company as a place to work.

**Knowledge of emerging markets** indicators measure the extent to which respondents gained knowledge or awareness of issues and needs in emerging markets, as well as the role of the company in that context.

**Leadership** indicators measure how respondents share or implement their ideas and how they pursue new approaches or strategies. It also encompasses elements of risk taking, confidence in oneself, and helping others to develop their skills.

**Loyalty** indicators measure the levels to which employees’ own pride and/or ego is tied to external perceptions of the company and their personal investment in the company’s image.

**Networking** measures the relationship building and networking outside of a normal work environment.

**New ideas** indicators include new ideas for products, services, or process improvements. Also included are new insights, ideas, or learning that can be applied to create positive business outcomes.

**Other** indicators serve as a “catchall” for things that did not fit well in others areas. These were questions where it was not possible to determine what the indicator was “getting at” and could have fallen in numerous places, depending on what the respondent answered. Examples include if the experience will change day-to-day work at home and unexpected areas of growth.
**Personal development** indicators measure personal characteristics (such as resourcefulness or creativity), social skills, self-learning and self-awareness, engagement in community outside of work, and changes in personal behaviors.

**Professional skills** indicators measure the development of any employee skills unrelated to leadership, knowledge of culture, teamwork, or personal development. This category includes questions that ask about skills that employees may use at their job.

**Recruitment** indicators measure how likely the respondent is to recommend employment with the company to prospective employees.

**Resilience** indicators measure flexibility and problem solving in difficult or new situations, confidence in ability to adapt and/or handle stress, and ability to look at issues from different perspectives.

**Retention** indicators measure how well corporate values align with personal values, perception of the company, and interest in remaining with the company.

**Teamwork** indicators measures relationship building, ability to work with a global team, willingness to work cooperatively, and general teamwork skills.
Annex B. Sub-category proportions by company

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Diagram showing sub-category proportions for each company A to E.
HUMAN RESOURCES

[Diagram showing the distribution of retention, recruitment, loyalty, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation across Company A, Company B, Company C, and Company D.]
CORPORATE REPUTATION

![Bar chart showing corporate reputation for different companies. The chart compares loyalty and corporate citizenship percentages.]

- **COMPANY A**: High loyalty, moderate corporate citizenship.
- **COMPANY B**: Balanced loyalty and corporate citizenship.
- **COMPANY C**: High corporate citizenship, low loyalty.
- **COMPANY D**: Moderate loyalty, high corporate citizenship.
- **COMPANY E**: Low loyalty, high corporate citizenship.

Legend:
- **Red** - Loyalty
- **Blue** - Corporate Citizenship
# Annex C. Semi-structured interview questionnaires

## Original

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Question &amp; Answer:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) Would the organization have implemented the project if working with CDS had not been an option?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• If so, how would the organization have completed this project?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2) Can you provide an estimate of associated costs for this alternate scenario?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3) How many hours do you think it would have taken to complete the project without volunteer support?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4) Why did the organization decide to use international corporate volunteers for this particular scope of work?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5) Did the consultants bring any new insight into the operations and processes of the organization?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• If so, can you tell us about what these were and how they have impacted the organization in the long term?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6) Did you notice a change in your staff between the beginning and end of the assignment?
   - If so, what kind of change?
   - Which staff members showed the most change?

7) Did you see a transformation in the volunteers during their time working with you?
   - If so, what type of a transformation did you see?
   - Could you give some specifics on how the transformation occurred?
   - Could you give us an example?

8) What was the greatest impact or value that you have gotten from this volunteer assignment?

9) What could be changed so that you could get a greater impact from these ICV programs?

10) What was the perception of the volunteer assignment among your employees?

