Towards a sustainable economy – Vers une économie responsable

ENTRETIEN/INTERVIEW
UNCTAD Secretary-General

OMS/WHO
Relationships with non-State actors

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Les crises financières mèneront-elles à une réelle réflexion sur nos modes de consommation, à une prise de conscience de l’obsolescence de certains modèles économiques? Les projections sont sans appel: sans une exploitation responsable et mieux gérée de nos ressources, la planète ne pourra bientôt plus subvenir aux besoins vitaux d’une population qui ne cesse de croître.

L’émergence de nouveaux modèles économiques a vu le jour. Ils sont fondés sur les règles de partage et de redistribution des richesses de manière équitable. Ces modèles, comme le RSE (responsabilité sociale des entreprises) intègrent les composantes sociales, environnementales et économiques. Le RSE encourage les sociétés à redéfinir leur stratégie globale autour du développement durable et invite tous les acteurs économiques à devenir partie prenante.

L’économie sociale et solidaire, elle, existe depuis plusieurs décennies et est tournée vers la satisfaction et le bien-être collectif plutôt que la concurrence et la recherche insatiable de profits.

Ces pistes de réflexion mèneront-elles à une redéfinition de la notion de prospérité et à l’utilisation de nouveaux indicateurs de richesse et de supports d’échanges économiques? Une seule certitude: chacun de nous a un rôle à jouer dans ce défi pressant.

“Il n’y a pas de passagers sur le vaisseau Terre. Nous sommes tous des membres de l’équipage.”

— Marshall McLuhan

New business models have emerged. They are based on the rules of sharing and redistribution of wealth in an equitable manner. These models, such as the CSR (corporate social responsibility), integrate social, environmental and economic components. CSR encourages companies to redefine their strategy on sustainable development and invites all stakeholders to become involved.

The social economy has existed for decades. Its focus is on satisfaction and collective well-being rather than competition and the insatiable pursuit of profit.

Will these ways of thinking lead to redefining the concept of prosperity and using new indicators of wealth and support for economic exchanges?

One certainty remains: each of us has a role to play in this urgent challenge.

“There are no passengers on spaceship Earth. We are all crew.”

— Marshall McLuhan
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What the UNOG Staff Council did for you in 2013

As the term of this UNOG Staff Council comes to an end, with elections later this month, I would like to provide some highlights of our work, in what has been a busy and challenging year.

IAN RICHARDS, PRESIDENT

Let me start by recognizing the work of the members of the Council, who throughout the year have worked as a team to implement our work programme. This unity, which of course does not prevent discussion or debate, has helped us in standing up for staff. We have also worked closely with the other unions of the UN and are thankful for the support we received from staff at ILO and WHO.

Budget

The start of the year was characterized by preparations for the 2014-15 budget, which had to be 2 percent less than the previous one. We ensured that we were consulted by management on posts that they were planning to cut and, where necessary, we pushed to ensure that affected staff would be placed in a suitable role elsewhere. Once the budget went to the General Assembly, we also met with diplomats to push our position, that cuts should not affect staff. As a result, and as far as we were aware, no staff in Geneva lost their jobs despite the large number of posts that were cut.

Salaries

As you may recall, the government of the United States of America (USA) put forward a proposal for a P staff salary cut of 8 percent as of February 2014. We worked with our federation to lobby Member States to oppose this measure, which bore no relation to the situation at our comparator civil service (the USA), which had only had a pay freeze.

The outcome of the General Assembly negotiations was that pay will instead be frozen. However, a compromise text still requests the International Civil Service Commission, which sets our pay and conditions, to look at different options on how to manage our salaries. So still plenty left to do.
Février 2014

mendations and to give comments to the
have a right to inspect selection recom-
magement that the Staff Council will now
We have therefore agreed with man-
these allegations are diffi  cult to disprove.
from G-3 to G-4, and without oversight,
levels
Oversight of appointments at the G-1 to G-4
levels
As appointments at these levels are not
rhased by a central review body, Staffs
have found it difficult to have confidence in
the integrity of selections made. Allegations
of preference and favoritism have been lev-
eled, especially with regards to promotions
from G-3 to G-4, and without oversight,
these allegations are difficult to disprove.

We have therefore agreed with man-
agement that the Staff Council will now
have a right to inspect selection recom-
mandations and to give comments to the
Director-General. This is a great develop-
ment, especially for staff in Security and in
Central Support Services.

Crèche
Putting the crèche in place has been a com-
plex and expensive undertaking – more
than we had expected. Nevertheless, hav-
ing brought management around to the
idea, where before there was skepticism,
we have now been able to engage in talks
with a private partner to run the crèche
on a sustainable basis. The crèche will be
placed on UN land across from the mission
of the USA, giving children easy access to
the parks of the Domaine des Penthés and
the botanical gardens.

Under this arrangement, we would provide
a major part of the total building costs of
2.2 million CHF (we have now built up a
fund of over 1.2 million for this, which took
some time) and the partner would operate
the crèche as a concession and pay us rent.
For the remaining investment costs these
would come either from the concessionaire,
or from a loan or other organization – we
have had encouraging talks on this. Once
the financing and oper-
ating package has been
negotiated we will pre-
sent it to the Council for
approval.

We are aware that this is
taking longer than origi-
nally foreseen and many
children have been born
in the meantime, but with
the Swiss rules on adult to child ratios, the
expertise and financing required has been
considerable. From our research it is quite
common in the region, given these factors,
for 2 to 3 years of planning before a crèche is
built.

The right to work longer
We have consistently supported the right of
current staff, who currently have to retire
at 60 or 62 to be able to choose to retire,
and only continue working until 65 if they
wish to. We got an agreement on this at
the International Civil Service Commission
and this was then proposed to the Gen-
eral Assembly. Certain countries at the
General Assembly were hesitant about the
proposal in case it would negatively affect
rejuvenation and gender balance and in case
it would result in only poor perform-
ers remaining until 65.

We pointed out that if the organization
wanted to improve gender balance and
have younger staff, it could simply recruit
such staff.

We expect this to be brought back to the
General Assembly later in the year and will
be following up closely with delegates.

Parking
We kept busy over the summer after being
leaked that management plans to charge
staff 500 CHF a year to park in the Palais
grounds. Naturally Staffs were upset and
we were able to mobilize a lot of support
to persuade management that these plans
did not accord with the reality in Geneva,
where open air parking is provided free by
employers, especially if they are not rent-
ing the land. Thankfully the proposal was
shelved.

Staff management relations
A low point of our work this year was
the decision of the Secretary-General to
remove our right to negotiate on issues
of concern to staff. These
included staff safety at a
time when more staff are
being attacked and killed
than ever before, mobility,
better rules to protect staff
downsize, travel rules,
whistleblower protection,
human rights screening
of job candidates, and
reforms to the internal
justice system.

We campaigned quite strongly on this
issue, gaining press coverage including
in the New York Times, having the 14,000
members of the public write to the Secre-
tary-General, and mobilizing trades unions
around the world in our support. Those
same unions mobilized governments
in the USA, UK and Germany. We also
counted the large number of you attend-
ing our many staff events and the many
messages of encouragement following our
broadcasts. As a result of this pressure, the
Secretary-General accepted to negotiate on
new rules for staff-management relations.
For us, this means ensuring we will be able
to negotiate again. At the time of writing
this article, these negotiations were in full
swing, so it is too early to tell what the out-
come will be.
Mukhisa Kituyi, UNCTAD Secretary-General

UNTAD’s motto is “Prosperity for all.” Global Gross Domestic Product may be growing, but so are wide inequalities around the world. How can we reach the objective of shared prosperity between and within nations? To me that is at the heart of UNCTAD’s motto – that we pursue prosperity, but for all. We must pursue a prosperity that is inclusive, that eradicates extreme poverty and that addresses questions of social justice. Today, many countries – both developed and developing – are experiencing what has come to be called “jobless growth”. In Africa, for example, many economies have been achieving 5 per cent GDP growth in recent years. However, most of this growth is due to exports growth and to higher world prices of commodities. But it has not brought new jobs. Millions of youths remain un- or under-employed. Indeed, this jobless growth is one of the causes of the crisis that is turning the Mediterranean into a cemetery of young men and women coming from Africa, trying to cross the sea at night to look for opportunities in Europe. Therefore, one of the key challenges to the future world order and international security is to create growth with jobs. Trade and Investment must serve development. Disciplining trade in the service of development requires investing in human resources, spreading entrepreneurship, and targeted policies to channel trade and investment in sectors with high potential for job-creation and high value added. Turning trade and investment into tools for development and inclusive growth is at the core of UNCTAD’s mandate.

Can trade be a key development tool, including for the poorest countries? If there is any need to attest the connection between sound trade policies and national development, you only have to look at some of the success-cases in South Asia, such as India and China. The dramatic development achieved by those countries over the past thirty years has demonstrated what can be achieved by mainstreaming a national development strategy and effectively harnessing trade policy and trade as forces for development.

UNCTAD is about to turn 50. You have said “Indeed, if UNCTAD did not exist, we would have to invent it.” Why does the world need UNCTAD at this particular moment? There is no other forum on the international
UNCTAD's voice has disappeared has that. And today, UNCTAD integrated treatment of trade and development. And today, UNCTAD is the only institution that has that.

What about the criticism that UNCTAD's voice has disappeared from the international debate on development? I do not think that UNCTAD's voice has disappeared from the international debate, but you are perhaps right to point out that we have not always "marketed" our contributions to the debate adequately. Our key publications, such as the World Investment Report and Trade and Development Report, have never ceased to be authoritative and innovative contributions to the international policy debates in development. So to that extent we have continued to be part of the debate. However, I think that we did not always advertise and promote our products enough. This has meant that while our work is very much being used in intellectual and public policy debates, it is not always acknowledged as the work of UNCTAD. This is something we need to address. As it were, many times we have been hiding our light under a bushel. We need to clamber more to the rooftops and shout. UNCTAD's voice is alive and well, but more people need to be able to hear it.

What will be the new measure of UNCTAD's success? It will be how much we have positively impacted the dialogue, the narrative, and the policy content of development practitioners in developing countries through our analytical work. That is going to be our key impact on the ground – the measure of whether we have succeeded or not.

The UN family is reflecting on the post-2015 new development goals. What can UNCTAD contribute to this process and what is its specific message? We are making UNCTAD a focal point in Geneva for dialogue on the post-2015 agenda. We are already convening open-ended high-level dialogues between relevant organizations and the Permanent Missions in Geneva. These dialogues provide a forum to expand engagement and awareness of the different building blocks of the post-2015 agenda, and to make specific contributions to the content of what is being discussed in New York but. Of course, the actual content of the agenda will be decided by member States in New York. But we feel that the Geneva trade and development community has an important contribution to make. What is important for us is if it is leading to inclusive growth, if it is about shared prosperity, if it is about being sustainable. It is a natural area of interest for us. We also have to be alive to the globally agreed goals and review if our analytical and technical cooperation work is effective in disciplining trade to the service of development.

Can we say that today we are witnessing Africa’s awakening? What are the major hurdles on its way to sustainable development? We can certainly say that Africa has shown some resilience and promise over the past decade although achieving 5 per cent of commodities-driven growths while the entire Africa’s share of global trade accounts for only 3 per cent, cannot be termed awakening. There are two main reasons to say so. Firstly, it has managed to return to pre-crisis levels of GDP growth faster than any other developing region. And secondly, the relatively fast growth achieved by many African economies both prior and after the crisis is an indication of the continent’s potential. But Africa still faces significant challenges on the road to inclusive and sustainable growth. Africa still has to recover from the cost of two “lost decades” in the 1980’s and 1990’s. At that time, the prevailing policy-orthodoxy was for the state to disengage from the development challenge, and to give more scope to the market through liberalization of import regimes and privatization. These policies had a significant adverse social impact, but did not achieve the promised leaps in growth. As mentioned above, many African countries also need to ensure that their growth is more inclusive. A lot of the growth to date has been based on commodities exports, and has not benefitted large parts of the population. Finally, Africa may need to adjust to reduced global demand for its products, if demand in the advanced countries does not pick up. So what does that mean? It means that Africa should not sit on its laurels because it has achieved 5 per cent GDP growth. Instead, African countries should work towards making this growth more inclusive and sustainable. This means mainstreaming inclusive development in national policy-making, and reducing dependence on commodities. Some of the policies to be explored include 1) expanding regional trade and integration 2) integrating in global value chains 3) supporting domestic sources of growth, and 4) strengthening domestic resources mobilization. If these policies bear fruit, in a decade we may be right to speak of the emergence of Africa especially if the post 2015 sustainable development goals lead to a strong economic dimension with trade at the service of development. UNCTAD stands ready to make her contribution towards these goals.
WHO reviews its relationships with non-State actors

In 2013 the UN Special published several articles and reports on the WHO reform process. The September 2013 issue focused on the WHO reform from the perspective of the WHO Director-General and the President of the headquarters Staff Association.

GARRY ASLANYAN, WHO

The process included proposed reforms to various aspects of WHO’s governance, including the Organization’s role in global health governance and engagement with non-State actors. Review of these processes is well overdue.

The global health landscape has changed dramatically since WHO’s establishment in 1948. While WHO remains the primary global intergovernmental body in which WHO Member States coordinate joint efforts for global health improvements, many other non-State actors are working towards the same goal. In this context, WHO’s role in global health governance must include non-State actors as they play a critical role in the overall success of WHO’s mission. WHO’s engagement with non-State actors has already taken on different forms. WHO is at times a technical partner providing normative guidance, which WHO does best, while at other times is a host or coordinator of health related partnerships at global, regional or country level. While much of the discussion has been about how these actors participate in the governing bodies of WHO, there are many other important considerations that would require the development of clear principles and procedures.

Terms matter

Who are these non-State actors? Their most important distinguishing feature is that they do not belong in any way to state run institutions. In health, this is a large group of actors. Community groups, civil society groups, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations, academic institutions, trade unions, private-for-profit enterprises, media, professional and patient groups are a few of the major ones. In addition, in the global health landscape there are unique hybrid partnerships such as the GAVI Alliance and the Global
Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in which state and non-State actors work together and share governance arrangements and oversight of funding and programming performed by these partnerships. With this vast range of actors, the Organization’s relations and interactions carry risks, especially how best to protect the normative work of WHO from the influence of those with a vested interest. It is quite clear that WHO cannot be funded by non-State actors for any normative activities that could influence the commercial interests of a funder.

In October 2013, WHO convened an informal consultation with its Member States and non-State actors. In the run-up to the meeting, background documents and discussion papers were distributed by WHO. More than 320 representatives from Member States and non-State actors participated in person or via webcast. The report of the meeting draws attention to the remarks made by WHO’s Director-General, Dr. Margaret Chan, who reiterated that there is a need to establish a robust framework for engagement that protects WHO’s reputation and is also transparent, open, and as inclusive as possible. Dr. Chan asked Professor Thomas Zeltner, former Director-General of the Swiss National Health Authority and Secretary of Health of Switzerland, to be a Special Envoy on WHO’s engagement with non-State actors. Professor Zeltner has a long history as an innovative and progressive leader in national and international public health. He presented the results of his consultations with Members States and non-State actors as a Special Envoy which confirmed that WHO’s engagement with non-State actors is a timely question.

What he heard from the consultations is that some of the problems identified with existing mechanisms of WHO’s engagement with non-State actors include lack of trust and clarity, inconsistency in the application of rules, a need for clear definition of roles, inclusiveness of all actors and the importance of establishing firmer foundations with non-State actors.

As mentioned earlier, terms matter. The meeting asked the WHO Secretariat to propose a definition of non-State actors, undertake an inventory/mapping of non-State actors with whom WHO currently engages and to describe the types of engagement. This also leads to another proposed mechanism which was generally supported by the participants of that meeting, development of a transparency register that would help strengthen due diligence, management of risks and conflict of interest for which the Secretariat will develop a proposal.