11) What was the perception of the local community and local organizations regarding the volunteer assignment?
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<td>12)</td>
<td>Did the overall ICV experience change your perception of the corporation?</td>
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<td>13)</td>
<td>How do you understand the value proposition of CSR and of the organization sending employees for their company?</td>
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<td>14)</td>
<td>Is there anything that we didn’t cover that you think is important for us to know?</td>
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Conclusion:
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<th>Notes &amp; Observations</th>
<th>Question &amp; Answer:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>1) Would the <strong>&lt;&lt;organization name&gt;&gt;</strong> have implemented the project if working with <strong>&lt;&lt;company name&gt;&gt;</strong> volunteers had not been an option?</td>
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<td>• If so, how would the <strong>&lt;&lt;organization name&gt;&gt;</strong> have completed this project?</td>
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<td>2) Can you provide an estimate of associated costs for this alternate scenario?</td>
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<td>3) How many hours do you think it would have taken to complete the project without volunteer support?</td>
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<td>4) Why did the <strong>&lt;&lt;organization name&gt;&gt;</strong> decide to work with corporate volunteers for this particular scope of work?</td>
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<td>5) Did the volunteers bring any new insight into the operations and processes of the organization?</td>
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<td>• If so, can you tell us about what these were and how they have impacted the organization in the long term?</td>
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<td>6) What was the greatest impact or value that you have gotten from this volunteer assignment?</td>
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<td>7)</td>
<td>If CDS wanted to improve the volunteer program, what suggestions would you make to them?</td>
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<td>8)</td>
<td>Did you notice a change in your staff between the beginning and end of the assignment?</td>
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<td>If so, what kind of change?</td>
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<td>12)</td>
<td>What was your opinion of &lt;&lt;company name&gt;&gt; before the volunteer assignment and did it change afterwards? If so, how?</td>
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<td>13)</td>
<td>What benefits do you think &lt;&lt;company name&gt;&gt; gets from sending volunteers?</td>
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<td>14) Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your experience with the volunteers?</td>
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<td>15) Is there anything that we didn’t cover that you think is important for us to know?</td>
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Conclusion:
Annex D. Case studies

Americares India

Organizational profile
Americares India is a charitable organization that responds to emergencies by providing medical supplies and humanitarian assistance. Present in over 20 states, the organization has been working in India for 17 years. Other activities include health education, disaster preparedness and medical training. Americares India is able to carry out its mission thanks to donations of medical supplies and other relief materials from Indian-based and multinational pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Volunteer assignment
Americares India worked with two volunteers in the fall of 2009 and the winter of 2010. The first collaboration began with a volunteer working with the Mumbai office in October 2009 for a period of three months. The volunteer’s contributions included the design and implementation of branding rules, publicity timelines, standard operating procedures and fundraising. The volunteer also conceptualized a project called the Spirit of Humanity Awards program, still in existence today.

The second volunteer worked with Americares India for four and a half months in January 2010, immediately following the first volunteer’s departure. The volunteer helped streamline financial standard operating procedures, making them compliant with Indian regulations and laws as well as other important contributions to Americares India’s capacity building.

Major impacts
Americares India’s staff expresses deep gratitude to have had the opportunity to work with both volunteers, as they helped the organization through a period of significant growth.

More effective operating systems
During Americares India’s transition period, the organization needed to build financial operating systems that could support an expanding organization. Furthermore, they needed to build one that met India’s complicated legal compliance issues and income tax procedures. The first volunteer helped with this transition, as she was familiar with both US and Indian accounting systems and reporting requirements. She also helped the US Americares office understand the intricacies of Indian accounting requirements and FCRA rules, and helped create a common financial system that could translate between offices.
**Birth of the Spirit of Humanity Awards**

Americares India’s first volunteer conceptualized the organization’s now well-known *Spirit of Humanity Awards*, and created standardized operating procedures for the program so that staff could easily carry it into the future. The Awards were designed to help Americares raise funds for its core relief objectives in medical response and humanitarian assistance. The Awards launched in April 2010 with success, and are now considered a flagship program, going on their third consecutive year. Americares staff says that the Awards have provided a level of visibility and impact that have contributed to the growth of the organization. They express that without the help of the volunteer it would have taken them at least another year to reach the capacity needed to design and pilot such a high profile program, as they were a small, overstretched team at the time.

**Themes**

**The value of lasting relationships**

The ICV assignments led to a strengthened and valuable relationship between Americares and the company that sent the volunteers. Following two major disasters in India in 2011, the company contributed a large amount of medical supplies to Americares’ response efforts and the company’s employees separately raised money that helped equip a hospital. Americares staff attributes this display of charity to the enduring relationship they have formed with their former corporate volunteers.

**Innovation**

Americares staff express that the corporate volunteers brought fresh perspectives to the organization. Without the volunteer, they note that they may not have conceived of the Spirit of Humanity Awards, as the team was entirely focused on expanding projects with little time for out of the box thinking. They say that the Awards program linked innovative thinking to the organization’s core activities, which brought excitement to their work in addition to furthering their mission.