“WHO is leading the way by developing its relations with non-State actors in a thorough and systematic manner”, says Dr. Gaudenz Silberschmidt, a senior adviser at the Office of WHO Director-General. “There are still several iterations of reviews, consultations and input that will require Member States’ deliberations and decisions in 2014, but the organization is moving in a right direction”, Dr. Silberschmidt adds. The Organization seems to be taking this issue very seriously and lots of work is ahead for Dr. Silberschmidt and his colleagues. The process is expected to trigger continuous dialogue among Member States and non-State actors that will help the WHO Secretariat to develop a more detailed framework on WHO’s engagement with non-State actors that will be further discussed in a follow-up meeting that will take place before the World Health Assembly in May 2014.
Financing Health in the Global Economy

People are continually demanding more and better quality health services. New medicines and health technologies become available daily, usually at higher cost. Populations are aging, and the need for longer term care is increasing.
various forms of elective surgery. The costs are frequently met by the funders of the health services in the home country or the health insurance people hold, with some governments and insurers encouraging and even facilitating the practice in order to reduce costs. Official statistics are difficult to find, but Patients Beyond Borders estimates that eight million people receive treatment annually outside their own countries for various reasons, at a total cost of between US$24 and $40 billion. Brazil, Costa Rica, India, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey and the USA are reported to be the prime destinations, although some of these countries specialize in particular procedures, and some are both “exporters” and “importers” of patients. A recent study from the United Kingdom (UK) estimated, perhaps surprisingly, that more UK residents sought treatment overseas (63,000) in 2010 than foreign residents seeking treatment in the UK (53,000). EU residents are entitled to receive treatment in another countries in the European Union (EU) or European Free Trade Association (if they are travelling or if they work in a country other than their own. They can also decide to be treated in another EU country if they wish, with their own insurance picking up the costs although they can only be treated to the same standard as residents of that country. Not surprisingly, there is a massive industry has emerged to service this forms of trade in health. In addition to the providers of the health services, travel agents, brokers, hotels, advertising and marketing agencies and insurance companies have emerged. It is not surprising that governments as diverse as Hungary, India, Malaysia, Malta, Poland, Singapore, and Thailand have promoted their countries as desirable destinations for health services and procedures at trade fairs. There are a number of other types of trade in health in addition to the movement of people across borders. They include cross border provision of services (e.g. diagnostic tests, particularly imaging, read outside the country with the results transmitted to the treating doctor), foreign investment in the health sector (e.g. pharmaceuticals, hospitals, diagnostic services, insurance), and the temporary movement of health workers across borders. They all complicate the traditional problems of developing health financing systems.

In 2010, the World Health Report suggested that health financing systems should seek to help countries move closer to universal health coverage by ensuring that all people could use the health services they need without the risk of financial hardship linked to paying out-of-pocket. This requires raising sufficient funds for health, raising them in a way that ensures people do not encounter financial barriers to using needed services, pooling them to spread the financial risks for ill-health across the population, and using them efficiently and equitably. This has traditionally been complicated, with virtually all countries making frequent modifications to various components of their systems. The increasing trade in services offers both challenges and opportunities to the health financing system and the health system more broadly. The challenges largely concern issues beyond health financing – ethical concerns about various forms of treatment (e.g. stem cells), legal issues about who is liable for malpractice or adverse events, issues associated with ensuring high quality care, and questions of brain drain. Health workers have for decades moved from low salary to high salary environments, something that is continuing. At the same time, medical tourism facilities have been able to pay higher salaries to the health workers remaining in a country, taking scarce staff from treating country nationals, particularly the poor and people living in isolated areas. For the health financing system, the payers of health care (e.g. governments as in the UK’s National Health Service or Medicare in the USA, or national, company or personal health insurance systems) need to become more sophisticated. They need to decide which providers outside the country should be accredited, sometimes developing the capacity to negotiate prices with external providers in a different language with unfamiliar legal systems, and then verify bills and reimburse patients for the costs incurred overseas. On the other hand, there are considerable opportunities to ensure more timely care (reduce waiting lists) and reduce costs by purchasing lower cost services.

What is clear is that globalization is not slowing and that the private sector and governments will continue to seek to export their products and expertise. Trade in health is expanding as a result. Although reliable data are scarce, this trade is increasing rapidly at the demand of patients and the agencies or governments who fund health services. It is already common to find that a high proportion of health workers in a country originate from elsewhere. We are used to the idea that medicines and health products are developed and produced in one country, and exported to others. It is not far-fetched to think that our own MRIs will be sent to Asia to be read while we sleep, or that our children will, in the not-too-distant future, be planning their next medical or dental procedure to coincide with a holiday abroad.

1 http://virus.stanford.edu/uda
4 http://www.patientsbeyondborders.com/medical-tourism-statistics-facts
6 http://europe.eu/yourstravel/citizenswork/socialsecurityforms/index_en.htm
The “Best Kept Secret in the UN”

Storm surge and polar vortex might sound like great material for yet another movie about disasters, but just ask people from the Philippines and New Yorkers. These are more reality than fiction.

Vincent Fung

When Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines on 8 November 2013, it blew through the island of Leyte with 300-plus kilometer per hour winds. The tremendous force and speed of the wind also produced a wall of water or ‘storm surge’ estimated to have been between 4 and 7 metres high. As of January the overall impact from the super storm includes over 6,000 reported deaths, 14 million people affected, 4 million people displaced, and 1 million houses damaged.

On the other side of the Pacific Ocean, some areas along the east coast of the United States of America (USA) and Canada woke up to a new year with record freezing temperatures. The ‘polar vortex’ is as old as the Earth and is an ever-present mass of frigid air moving counterclockwise around the North Pole and normally kept there by the jet stream. With a dipping jet stream, the polar vortex was able to spread across central and eastern parts of North America bringing below-zero temperatures that stopped traffic, trains, and planes in their tracks. In USA alone, the vortex could have cost the economy losses of approximately USD5 billion.

These two examples from the opposite sides of the world highlight that neither rich nor poor countries are immune to disasters caused by natural hazards, such as earthquakes, floods, storms, and drought. The typical response to these disasters is to deal with them once they have happened. Yet the medical field regularly promotes the principle ‘prevention is better than cure’ and this should apply also to disasters.

In the UN system, there is one forward-looking organization that is working on addressing disasters before they happen and to reduce the risk of them happening again. Aris Papadopoulos, the CEO of Titan America, once called this organization “the best kept secret in the United Nations”.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction. Headquartered in Geneva with offices in Almaty (Kazakhstan), Bangkok, Brussels, Cairo, Incheon, Kobe, Nairobi, New York, Suva, and Panama, UNISDR was created in December 1999 to coordinate with governments and the various UN agencies and organizations to reduce disaster risk around the world.

One of UNISDR’s key responsibilities is to work with countries and organizations to implement the ‘Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters’, a 10-year international plan which seeks “the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.” Often referred to as the ‘HFA’, the internationally endorsed framework came out of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Japan one month after the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Since the adoption of the HFA by the UN General Assembly in 2005, a total of 146 countries have reported back on their progress in implementing the HFA and its five priority actions.

– Priority Action 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
– Priority Action 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
– Priority Action 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

Vincent Fung

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– Priority Action 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
– Priority Action 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
– Priority Action 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
UNOG honours the loss of its four colleagues

The UN flag was flown at half-mast in mourning on Monday, 20 January, in the Palais des Nations in Geneva in solidarity with our colleagues, killed Friday evening, 17 January. On that day our UN family lost four more of its members.

EVELINA RIOUKHINA AND IAN RICHARDS
A commemoration ceremony was organized at 11 a.m., by the Acting Director-General of UNOG, Mr. Michael Møller, together with the UNOG Staff Coordination Council.

The ceremony was attended by numerous colleagues who came to express solidarity in this moment of sorrow, and to pay tribute to the civil UN staff, who lost their lives in this senseless and horrific attack: Mr. Vadim Nazarov of the Russian Federation working for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); Ms Basra Hassan of the United States of America, and Dr. Naseen Khan of Pakistan, both working for UNICEF; and Mr. Wabel Abdallah of Lebanon, working for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a UN specialized agency.

The ceremony took place in front of the memorial plaque for the victims of the Iraq Canal Hotel Bombing, which took the lives of twenty-two colleagues in 2003, and of seventeen colleagues in Algiers in 2007 as a poignant reminder for them and all too many others lost over the years.

The ceremony opened with the lighting of commemorative candles for our four colleagues. The Acting Director-General, Mr. Michael Møller, the President of the Coordination Council, Mr. Ian Richards, together with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Navi Pillay, and the UN Human Rights Council President, Mr. Baudelaire Ndong Ella (who interrupted the Special Session of the Human Rights, held next door, joined the ceremony) lit the candles for our four colleagues. The bouquet of flowers in front of the table marked this solemn occasion.

The attack took place in the restaurant situated in one of the most safe places in the Afghan capital, district of the Embassies and international agencies, was on a safety list and well protected. This place was well known and famous, where most of the international staff and diplomats used to get together, after their difficult and risky duties. Where they used to come feeling safe, to meet or simply to socialize, and thus symbolically return back to normal life at least for one evening, on Fridays, after the difficult work week behind. This was the place and time when this terrorist attack, apparently cruelly and coldly planned, took place, and this makes it far more horrific.

Only for the last decade, since the Baghdad bombing, our UN family has lost more than 560 of its members, international civil servants. In 2013, fifty-eight personnel were targeted by terrorists and insurgents, making it a particularly murderous year. This year sadly promises more of the same.

This is the sad reality that we as UN staff face today. The UN flag is now a target, not a shield and we are targeted because of who we are and what we do.

For more information, please visit our website: www.unisdr.org/
As we dive into a new biennium, some new faces have appeared on the Staff Association Committee (SAC) to serve the WHO staff over the next couple of years. The SAC also has a new President, Dr. Patrick Zuber, Medical Officer in the Department of Essential Medicines and Health Products. He takes over from Mr. Lahouari Belgharbi who has been the President for the past three years and long-standing Committee member.

The three new members elected by staff are Mr. Aboulkaire Ahmed, Dr. Gemma Vestal and Ms Veronica Riemer, they will complete the 20 strong team. As he steps in this new role, Patrick Zuber said that being a member of the Staff Association Committee over the past three years has taught him an enormous amount about how the Organization operates and how the staff are constantly challenged to be truly recognized and treated as WHO’s greatest asset. Talking about priorities for the Committee this year, he spoke of the continued defence of conditions of service through the implementation of WHO reform.

“The Committee will support any staff member who faces difficulties at work” said Patrick. “This includes challenging any additional post abolition. We shall strive to maintain a spirit of respectful dialogue with the Administration so all opportunities can be seized to make our agency a place where staff can develop harmoniously”. Other priorities for the SAC are to increase investment in staff and take a more active approach to workforce management. “The proposed staff mobility programme has the potential to create new opportunities, expose staff to different social and political contexts, and reinforce cohesion across offices. The staff associations have advocated for both geographical and functional mobility, with an approach that is family-friendly and takes into account various personal and professional considerations” confirmed Patrick.

The three new committee members share this spirit to serve WHO staff. Aboulkaire Ahmed, Systems Engineer in Information Technology and Telecommunications Department is committed to preserving staff rights and improving working conditions. Gemma Vestal, Technical Officer in PND in Prevent Noncommunicable Disease Department wants to see that staff are empowered to fully use their skills, talents, and abilities to perform to their potential. Veronica Riemer, Project Manager, Department of Communications is interested in supporting the selection panels to ensure that we recruit and retain talented and highly qualified staff and that the work of the selection panel is systematic, objective and fair. Reform of internal justice mechanisms is also high on the agenda. Patrick explained that better systems are needed to ensure timely access to justice for all staff of the Organization wherever there are grievances, from HQ to country offices. “Processes are protracted; investigative functions lack sufficient independence; and the grievance mechanism does not have adequate legal expertise. We are pleased that the Director-General is committed to undertaking a review and reform process, and we look forward to giving her our full support and engagement” he added. We recognise that a fair and just workplace reinforces staff commitment, confidence, well-being and health, and ultimately drives success”. ■

To contact the WHO-HQ SA please send an email to staffassociation@who.int
Responsible leadership

CSR education for present and future managers

Achieving sustainable development implies a profound change in mindset, thinking and values. It involves that managers and leaders are able to consider complex and intricate environmental, social and economic issues in their daily work, no matter their job function, position, sector of activity, industry or service.

In this respect, institutions of higher education play a crucial role in training future managers, leaders and decision-makers to integrate sustainability and ethical considerations as a core competence. The challenge for universities is to transcend their long tradition of disciplinary research and teaching to integrate ethical and sustainable considerations throughout their curricula.

Two international initiatives aim at fostering this trend. Adopted in 2007 under the auspices of the UN Global Compact, the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) intend “to inspire and champion responsible management education, research and thought leadership globally”, by embedding corporate responsibility and sustainability into business education.

In June 2012, the international academic community presented the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative on the occasion of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. This Initiative calls for revising teaching contents and methods to integrate sustainability, in order for students to acquire skills of “interdisciplinary thinking, integrated planning, understanding complexity,”
cooperating with others in decision-making processes, and participating in local, national and global processes towards sustainable development”. This Initiative also tackles the “green campus” dimension. Universities, as any other organizations, have an important environmental and social impact through their energy and water uses, transport of staff and students, supply chain and catering services, recruitment and human resources policies including diversity management. Indeed, universities and business schools respond to students and employers demand for increased knowledge and competence on CSR, social entrepreneurship, environmental issues or ethical considerations.

The University of Geneva introduced a course on Transversal Ethics in September 2013. Open to all students from all faculties and disciplines it aims at fostering their reflexion on goodness, fairness and usefulness. In the Geneva School of Economics and Management, a number of programmes integrate a CSR dimension in their curricula including the Master in Business Administration (MBA), the International Organizations MBA and several other Masters.

Executive education provides professionals with the opportunity to update their skills and knowledge to integrate a sustainability dimension in their daily work. The University of Geneva advanced education programmes in Corporate Social Responsibility are designed for professionals from private companies, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), international organizations and the public sector. They help them understand the different aspects of CSR and how it can contribute to institutions meeting today’s global sustainability challenges and opportunities. The courses also aim at having participants master CSR tools and methodologies in order to become innovative responsible leaders.

Since 2008, the Certificate and Diploma of Advanced Studies as well as the Executive Summer Course in Corporate Social Responsibility have trained over two hundred international executives from all professions and sectors of activities in the public and private sector, as well as international organisations and NGOs.

The diversity of backgrounds and the international profiles of participants contribute to the high quality of debates during the course, which is taught by leading CSR professionals and academic experts. Faculty and alumni constitute a network of active CSR professionals, gathered in the CSR International Forum (CSRIF), the course alumni association. The CSR International Forum actively contributes to opening up the debate on corporate social and sustainable responsibility to a wider audience in Geneva through monthly CSR Thursday Lunches.  

Proceeds from the Match will support recovery efforts in the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan. To bolster the local economy UNDP has already begun a cash-for-work project clearing debris in Tacloban. Efforts will continue to help those who have lost homes, businesses and jobs as a result of the typhoon.

The Match will start at 20:00 local time on 4 March 2014. Ticket prices range from CHF 20.00 up to CHF 60.00 and are available at www.ticketcorner.ch

More information at UNDP.org
Sustainable development and economic growth

Should economic actors change their behavior?

OLIVIER BORIE

Population growth along with environmental degradation has led to the emergence of the sustainable development concept. The most often quoted definition of sustainable development was published in the 1987 report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, ‘Our common Future’. Also known as the ‘Brundtland report’, it defines sustainable development as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

Development is concerned with the improvement of the quality of life for everyone. The economy is one of its key dimensions, along with the environment and society. The general assumption is that the increase of income leads to an improvement of living conditions. Sustainable development conveys the key belief that social and environmental problems will be solved through the economy: the market is the main driver of development combined with an absolute trust in technological progress and innovation.

Ironically, sustainable development can also sometimes be perceived as a barrier to development as it sometimes imposes new requirements that previously did not apply. It is, however, the only way forward, any other option being, by definition, unsustainable.
Today, economic growth is at the heart of our economies and our societies. It is both the engine and an end in itself. However, there is an apparent dilemma between economic growth and sustainability. How can we achieve both in a finite world?

Economic growth is usually measured in terms of gross domestic product, or GDP. This approach is limited as the complex question of development can hardly be reduced to a macroeconomic equation.

In addition, the GDP does not take into account certain externalities: a country can exploit all of its mineral resources, cut all its forests, erode its soils, pollute its waters, destroy its biodiversity and yet increase its GDP, i.e. it fails to account for the depreciation of natural assets. The GDP will however include profits made on addressing unaccounted costs related, for instance, to the cleaning-up of a pollution.

The GDP is also blind to worsening poverty as long as national economic figures keep increasing. Nor can it measure the well-being of a population as it overlooks issues of income distribution.

Why is there such an imperative for economic growth? The short answer is that there is a structural reliance of the economy on growth to maintain employment, i.e. people’s livelihoods.

The drive for profit is a strong incentive for increased productivity, i.e. fewer people are needed to produce the same goods from one year to the next. As long as the economy expands fast enough to offset labor productivity there isn’t a problem. But if the economy doesn’t grow, there is a downward pressure on employment. People lose their jobs. With less money in the economy, output falls, public spending is curtailed and the ability to service public debt is diminished. A spiral of recession looms. Growth is necessary within this system just to prevent collapse.

In times of economic crisis, policy responses are almost unanimous that recovery means to re-invigorate consumer spending to stimulate economic growth.

There is clear case to sustain growth, but how can growth be sustainable? ‘The conventional response to the dilemma of growth is to call for “decoupling”: continued economic growth with continually declining material throughput.’

As stated in the United Nations Environment Program’s International Resource Panel’s report published in 2011, ‘Decoupling Natural Resource Use and Environmental Impacts from Economic Growth’, ‘decoupling at its simplest is reducing the amount of resources such as water or fossil fuels used to produce economic growth and delinking economic development from environmental deterioration. For it is clear in a world of nearly seven billion people, climbing to around nine billion in 40 years time that growth is needed to lift people out of poverty and to generate employment for the soon to be two billion people either unemployed or underemployed... Decoupling represents a strategic approach for moving forward a global Green Economy.’