**Both parties benefit**

Americares staff notes that both local partners and corporations benefit from the ICV experience. Mr. Deshpande, a manager at Americares India, spoke to the impact that ICV-related initiatives can have for companies, saying “[it] can open up new markets . . . They are achieving some social objectives, some intangible benefits, so that improves their own brand value.” Dr. Swati Jaha adds, "it improves their value . . . and it improves their image." They express that these kinds of initiatives also expand employees’ minds as to how much they can do, and are great team building exercises.
The Avert Society

Organizational profile
The Avert Society was created in 2001 through a bilateral partnership between the Government of India and the US Government, with the mission to mitigate the spread of HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases in the state of Maharashtra. The Avert Society accomplishes its goal by providing care and support services for those affected by transmittable diseases, increasing the use of communication tools for behavioral change, and disseminating research findings related to these issues.

Volunteer assignment
Prior to the fall of 2009, The Avert Society was experiencing numerous problems with their ICT/MIS system, including slow speed of the server, system down time, and lack of sufficient virus protection. During September and October, the organization hosted two corporate volunteers to review the entire ICT/MIS system. The volunteers prepared an assessment of the current system and summary recommendations to the organization. Their final deliverable included advice on system improvements and Symantec antivirus upgrades.

Major impacts
The Avert Society believes they have gained a lot from hosting corporate volunteers for three weeks. The long-term changes to the IT systems that the volunteers suggested have been implemented and have brought benefits to the organization that persist to this day, including fewer complaints about viruses and increased internet speed. In addition to the major impacts listed below, Associate Project Director Anna Joy estimates that the savings that accrued to Avert Society by hosting corporate volunteers rather than paid consultants was about US$4,800.00.

Reduced operating costs
The volunteers recommended that Avert invest in updated IT systems, and this investment has paid out many times over. New load balancing techniques, better security systems, and improved IT infrastructure are now in place. Avert staff estimates that they have saved between 30 and 35 percent in operating costs since the volunteer team visited their organization, and that the newfound efficiency of their systems has been very beneficial.

Reduced virus problems
The volunteer team recommended that Avert switch to an updated version of a Symantec antivirus system. This system has eliminated about 95% of the virus problems they previously experienced.

Formalized trainings for staff
Another important impact of the corporate volunteers relates to training of employees. Prior to the assignment, Avert believed that most of their staff were computer-savvy and did not require extra training. However, the volunteers suggested that Avert conduct trainings to ensure that every staff member had sufficient capacity to perform his or her job at the highest level possible. The team demonstrated how to give appropriate IT trainings. Avert has now institutionalized these trainings and regularly conducts them when new software is added.

Server can support more employees
With the new IT systems, Avert reports that they can have about 50 people working on the same server, whereas before it would only support 10 or 11 employees without freezing or crashing the system. The server is also much faster and has a better security system in place. The IT department of Avert reviews IT hardware every three years and makes replacements as necessary, as recommended by the volunteers.

Themes
Reasons to accept help
Part of the reason that Avert agreed to host corporate volunteers was that they felt that the volunteer’s skill sets were a good match with the assignment and they could offer a lot. Ms. Joy says that, “we thought it would be good for someone to come and help us, because generally we help everybody, so we said why not take somebody else’s help.” There was a feeling that the volunteers would complement the assignment well, and there was a good opportunity for mutual learning between Avert staff and the corporate volunteers.

Mutual understanding and transformation
Other benefits of the project were intangible, such as cross-cultural communication and exposure to new perspectives. Ms. Joy states that, “[M]any of our team members could interact with [the volunteers] and relate to them and understand that they are like everyone else, human beings, and in this way it was exposure for all of them to connect with [the corporate volunteers] on an individual level. They could interact with them and understand the field where they are coming from, which is very different from where we are [coming from].”

This was a mutual sharing of perspectives, as representatives from Avert also expressed that the volunteers were exposed to many new things and were able to link the new experiences they had in Mumbai with their past experiences and views. The corporate volunteers took time to get to know Avert’s staff and they have formed strong bonds that endure to this day.