In a competitive market, the profit motive fuels a continual search for newer, better or cheaper products and services. Environmental issues should therefore be solved through technological progress as price signals will have economic actors change their behavior. For this to happen though, prices should factor in costs that are currently unaccounted for.

But, while efficiencies are indeed achieved, these improvements are generally offset by increases in scale of the economic activity during the same period. As yet, technological progress, increased efficiencies, and dematerialization fail to balance or compensate for the material aspects of economic growth. Coming up with substitutes may help but isn’t a solution in itself.

The contradiction between a relentless economic growth in a finite environment cannot be reconciled. Sustainable development is a concept that can be conveniently interpreted and embraced in many ways, and its goals should still be pursued for the lack of better alternatives. It is an imperfect but smoother path to maintaining a certain balance in our societies while trying to improve the living conditions of people. It might even eventually foster the emergence of new approaches and economic models. New measurements to assess development should encompass its multiple dimensions, consider diverse societies and traditions as well as involve various stakeholders.

2 Tim Jackson, Prosperity without growth, UK Sustainable Development Commission, 2009, p 8
3 Tim Jackson, ibid, p 8
4 UNEP (2011) Decoupling natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth, a report of the Working Group on Decoupling to the International Resource Panel, p. XI
L’économie sociale et solidaire
Des coulisses à l’avant-scène?

Jean Fabre, ancien directeur-adjoint du Bureau du PNUD à Genève et chargé des communications

Ouvrons les yeux : sous des apparences de progrès, le monde est en pleine sortie de route que de simples aménagements au modèle économique qui prévaut ne réussiront pas à enrayer.

En fait, sans l’ESS nombre de nos sociétés seraient actuellement des faillites sociales.

Pourquoi mettre l’ESS à la pointe de nos travaux et propositions ? Parce que le monde ayant davantage changé en 60 ans qu’en six siècles, et ses mutations futures s’annonçant encore plus grandes, il est urgent de changer de paradigme économique et de mode de gouvernance.

En 40 ans la concurrence est devenue omniprésente : entre nations, entre entreprises, entre individus, alors pourtant que le monde basculait pour toujours dans l’ère de l’interdépendance. Depuis 1950 la population mondiale a triplé, passant de 2,4 à 7,2 milliards d’habitants, et nous préparons le monde de 9 milliards d’humains de 2050. Compte tenu des ressources limitées de la planète, nous sommes désormais tous sur le même bateau : en première, seconde ou troisième classe, ou à fond de cale – passagers, mais aussi de facto tous membres de l’équipe. De notre volonté de nous comporter comme tels dépend la possibilité d’arriver à bon port et naviguer hors tempêtes.

Puisque chacun revendique le droit au meilleur de ce qui est accessible à autrui, nous nousions, sommés depuis longtemps...
l’alarme sur l’effondrement écologique en cours. On consomme en un an ce que la nature met 14 à 15 mois à reconstituer.

Faute de changer de modèle, le climat devient ingérable, les pollutions maritimes délétères, la pression sur les sols excessive, les ressources naturelles s’épuisent, et bientôt certains métaux ne se trouveront que dans les décharges. Nous sommes en train de clore la parenthèse pétrole dans l’histoire de l’humanité. Le premier puits fut foré il y a 150 ans, le dernier fermera dans 70. Puis il faudra attendre 200 millions d’années pour que puisse se reconstituer cette ressource.

La démesure est celle de nos choix économi ques. Depuis que nous avons confié aux marchés la définition des taux de change, les États et banques centrales ne créent plus la monnaie. L’essentiel des capitaux qui circulent sont de simples écritures bancaires qui ne sont garanties que par les dettes des emprunteurs astreints à rembourser à des taux aussi élevés que possible. Nos entreprises à propriété actionnarielle n’ont plus pour but premier de fournir des biens et services mais de maximiser des profits. Déharnessed de la tutelle de règles visant la protection sociale, la finance a déchelé son inventivité, générant bulle sur bulle, le désastre de 2008 et d’immenses inégalités, et prépare des chocs à venir encore plus grands – les mesures prises à ce jour étant inopérantes.

Les conférences onusiennes se succèdent sans qu’émerge une nouvelle époque économique. Nous restons englués dans le schéma anachronique imposé durant les dernières décennies. Un monde d’interdépendance planétaire ne peut être articulé autour de la concurrence. L’attention ne peut être centrée sur les “réactions des marchés” à toute décision, mais devrait porter sur ce qui peut nous en protéger. Nous ne pouvons continuer à ignorer que des masses colossales d’argent spéculatif, très supérieures à tout ce qu’il eut fallu mobiliser en 15 ans pour atteindre les OMD, continuent à circuler et dénaturer nos échanges économiques et rapports sociaux alors qu’elles n’ont aucune contrepartie dans l’économie réelle des biens et services.

Il y a urgence à mettre chaque pays en état de faire sa part de la gestion de notre écologie et contribuer à réduire les tensions sociales – donc, à l’instar de la CNUCED, de faire de la « prospérité pour tous » une priorité absolue.

Merci donc à l’UNRISD et au BIT, Sarah Cook, Peter Utting et Guy Rider en tête, pour avoir rassemblé en mai dernier à Genève1 des acteurs et analystes de l’ESS, et au SLNG, PNUD et CNUCED avec qui ils ont constitué un groupe permanent afin d’en faire le centre d’une réflexion novatrice sur la refection de l’économie. Il ne s’agit pas ici d’inciter à la responsabilité sociale et environnementale des entreprises comme le veut le Global Compact sous l’égide de l’ONU, mais de mettre l’humain et l’écologie au cœur d’un pacte économique, social et environnemental mondial pour le XXIe siècle, et non la maximisation des profits ou la croissance du PIB.

Rêvez. Non. L’ESS constitue déjà 7% de l’emploi dans l’Union Européenne (10% en France), et une part importante dans nombre d’économies émergentes et en développement. Une partie (notamment les coopératives, mutuals, fondations, banques éthiques) sont des acteurs puissants du secteur privé, alors que d’autres (entreprises d’aide à la personne, associations de bénévoles, syndicats, etc.) sont parfois soutenus par le secteur public dont certains remplissent des missions. On doit aux coopératives agricoles l’essor de grands pays dont la France, et leur industrialisation au XXIe siècle. Le mouvement sportif, hormis le microcosme médiatisé construit sur l’argent, ne pourrait fonctionner sans ses dizaines de millions de bénévoles à travers le monde. L’ESS c’est aussi le commerce équitable, la finance solidaire (dont le microcrédit), les logiciels libres, les banques de savoir 2.0, les monnaies alternatives locales (parfois appuyées par les municipalités ou gouvernements régionaux) facilitant les échanges locaux et permettant de faire front aux crises financières et sociales…

Contrairement à l’économie dominante centrée sur le profit à tout prix, l’ESS est focalisée sur le service de ses sociétaires et de la collectivité. En outre, ses entreprises sont caractérisées par une gestion démocratique à travers la participation des salariés aux orientations et aux décisions (une personne, une voix). Celles qui font des profits ne visent pas à le maximiser, mais à le maintenir à un niveau assez bas pour rendre leurs productions accessibles au plus grand nombre, et répartissent les éventuels surplus prioritairement au bénéfice des personnes et/ou du développement de leurs services à la communauté plutôt que rémunérer des détenteurs de capitaux.

Sans ignorer les limites actuelles de ces modèles, et les risques de dérive vers l’économie clinquante enseignés par l’histoire, l’ESS constitue donc une base à amplifier considérablement et un sujet de référence à partir duquel concevoir des modèles de production et d’échange, et des types de gouvernance entrepreneuriale adaptés à un monde condamné à sortir du chacun pour soi et des logiques de cupidité pour offrir un avenir aux nouvelles générations.

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1. Avec notamment le soutien de la Ville de Genève – outre HIVOS et la Fondation Rosa Luxembourg.

Pour en savoir plus, veuillez visiter les sites web suivants:
http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/events.nsf/%28
http://events29/513ED4DE8AD56ECC1257A00469
15770.pdf/document
https://www.rencontres-montblanc.com/

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Le troc, c'est tout bénéfice!

OLIVIER BORIE

Le troc consiste à échanger la propriété d’un bien ou d’un service avec un autre bien ou service. Il intervient entre des particuliers, des entreprises et des États. Il se base sur la réciprocité d’une prestation et requiert une double coincidence des besoins: le propriétaire du bien, ou service, que l’on souhaite échanger doit également être intéressé par celui que l’on a à lui offrir. A cela s’ajoute une contrainte de temps qui implique de trouver un partenaire qui accepte ce qu’on fournit, et propose en même temps ce qu’on demande. Par ailleurs, l’indivisibilité de certains biens limite également les possibilités d’échange. Ces limites ont fait que la monnaie est devenue le principal moyen d’échange.

Le troc conserve encore, toutefois, toute son utilité en offrant un autre système de compensation, les multiprincipes fondamentaux. Face à des entreprises locales incapables de payer leurs commandes, les multinationales américaines ont accepté de recourir à ce type de compensation. On estime le volume des échanges commerciaux et de services comme General Electric ou Boeing à 7,5 milliards de dollars en 1998.1

En Argentine, lors de la crise économique de la fin des années 1990, des monnaies «sociales» sous forme de tickets ont alimenté une économie parallèle au travers d’un système informel de production et d’échange de biens et de services. On assimile cette pratique à du troc étant donné qu’elle en applique un de ses principes fondamentaux, la réciprocité: un individu ne peut acquérir un bien ou un service qu’il en offre aussi lui-même un autre. Ces réseaux ont permis à de nombreuses personnes, dont les revenus étaient trop faibles pour surmonter leurs difficultés, d’en trouver un sentiment d’appartenance à une communauté. Toutefois, au bout de quelque temps, un contexte de reprise économique et des dysfonctionnements qui ont entamé la confiance (par exemple tickets contrefaits, revente d’objets volés) ont marqué leur déclin.

L’un des plus anciens, peut-être même le plus ancien système de monnaie alternative, est suisse. Il s’agit de la coopérative WIR, fondée en 1934 lors de la grande crise. Confrontés à une pénurie d’argent liquide, et afin d’assurer leurs échanges commerciaux, un groupe d’entrepreneurs a mis en place un système parallèle d’échange, une forme de troc amélioré basé sur le concept de monnaie «fondante», i.e. une monnaie qui, à l’image des biens de consommation, perd de sa valeur au fil du temps, et rend la spéculation inopérante. Aujourd’hui, près de 65 000 sociétés font partie de cette coopérative. Ce système cherche à promouvoir l’esprit d’entreprise et la croissance économique. Probablement le seul système monétaire alternatif des années 1930 encore en activité, on attribue sa longévité à sa licence bancaire qui lui permet d’octroyer des crédits dont bénéficient ses membres et d’offrir des solutions complémentaires au système monétaire classique, plus responsable de réduire les limites du troc et faciliter les échanges. Au niveau des consommateurs, Internet permet également de mieux s’informer, de partager des informations et des «bons plans». L’évolution de nos modes de consommation contribue au succès de ces sites. Une prise de conscience accrue des enjeux sociaux et environnementaux favorise une consommation plus responsable. Échanger ou acheter des produits de seconde main peut tout à fait s’inscrire dans une démarche de développement durable face au «tout jetable», sans oublier l’augmentation du pouvoir d’achat qui en résulte, puisqu’il s’agit d’un échange sans monnaie. Reste que les sites «classiques» d’annonces et de vente d’enchères en ligne ont toujours, pour le moment, largement plus de succès auprès du public.

Bien que relativement marginaux et, finalement, tout autant exposés à des faiblesses que le système monétaire classique, le troc et les réseaux d’échanges locaux demeurent indispensables pour offrir des solutions complémentaires au système monétaire actuel. Plus qu’une remise en cause de ce système, leur résurgence relève peut-être plus d’une volonté de proposer un outil qui créé du lien et rende du sens à l’usage de la monnaie… sans dépenser son argent!

1 Alternatives Économiques n° 164 – novembre 1998
2 www.wir.comandie.ch/presse/romag25-wir.pdf

Dans les années 1990, par exemple, les crises asiatique et russe ont eu pour effet inattendu de provoquer un accroissement du troc dans les échanges commerciaux mondiaux. Face à des entreprises locales incapables de payer leurs commandes, les multinationales américaines ont accepté de recourir à ce type de compensation. On estime la valeur de ces échanges pour les plus grandes entreprises comme General Electric ou Boeing à 7,5 milliards de dollars en 1998.1

1 Alternatives Économiques n° 164 – novembre 1998
2 www.wir.comandie.ch/presse/romag25-wir.pdf
GPAFI proposes additional assistance services with the current supplementary health insurance plan

Could you remind us of the mission of GPAFI?

PATRICK BREHM® GPAFI is a non-profit-making association, formed in 1958 by the Coordinating Council of the United Nations Office at Geneva (formerly Staff Council).

Initially, its objective was to provide health insurance coverage for short-term and retired international civil servants. Year after year, GPAFI has negotiated collective insurance schemes with insurance companies, offering its members highly favourable conditions.

Today, GPAFI provides a wide range of insurance schemes for international civil servants working in the international organizations based in Geneva and employees of permanent missions to the UN, as well as family members of all its staff.

Who is UNIQA? What partnership has been made between UNIQA and GPAFI?

NADINE BURCHER-GRANVILLE® UNIQA Assurances SA is a Swiss private health insurance company with a strong international identity. UNIQA offers innovative worldwide healthcare/accident plans, especially to employees and their family members of international organizations and multinational companies who are not subject to the mandatory health insurance of their country of residence.

GPAFI has been proposing a supplementary health insurance plan to their members since 2010 thanks to the partnership with UNIQA Assurances SA.

Which products are proposed to the members by GPAFI?

N.B.G. The current supplementary health insurance plan also covers the costs for treatments not supported by the basic insurance scheme, such as a private room in case of hospitalization. The supplementary health insurance plan also covers the costs for alternative medicine up to CHF 1,000 per year.

P.B. GPAFI will propose additional assistance benefits, from February 1st, 2014, to the existing supplementary health insurance plan, initially to members from UNO. The GPAFI members from UNO will be able to choose either the existing supplementary health insurance, or a “premium” supplementary health insurance. This “premium” health insurance includes medical, travel and security assistance services in addition to the existing cover. The existing insured members will also be able to subscribe to these assistance covers.

What will be new within the “premium” health insurance?

P.B. The assistance cover will include medical assistance services, travel risks and security assistance in addition to the existing benefits offered. An access to a multilingual assistance platform as well as a smartphone application, including all necessary information before travelling, will be proposed in order to make your journey safer and more pleasant.

A dedicated phone number will be at the disposal of the insured members to contact our platform for any kind of request 24/7. From trip cancellation to evacuation in case of unrest in a country or to the medical repatriation, our assistance product will make your journey abroad completely stress free.

The full and 24/7 coverage of inpatient costs in case of emergency for all insured members during their stay abroad will be an additional source of security for travellers (with no necessity to wait for the prior approval from UNSMIS).

Detailed information related to the new scope of assistance services is available by contacting GPAFI.

Who is UNIQA Assistance?

N.B.G. The assistance services proposed by UNIQA Assistance provide a wide range of medical assistance coverage to the insured members from the simple case of medical monitoring to the complex medical repatriation. We can intervene anywhere in the World without any geographical restriction. Our assistance service centers located in more than thirty countries and our partners in more than 200 countries provide a response capability in all countries even in the most remote areas.

Management of daily emergency,

Our service assistance centers take care of our insured members 24/7 in case of illness or accident. We also ensure safety and well-being of our policy holders in case of any incident during their trip.

In several languages and through a dedicated phone number, our insured members holding our assistance cover will be able to:

– Access medical and safety recommendations regarding their destination from a smartphone application or internet;
– Talk to a physician, get advice from a security expert and claim a loss related to a problem with luggage or flight tickets and ask for compensation;
– Be supported and assisted to organize hospitalization, evacuation or repatriation anytime;
– Access a worldwide network of more than 40.000 medical providers;
– Receive a full coverage of inpatient costs in case of emergency for all policy holders (UN staff and their family members);
– Assistance claims will be handled by a leading international assistance provider in case of loss.

How can GPAFI members subscribe to this new supplementary health insurance plan?

P.B. The supplementary health insurance plan including the assistance cover is initially offered to the ONUG international and their family members only.

GPAFI members who are interested in this second supplementary health plan should contact GPAFI, either by phone (+41(0) 22 917 26 20) or by e-mail (gpafi@unog.ch).

1 Patrick Brehm, Administrator of GPAFI
2 Nadine-Burcher-Granville, CEO of UNIQA Assurances SA

Février 2014 | 23
“The choice we face is not between saving our environment and saving our economy. The choice we face is between prosperity and decline”.

— President Barack Obama
Does the Bitcoin have a future as an online international currency?

MARIA-ANGELES MARTIN GIL

Bitcoin is an alternative virtual currency for online transactions. The million dollar/bitcoins question today is “does the Bitcoin have a future as an online international currency? Technically speaking, there is no doubt among the experts that the creator or creators (who’s identity is still unknown) were able to solve brilliantly the biggest challenge of the system: fraud in the emission of Bitcoin. According to the current users, if the developers are able to speed the process of confirming a transaction, we could expect in little time a newcomer settled in our daily life.