Perception of [the company]
Avert staff believed that [the company] focused solely on profit-making activities, so they were surprised to learn that it also carried out CSR initiatives. After their initial interactions with the volunteers, Avert employees recognized the potential impact the volunteers’ services could have on the organization, and they had “a good feeling about [the fact that] there was a group of people who were otherwise very busy, but who found the time to donate their time.”
Envirofit

Organizational profile
Envirofit takes an enterprise-based approach to the problem of indoor air pollution and cook stoves by designing, manufacturing, and distributing clean and efficient cook stoves worldwide. Envirofit has sold over 300,000 stoves that meet consumer needs, reduce harmful emissions, require less fuel than regular stoves, are easy to maintain, and are durable. They rely on market mechanisms to guide product development and drive consumer demand, while also partnering with various organizations such as World Vision, The Shell Foundation, and the EPA. Envirofit India is located in Bangalore, India and markets primarily to rural areas in India through a network of 500 retailers in 7 states. They also incorporate education on the issues and believe it is important to raise awareness of the health dangers of cooking smoke.

Volunteer assignment
In the fall of 2010, three corporate volunteers agreed to do a deep dive analysis with customers to learn if the stoves were meeting expectations and what improvements Envirofit could make in this regard. They conducted a product analysis and consumer survey, analyzed the data, and worked with Envirofit engineers to develop a plan for any changes that needed to be made to the product. The volunteer team also developed a marketing plan around the Envirofit products.

Major impacts

Strategic planning
Envirofit was in the process of re-thinking their business strategy and changing models from a business to customer model to a more focused business to business model. Envirofit Managing Director Harish Anchan said that he sought out a corporate volunteer team because his own team had been thinking a lot about strategy and was “too close to the camera”, and they wanted to bring in an outside perspective on the issue. The volunteer team helped them to think about issues such as sustainability, how to conduct R & D, and switching to a new model of operation. Additionally, they highlighted the need to bring in funding from various funding agencies, and provided input on different possible strategic partners, including microfinance partners who might be interested in providing financing for the stoves.

Project management
The corporate volunteers created a project management checklist and template that included accounting, budgeting, and various management areas. This document has been continuously used by Envirofit as part of their project management system. The team also created an M&E template to help Envirofit think about their progress and evaluate different aspects of operations, which has been very helpful. Envirofit has made adjustments to some of the stoves that they sell in response to a customer feedback mechanism that the volunteer team created.
Modeling teamwork
During the team’s stay in Bangalore, the volunteers created an environment in which Envirofit employees could share ideas, problems, solutions, and be a part of the decision making processes. Envirofit has continued to build upon the mentorship and leadership of the corporate volunteers in this area, and as a result has seen an increase in teamwork among employees, better bonds among co-workers, and decreased employee turnover rates.

Themes
Importance of outside perspective
Envirofit staff was eager to engage an outside perspective in strategic planning and business operations planning. The corporate volunteers contributed ideas and diverse experiences to the process of transforming Envirofit from a primarily business to customer organization to a focus on business-to-business strategy.

The value of ICV for corporations
The corporate volunteers were able to see how businesses operate in a new environment, understand the Indian context and their particular problems, and to ask various questions in order to create solutions to new problems. Harish Anchan believes some of the benefits that the company obtained from sending volunteers include getting a close look and perspective on the issues that organizations face in developing countries on the ground as well as “to look at different people on the ground and how they solve problems, how [the volunteers] can solve these particular problems and [take this learning] back to [the company] with the gathered solutions and methodologies that entrepreneurs have and to use them.”
The Film & Television Institute of India

Organizational profile
The Film and Television Institute of India is an autonomous institute of the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting based in Pune, Maharashtra, and established in 1960. FTII provides approximately 400 students with a 12-course training in filmmaking and television production.

Volunteer assignment
FTII's Sound Department worked with two corporate volunteers from February to March of 2010. The objective of this month-long collaboration was to design software for an institute-wide information management system. This system, called the Office Automation Application, will provide FTII with the logistical framework and tools necessary to improve processes for resource scheduling, asset management, inventory control and information sharing.¹ The Sound Department will pilot the new program for the rest of FTII's departments. Milind Bapat, FTII’s Sound Department Director, worked with the two volunteers.

Major impacts

Improve efficiency
Two years following the completion of the volunteers’ assignment, Mr. Bapat indicates that the Sound Department still benefits from the team’s work. The procedure to put the information system in place is now underway. Mr. Bapat estimates that, once in place, the tool will improve the department's efficiency by 20 to 25 percent.

Impact across the institute
The information management system was designed for use by all FTII departments. While the volunteers were working with the Sound Department, the Accounts Department became interested in the project because it would make their asset management and inventory control procedures simpler. At the completion of the ICV team’s assignment, each department was asked to provide its own system requirements in order to customize the tool for institute-wide use.

¹ Project is pending implementation
Themes
A unique opportunity
Mr. Bapat says that FTII would not have designed the information system had they not hosted corporate volunteers, and that contracting out the work would have cost FTII approximately $US 1,800.

Perception of [the company]
Mr. Bapat notes that hosting the volunteers helped shift his opinion of the company from one that has an impact on people as well as technology.

The challenges of implementation
Implementation of the information system faces a series of challenges, however. Mr. Bapat indicates that although code writing for the program can essentially be completed overnight, it will take approximately 2 to 3 additional months for the system to be fully put in place.
MITRA

Organizational profile
Established in 2000 by a group of graduates from the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), MITRA provides a way for Indian volunteers to address development challenges at home and abroad. iVolunteer, a MITRA initiative, is “a volunteering exchange platform, which promotes volunteering in India and abroad, connecting potential volunteers with volunteering opportunities.” Today, iVolunteer places approximately 2,500 volunteers with about 300 NGOs per year.

Volunteer assignment
In 2009, iVolunteer was running two corporate volunteer programs of its own and was contemplating the development of a third. While it had corporate clients, MITRA’s leadership was seeking a way to market its programs in a more systematic way and wanted to explore the feasibility of a new programmatic offering. From September to October of that year, two volunteers worked with iVolunteer staff to assist with more effective engagement of corporate partners.

Major impacts
The corporate volunteering program has grown phenomenally in the past three years, which Mr. Sahai attributes in part to the ICV experience.

Improved capacity for corporate engagement
As MITRA attempted to strengthen relationships with corporate partners, it needed to better understand corporate culture. The infusion of professional expertise from [the company] gave MITRA staff a fresh perspective on how to engage the private sector. Before the assignment, Mr. Sahai notes that MITRA’s strategic planning was rarely based on formal strategizing and research. Today, MITRA understands that to attract corporate clients, it has must have a strong brand and offer customized solutions to corporate partners. In 2010, they put a marketing team in place that has three staff today.

Increased revenues from corporate partnerships
From 2009 to 2011, MITRA’s revenue generated from corporate partners increased by approximately six-fold. In addition, the average revenue per contract has seen a notable increase. Within the same time period, revenue per contract has increased by a magnitude of eight.

2 http://www.mitra.org.in/pages/volunteering.htm
Increased corporate engagement
MITRA’s ability to attract new corporate clients has improved since their ICV experience. MITRA appears to have increased visibility in their market space. Mr. Sahai estimates that, from 2009 to 2011, MITRA’s inquiries from corporate partners have increased approximately two to threefold.

Themes
ICV as a unique leadership development experience
Mr. Sahai believes that the ICV experience improves the capacity of employees to work in a global workplace: “[the company] is a multinational corporation, having people across the globe, working across the globe in markets across the globe…[T]he better they understand the different cultures, the better it is for…leadership.” He also noted that the ICV program provides a singular experience that other leadership development programs simply cannot. He describes it as “a leadership experience that no internal corporate program can actually give to anyone. You can’t have it in a classroom, you can’t have it in solving any of the corporate problems because, still some similarity is there…You’re still in your comfort zone. This is something where you really put people out of their comfort zone, and that goes back to [the company].”

Corporate reputation
The ICV program can bring reputational benefits for [the company] and positions it as a thought leader. Shalabh notes: “(b)efore, I knew [the company] as an IT company…and I had heard about their volunteer programs…a little bit. But post the volunteer assignments, I started looking at [the company] as somebody who was leading [the] thinking on merging…corporate leadership development with the volunteer sector.”

The lasting impact of new ways of thinking
The main “deliverable” of an ICV assignment may not be a deliverable at all. In the end, the marketing plan created by the volunteers was not used and MITRA ultimately changed its mix of iVolunteer product offerings. But why, then, does Mr. Sahai credit the ICV assignment with helping the growth of iVolunteer’s corporate programs? Engaging corporate volunteers gave Mr. Sahai and his staff important insights into corporate culture and effective private sector engagement. Mr. Sahai believes that after the ICV assignment, iVolunteer began building its corporate partnerships in a more strategic way.
Pratham/Sanchar

Organizational profile
Pratham is a large education-focused NGO working across 21 states in India and other countries around the world. Founded in 1994, Pratham’s main goal is to ensure that children are able to attend school and to learn well. The organization accomplishes this goal by providing a Computer Assisted Learning Program (CALP) for school children and a Youth Skills Training and Employment Program, among other programs.