Aimed at being global, Bitcoins are not issued by any central bank, they are not subject to any financial authority and are not limited by any regional or country law. This is irony for our financial system, which pretends to be global, but it is in fact struggling with the regulation imposed after the last western European financial crisis. As no physical currencies are involved in the online payments, some see it like a salutary alternative to the almost global oligopoly of Mastercard or Visa.

The idea is so attractive and the development is so well mastered, that the popularity of Bitcoins has been increasing since its creation in 2009, reaching a peak of 100,000 transactions last year.

However there are some important roadblocks to be certain that Bitcoin came to stay. The first and most straightforward is the value of Bitcoins, which is difficult to address due to its volatility: it was at 14$ at the beginning of 2013, it reached 266$ and fell to 110$ in June, peaced to 1,240$ by November and ended at 1,000$ by the first week of January 2014. On top, you might need to pass from your local currency to USD to acquire Bitcoins, which add more volatility to your transaction that raises another concern: volatility is the magnet for speculators. In other words, swinging in the price of the currency might be due to pure speculative transactions (and not supply and demand mechanisms), where people will benefit just from selling at a more expensive price. Does it mean then that Bitcoin can reach to more than 1,500$? It might be as it is also possible that it might fall to zero.

Central banks like Bundesbank, of Malaysia and the European Central bank of, warned during the passed days about the lack of protection for Bitcoins investors, and the French highlighted the lack of guarantee that Bitcoins could be exchanged for real money. In December, the Chinese central bank banished Bitcoin exchanges, limiting and putting in danger the system in the currency’s most important market.

The second big question, is how can regulators supervise the origin of real money in a system where the transactions are all anonymous? Liberty reserve, another virtual coin, is already under judiciary scrutiny for money laundering and authorities fear about the easy access to money from illegal activities.

In the meantime, the number of online stores that accept Bitcoins as payment is still very limited and the tendency is not clear: during the first week of January, the Chinese online group Alibaba announced that they had stopped accepting Bitcoins in its shopping websites while Zynga, a US based games company announced that they would pilot a program to accept them.

Improvements for consumers and commerce? The revolution for people with no access to a bank account? The step forward to globalize e-commerce? Someone said: the Esperanto of the currencies.
INSTITUT DE FORMATION MARIA MONTESSORI

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Février 2014 | 27

Teach a Man to Fish

OMAR BAWA

Millions of low-income families and people around the world survive without access to loans, savings accounts and the basic financial services that many of us take for granted. Without the tools to attain financial independence and stability, fighting poverty is an uphill battle.

In the 1970s, Mohammed Yunus, now a Nobel laureate, introduced a micro lending model in rural Bangladesh. He started a movement to provide better financial services to the people who need it most: the same people traditional banks refuse to serve. The movement was called microfinance, and microcredit or small loans is its most powerful facet. Often, a small loan is all it takes for a person to build a future and escape the outstretched claws of poverty. They become self-employed, their business provides goods, services and job opportunities to their local community and the revenue support their family and allow them to pay back their loan. The microcredit can also be used for education, housing or to create other opportunities for people to improve their lives.

Soon, microfinance institutions sprouted all over the world to offer small loans of a few hundred dollars at a time, to save people from poverty. By 2005, microcredit went online. Matt Flannery and his wife Jessica created the online non-profit micro-lending platform Kiva.org with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. The platform, thanks to its network of 237 field partners and 450 volunteers in seventy-three countries, allows individuals to lend as little as 25$ to create opportunity around the world. The results have been amazing: Kiva has already crowd-funded more than 515$ million in loans from over one million lenders. To the awe of traditional banking institutions, Kiva boasts a repayment rate of 99%.

“Give a Man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach him how to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” — Proverb

In my opinion, Kiva drives its success by telling powerful personal stories. Behind every business lies a story: the story of a spinach farmer in Cambodia, a carpenter in Gaza, a fish seller in Uganda or a hot dog man in Nicaragua. The stories build human connections between lenders and borrowers. They get us closer to understanding what it means to be imprisoned by poverty and the challenge of trying to escape.

Finally Kiva makes it easy: you make a small loan, you receive email updates throughout the life of your loan, the borrower repays your loan (the money, called your Kiva Credit, becomes available in your account), and then you choose to use the credit to fund another loan, donate it to Kiva or withdraw it to spend on something else.

While online microcredit is not a silver bullet to ending poverty, we cannot deny its incredible impact.

Photo credit: Flikcr

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Côté nuit, côté soleil

Entretien avec Muriel Scibilia, auteur du livre «Côté nuit, côté soleil – Des jeunes racontent leur traversée du cancer»

MARIE-JOSÉ ASTRE-DÉMOULIN

Muriel, qu’est-ce qui vous a amenée à faire ce livre?
Une de mes filles a eu un cancer à dix ans. Elle va bien aujourd’hui, mais le chemin a été incertain, long, difficile.

C’est pourquoi j’ai invité dix d’entre eux à raconter le pire comme le meilleur de ce qu’ils ont vécu. A travers leurs récits, ils donnent à voir ce que cette traversée comporte de frayeurs, de souffrance physique et psychique, de désespoir, mais aussi de questionnement, de courage, de volonté, de solidarité, de moments de grâce, de résilience et d’élévation… D’où le titre : «Côté nuit, côté soleil».

Il n’a pas dû être facile pour ces jeunes de se livrer ainsi
Il leur a fallu beaucoup de courage et de persévérance pour se replonger dans un vécu douloureux, pour dire ce qui le plus souvent ne s’écoute pas, pour révéler ce qui se joue dans les détails : comment une absence, un manque d’attention, une parole maladroite peuvent anéantir l’espoir et générer un sentiment d’abandon; comment un mot, un geste peuvent ouvrir tous les possibles.

A qui s’adresse ce livre?
A tous : nouveaux patients, familles, amis, connaissances, collègues, personnel soignant, pouvoirs publics. En nous livrant le «côté coulisses» d’une expérience dont on ne voit d’habitude que le «côté scène», ces jeunes nous invitent à dépasser les clichés, à surmonter nos angoisses pour mieux aborder et soutenir ce magnifique combat pour la vie.

Leurs récits montrent ce qui se trame derrière les apparences afin que nous trouvions les mots et les gestes les plus appropriés pour faire équipe. Comme le dit...
Les associations semblent jouer un grand rôle. Capital. Qu’elles opèrent au sein de l’hôpital ou à l’extérieur, elles offrent un appui précieux aux parents, dont la vie est complètement chamboulée, mais aussi et surtout aux jeunes.

En leur proposant différentes activités, comme la musique ou le bricolage, en réalisant leur plus grand rêve, en les emmenant en voyage, elles leur permettent de s’évader de la maladie, de croire que rien n’est impossible, de partager un vécu avec d’autres jeunes au parcours similaire.

Ce qui permet de se sentir moins seul et favorise la reconstruction d’une identité bien malmenée par la maladie.

Pourquoi une journée internationale du cancer de l’enfant et de l’adolescent, le 15 février ?
Le cancer des jeunes reste difficile à aborder parce qu’il est par essence aussi injuste qu’insupportable. Il est donc important de mieux faire connaître cette maladie, qui est en fait une constellation de maladies rares, et de recueillir des dons pour la recherche scientifique. D’où cette journée lancée il y a quelques années par une association de parents, réunie au sein de l’International Confederation of Childhood Cancer Parents Organisations. Elle donne lieu à de multiples activités de sensibilisation à travers le monde.

La recherche a pourtant fait des progrès. Certes. On arrive désormais à guérir 8 enfants sur 10. Le cancer de l’enfant et de l’adolescent reste néanmoins la deuxième cause de décès après les accidents et la première cause de décès par maladie. En outre, les problèmes sont très différents de ceux rencontrés chez les adultes, ne serait-ce que comme les jeunes sont en pleine croissance, les traitements peuvent provoquer d’importantes séquelles. Il est donc essentiel de découvrir des traitements plus efficaces et moins toxiques.

Que peut faire chacun d’entre nous ?

Merci, Muriel, pour cet entretien ainsi que pour cette collecte de témoignages qui nous bouleverse, tant au niveau de nos émotions que de nos croyances et perceptions.
Corporate Social Responsibility

A journey to Sustainable Development

In a recessionary context, the considerable impacts commercial enterprises’ processes and practices have over society and the environment take a new dimension.