Volunteer assignment
Pratham hosted two corporate volunteer teams in the fall of 2009. One of the teams designed and documented the architectural design of an ICT/MIS in a way that met the organization’s needs. This team also went above and beyond the scope of work to also analyze Pratham’s strategic plan and help them determine best practices to allow them to attain organizational goals. A second team assisted in the development of Pratham’s Sanchar commercial software capabilities through a technical design and software development support processes.

Major impacts

PROJECT 1

New MIS system
The corporate team spent time understanding the ICT/MIS that Pratham used, and made recommendations to improve the system. These recommendations and structural changes to the system have had a lasting impact. The organization now is able to store data more effectively, use the data to plan and grow their organization, and is better able to monitor their progress through the systems.

Strategic planning
Although it was not part of the SOW, the volunteers provided suggestions for Pratham’s long-term vision and recommended changes to the strategic planning process of the organization. They encouraged Pratham to think about what resources and planning that would be necessary to meet the organization’s 5 year and 10-year goals. The organization’s Director, Prem Yadav, believes that this new way of viewing strategic planning has contributed to Pratham’s ability to expand the number of schools in which the organization operated from around 150 in 2009 to over 450 in 2012 and with the goal of being in 1,000 schools by 2013.

New insights
During their volunteer assignment, the corporate team encouraged Pratham to expand its thinking and compare itself to other NGOs in the area, critically examining its own processes and organization. The team spent a lot of time questioning why the organization did things in a certain manner, and this helped the staff to think through their processes. This “growing by
thinking” allowed them to obtain new insight into the potential flaws of their operations and to make necessary corrections. They also put much more thought into partnerships with other organizations.

**Leading by example**
The corporate volunteers had a less tangible impact on Pratham through the example of their work habits and customs. The volunteer team arrived at the office on time every day, and soon Pratham staff began arriving on time as well. Before the team arrived, Pratham usually recruited new employees informally, through connections and friends of current employees. After working with the corporate volunteers, they began advertising for positions openly through a job system on the internet. Pratham began an internship program in the office and can now also hire people from this pool of young talent as well. Although not directly a goal of the corporate volunteers, these outcomes still had lasting effects on Pratham.

**PROJECT 2**

**Sanchar software system**
The second corporate volunteer team developed the technical design documentation for Pratham’s Sanchar commercial software. This includes the Computer Aided Learning (CAL) and Computer Learning Program (CLP). After the corporate volunteers’ assignment ended, Sanchar grew so immensely that it branched off from Pratham and became its own organization, Sanchar InfoTech. They still partner very closely with Pratham. Sanchar currently reaches over 400 schools.

**Specialization of skills**
The corporate volunteers completed the technical aspects of the SOW, focusing on developing the software design, but throughout the process they also interacted closely with Pratham employees and had the opportunity to make recommendations. They suggested that the employees specialize more in their specific fields and focus on the big picture instead of numerous smaller tasks. The volunteers also proposed that staff focus on creating a product that can be marketed to a larger number of people.

**Themes**

**Mutual learning**
The corporate volunteers also learned a lot from working in this setting. They visited slums and poor urban communities, and saw how people work and live in very resource constrained environments. Mr. Yadav believes that the volunteers gained an appreciation for what people do to survive in these circumstances and were transformed by this experience. Mr Yadav states, “[The volunteers] can directly connect with people on the ground…the grassroots connection. If they want, they can learn from these kinds of organizations. They learn a lot from the community.” Likewise, community members were surprised and very appreciative of the effort that the volunteers made to learn about their community.
Organizational motivation
Almost everyone within the Pratham organization was touched by the corporate volunteer experience in one way or another. Mr. Yadav believes that staff motivation increased significantly, and that they became a more “professional” organization as a result. The volunteers showed staff that by “thinking big” they could achieve their goals. By guiding Pratham’s future strategy planning process, the ICV teams went above and beyond their anticipated contribution to the organization.
Organizational profile
Software Institute for Rural Development (SIRD) is a start-up private sector company based in Pune with the mission of developing IT solutions for rural development. In the past, SIRD has developed software solutions for projects relating to watershed, water supply, forest management, employment generation, and education.

Volunteer assignment
Under the direction of Director Bhushan Ambadkar, SIRD hosted two corporate volunteers for one month in early 2009 to help with the design and development of the company’s latest Rural Business A to Z software. The software intends to streamline the loan process for agricultural divisions within banks, while also providing farmers with the scientific knowledge, cost estimates, and viability assessments necessary for their bank mandated project proposals. Presently, farmers must use a consultant to obtain this sort of analysis, or go without and risk submitting a proposal with errors or gaps that will cause the bank to reject it.

Major impacts
The volunteers centered most of their efforts on improving the technical aspects of the A to Z software and speeding up the development process. Mr. Ambadkar expresses that without the volunteers the organization would have completed the work internally, but it would have required much more time. He estimates the value of the volunteers’ work to be worth US$10,000, which is the price he would have had to pay for a local consultant to complete the same work. The volunteers also provided the team with suggestions for processes and tools to improve project management.

Product development
Like many start-ups, SIRD relies on a young staff with limited experience, so the development process for the A to Z software was slow and iterative. The volunteers helped speed up the product development process, allowing SIRD to offer potential customers a more superior product in a shorter amount of time. Mr. Ambadkar estimates the volunteers split in half the amount of time it would have taken the organization to arrive at the same level of product development internally.

Project management
The volunteers introduced SIRD’s team to tools, methodologies, and templates they could use to improve project management and organizational processes. The team is now using these tools and templates for the organization’s employment guarantee program, watershed program, and social security pension scheme. Mr. Ambadkar estimates the new processes have
improved organizational efficiency by 15 to 20 percent (time saved). The volunteers also helped SIRD incorporate more precision into project planning by suggesting ways to more accurately estimate the required time and costs to complete a project for a client.

**Product promotion**
The volunteers’ assistance has helped SIRD promote the *A to Z* software to banks, and increased the organization’s reputation. Three banks have already completed a pilot run of the software, and SIRD is currently in conversation with two banks for full implementation. Mr. Ambadkar says that telling potential clients that SIRD received product development assistance from employees of a major IT company impresses large banks. "I mention that [company] selected our company and sent two people . . . [who] gave the knowledge and know-how, and that helps me in promoting the organization."

**Themes**

**Capacity building goes both ways**
Not only did SIRD staff learn best practices for project management and increase their skills in product development, they also learned how to operate the company’s first internet based applications. Previously, SIRD only had stand-alone software. Learning goes both ways, though. Mr. Ambadkar notes that working in a small start-up, in which each person wears many hats and hierarchy is loose, exposed the corporate volunteers to a strikingly different working environment than to which they are accustomed. Also strikingly different is the low resource environment in which these volunteers were challenged to find solutions. As Mr. Ambadkar explains: "We don't wait for everything to be in order to act. We look at the resources and time availability that we have and try to achieve results." Both of these factors challenged the volunteers to be more resourceful and flexible, skills that translate to innovation back in the home office.

**Perception of [the company]**
Mr. Ambadkar indicates that the ICV assignment gave he and his staff a more nuanced opinion of the company: "Definitely, we know that IBM is a very profitable organization. That is all we knew . . . but now that we know this side of IBM, we know that it is a good organization."
Organizational profile
Established in 1936, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) is one of India’s premiere educational institutions. With programs in areas such as social work and rural development, TISS is preparing a cadre of bachelors, graduate and doctoral students to tackle India’s most pressing problems. Impact goes far beyond the classroom, however, with TISS research and field action projects that test new approaches in the field.

Volunteer assignment
In the fall of 2009, TISS hosted two teams of volunteers for two very different projects. TISS was assisting in the establishment of Rural Knowledge Centers (RKCs) in the tsunami-affected Andaman and Nicobar Islands. For the residents on the far flung and scattered islands, it was difficult to receive timely information. Volunteers created a short message service (SMS) program to bridge the communication gap.

Fifteen hundred miles away, TISS was conducting a field action project in Ladakh. Nestled between the Himalayan and Kunlun mountain ranges, Ladakh’s reliance on the tourism industry was placing pressure on its fragile ecosystem. TISS students were working with women’s groups to collect and market wild-growing sea buckthorn fruit in order to create alternative revenue streams. In order to increase the viability of Ladakh’s sea buckthorn business and increase revenues, TISS called upon volunteers to write a business plan for marketing the sea buckthorn pulp to buyers.

Major impacts
Increased connectivity for remote island residents
The volunteers wrote an SMS-based program to provide island residents with critical information on the timing of ships. The volunteer-created program has proven to be useful and adaptable. For example, the TISS project team built upon the program by adding the capacity to transmit information on agricultural commodity prices. According to Professor Parasuraman, the SMS program was operational by early 2011.

Increased purchases of sea buckthorn
Professor Parasuraman reports that TISS is working to implement the business plan created by volunteers and notes that there has been a five to six-fold increase in sea buckthorn purchases. Whereas 50 metric tons (MT) were purchased in 2009, he estimates that approximately 250-300 MT are purchased today. Juice made from the pulp produced by the women’s groups is being sold in Ladakh, Delhi and elsewhere in Northern India.

Professor Parasuraman also credits the volunteer team with the idea to partner with a large company in order to gain access to a greater market. TISS is currently in discussions with Tata Tea about the potential to source through the Ladakhi supply chain. The professor observes that the next challenge will be to increase the volume of production in order to meet the level of demand that such a partnership would entail.
Themes

Access to high quality expertise
The ICV program provided TISS with access to high caliber experts that, as a resource-constrained educational institution, they would not have been able to afford otherwise. Professor Parasuraman believes that they may not have been able to implement the SMS scope of work at all without the support of corporate volunteers. In the case of the seabuck thorn project in Ladakh, the infusion of volunteer talent accelerated project progress. Professor Parasuraman says that the work completed by the volunteers in Ladakh would have taken the team at TISS a year to complete.

Increasing understanding of developing country contexts
Volunteer programs can make corporate decision makers more sensitive to the realities of emerging markets. Professor Parasuraman observes: “Often our experience is that people who work on issues of developing countries are making decisions without really understanding context. That way, we encourage people to come and spend time and look at the context in which we live and work. [The company employees] are a very influential group of people, actually. When they go back they are going to talk about their experience.”

Generating good will in emerging markets
As an institution, TISS tends to view corporate engagement in the developing world with some circumspection. His experience with volunteers has had a marked impact on Professor Parasuraman’s perception of [the company]: “You think of [the company] as people who make machines, who work on profit. I think when you see these type(s) of men and women coming down to work…I think you see a different side of [the company].”
Organizational profile

YASHADA is the leading training institute for the government of Maharashtra, a state located in western India and home to Mumbai. The organization promotes and develops modern management practices through curriculum on topics like rural and urban development, basic administrative training, disaster management, and social equality and justice. In addition to government departments and officials, YASHADA conducts trainings for the employees of non-governmental and community based organizations. The organization conducts over 1200 training programs annually.

Volunteer assignment

From February to March 2010, YASHADA's Information Technology team hosted two corporate volunteers to help them develop the basic architecture for a distance-learning platform that would improve the organization's ability to meet the growing demand for its training programs. In order to successfully complete the scope of work, volunteers were challenged to take into account the technology constraints at the user end such as old hardware, slow web connectivity, and power failures.

Major impacts

Before the volunteers arrived, YASHADA's IT team was familiar with the concepts of distance learning and already had the basic platform installed, but it was not ready for use. The volunteers provided the team with a viability assessment and 12 month road map for the creation of the distance-learning module as well as ideas for expanding website content. Without the volunteers, Mr. Nadgowda, a System Administrator for YASHADA, says the team would have had to outsource the work for an estimated cost of US$49,000 and a time frame of one year.

E-Learning platform

The volunteers designed a template for the distance-learning courses, which YASHADA was able to implement in three weeks. They also suggested the IT team create and maintain user guides for the new platform, which the team subsequently designed and uploaded. YASHADA was able to complete all of the volunteers’ recommendations outlined in the road map within 10 months, and today there are two courses online and up-to-date user guides available. A total of 450 state employees have taken the courses. The IT department will soon be converting the e-learning platform to tablet technology.
New training website
The volunteers helped YASHADA commission the *Training for All* website at http://cbpr.yashada.org. *Training for All* is an initiative of the Government of India with the purpose of expanding coverage of civil service training like that offered by YASHADA. In support of this, the volunteers taught the IT team the Unicode skills necessary to translate website content into regional languages, a skill previously held by just one staff member. They also provided staff with ideas for expanding the volume of content on the website.

Themes
International corporate volunteers have a lasting impact
Mr. Nadgowda, who worked closely with the volunteers, says the greatest impact the experience had on the IT department was to change the team's vision. Interacting with and having access to the employees of an internationally recognized organization widened their perspective, and provided them with a peek into the working culture and the IT infrastructure of a successful multinational IT company. Staff also learned the different nuances of open source software and propriety software from the volunteers, as well as operating systems they could use for free, which has the potential to save YASHADA money in the future.