DR. CATHERINE FERRIER, DIRECTOR, CSR EXECUTIVE EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA

The subprime mortgage crisis and the subsequent global financial crisis and economic recession revealed the limits of a deregulated market economy. Are corporations acting with the sole purpose of increasing their profits, no matter the negative impact they may have on the environment and society? Or should the business of business not be about money, but rather about responsibility, public good and not private greed as late Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop, advocated? Somewhere between these two extreme positions, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) opens an intermediate path. CSR does not question the profit-making nature of business. It questions how these profits are made.

What is CSR?

Corporate social responsibility is “a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders” (UNIDO). CSR goes by many different names, such as Corporate Sustainability or Responsible Business, and countless definitions. For instance the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) in its ISO 26,000 Guidance on social responsibility defines CSR as the "responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment that:

- contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society;
- takes into account the expectations of stakeholders;
- is in compliance with law and consistent with international norms of behaviour;
- is integrated throughout the organisation and practiced in its relationships through transparent and ethical behaviour”.

Generally, CSR is seen as a voluntary, pragmatic and business-driven response to the pressures urged by consumers and civil society on companies to manage their social, economic and environmental impacts. CSR can also be perceived as the contribution of corporations to sustainable development, where the sustainable development goals of balancing social, environmental and economic development translate in business terms into balancing “people, planet and profits”.

Historically business has been involved in society in different ways, including philanthropic commitments, paternalistic management of employees or alternative business structures such as mutual funds or cooperatives. Modern-day CSR springs from Howard R. Bowen’s 1953 book calling to the ‘social consciousness’ of businessmen (no mention of businesswomen then) whose responsibility went beyond mere profit and loss statement of accounts. In the 1970s and 1980s, environmentalists and human rights activist groups confronted major corporations on their investment decisions or their supply chain and marketing policies. CSR has gathered momentum since the 1990s, building upon negative public exposure damaging companies’ reputation and questioning their legitimacy and (social) licence to operate. Today, with information circulating fast-paced, companies are careful to preserve their brand’s name and reputation. Indeed, CSR may as well be mere window-dressing unless corporate CSR communication is backed up with solid facts and data.

Criticised, yet beneficial

CSR is also criticised for being mostly applied by multinationals which are under closer scrutiny than small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and have the adequate resources to meet the extra investment. Multinational enterprises may then avoid hard law development through self-regulation. CSR critics also consider it contrary to market rationality, as social responsibility is a state duty and only markets can optimally allocate resources. However, when embedded into its core strategy, CSR can bring
positive outcomes to the company, even SMEs, including:
- Reducing costs through efficient resources use, e.g., energy, water, biodiversity, reducing waste and improving operational efficiency;
- Anticipating constraints through better risk management, including social, legal, ecological and reputational risks;
- Anticipating society’s needs and expectations through stakeholder engagement;
- Preserving and reinforcing reputation and brand value, which has a direct impact on stock value and investors’ decisions;
- Gaining and increasing employees’ motivation and loyalty through improved and fair working conditions;
- Increasing competitiveness, and by stimulating technical regulation developments by anticipating market and social innovation.

Nowadays over 95% of major global companies issue a CSR report and more than 10,000 organizations adhere to the United Nations Global Compact. Companies operate in a globalised context, dealing with the global challenges of an increasing world population, hence rising needs for food, water, energy, consumer goods, changing consumption patterns, environmental degradation, pollution and social inequalities.

To help companies in their CSR journey, many guidelines, methodologies and reporting frameworks have been developed such as the Global Reporting Initiative or ISO 26,000, both elaborated though a multi stakeholder consultation process. Sector-specific multi stakeholder platforms have also emerged, like the Initiative for Transparency in Extractive Industries (IETI), the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Better Cotton Initiative, or the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).

The UN and CSR

The 1999 United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) encourages businesses to adopt and report on sustainable and socially responsible strategies (see box 1). In spite of not monitoring or verifying companies’ declarations, the UNGC has become an essential reference for governments, companies and investors.

The labour dimensions of CSR have long been covered by the International Labour Organization, which tripartite structure is a precursor to modern multi stakeholder dialogues. In particular, the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work protects the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, intends to eliminate forced, compulsory or child labour and discrimination. In 2011, the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework” addresses states on their duty to protect human rights, businesses on their duty to respect them and intend to secure access by victims to judicial and non-judicial remedy.

Over the last ten to fifteen years, CSR has taken grassroots into business practices and strategies. A tool for the private sector, it questions each stakeholder’s social and environmental responsibility. Its voluntary character is being watered down by expanding national legal requirements on extra-financial reporting, transparency in the financial sector or even compulsory investment into CSR. While aiming at increasing transparency in business operations, the profusion of codes of conduct, standards, guidelines, reporting tools and sector initiatives created confusion and, ironically, opacity. There may now be a need for a clear and harmonised international framework, possibly UN-driven, in order to enable CSR to efficiently contribute to sustainable development.

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2 KPMG (2011): International survey of Corporate Responsibility Reporting

3 http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/index.html

4 UNEP (2011) Decoupling natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth, a report of the Working Group on Decoupling to the International Resource Panel, p. XI

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THE TEN PRINCIPLES – UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

The UN Global Compact’s ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption enjoy universal consensus and are derived from:
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

The UN Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption:

Human Rights
- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour
- Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment
- Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption
- Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.
La RSE est un concept pour lequel il existe plusieurs définitions et variantes. Elle s’inscrit généralement dans une démarche de développement durable où l’on prend en considération les impacts sociaux (ou sociétaux), environnementaux et économiques des activités d’une organisation.

OLIVIER BORIE

La RSE, une question de choix
On associe souvent la RSE à un engagement volontaire, un choix librement assumé, en dehors de toute contrainte légale. L’État peut y apporter son soutien sous forme réglementaire, fiscale ou en matière d’information. Cette implication des entreprises ne signifie pas pour autant qu’elles doivent se substituer aux manquements éventuels de l’État. De fait, ce partage des rôles évolue dans le temps en fonction des valeurs d’une société, de ses choix et des différents rapports de force.

Toutefois, les initiatives volontaires restent limitées au nombre de leurs adhérents. Elles ont parfois du mal à dépasser le stade du consensus sur le plus petit dénominateur commun.

Parallèlement à ces démarches facultatives, les cadres normatifs, aussi bien au niveau national qu’international, se renforcent progressivement.

Le concept de responsabilité varie en fonction des systèmes de valeurs. Elle peut donc s’appliquer différemment d’un pays à l’autre.

De ce point de vue, la pratique de l’éthique, que l’on peut assimiler à un processus ou un cadre de prise de décision par
lequel on choisit entre un bien et un mal, entre en deux maux ou entre deux biens, propose des outils très concrets et utiles.

**La RSE sur le plan individuel**

Aujourd’hui, la RSE s’inspire de principes internationalement reconnus dont beaucoup trouvent leurs fondements dans les chartes et les principes des Nations Unies. On parle même d’une éthique globale. Or, certaines initiatives peuvent aussi résulter de l’engagement d’un dirigeant qui aura à cœur de transposer dans son entreprise ses propres valeurs.

Les motivations individuelles à agir de façon « responsable » sont complexées. Cela va d’un altruisme désintéressé à des convictions « matérielles » telles que des déductions d’impôts, en passant par des convictions personnelles. Il s’agit souvent de conforter notre estime de soi ou d’obtenir la reconnaissance des autres. Inversement, saisir une occasion de diminuer l’impact environnemental et social.

**Vers une consommation individuelle raisonnée ?**

Dans les sociétés dites de consommation, l’impact de nos choix de consommation est considérable. Ceux-ci, loin d’être noyés dans la masse, sont reproduits des millions, voire des milliards de fois. Même si nous ne sommes généralement prêts à sacrifier qu’un peu de notre confort, nous pouvons agir sur notre impact collectif à travers notre consommation d’eau, d’énergie, de nourriture, d’habits, de voyages, ou de produits plus ou moins polluants, etc.

Or, nous sommes pris dans une logique de consommation qui vise à entretenir une croissance économique qui nous incite à acheter toujours plus, au point, parfois, de ne consommer que partiellement, voire pas du tout ce que l’on a acheté.

La pression exercée par la société influence nos actions en fonction de leur visibilité et de leur durabilité. Par exemple, on aura plus facilement tendance à acheter une voiture hybride ou des panneaux solaires plutôt que de changer une chaudière, alors que ce dernier investissement serait beaucoup plus rationnel en termes de gains en efficacité énergétique.

Il est également intéressant de noter qu’une étude récente1 indique que les dirigeants d’entreprises qui estiment avoir suffisamment accumulé de « crédit moral » ont plus tendance à entreprendre par la suite des actions contraires à la RSE, comme s’ils avaient une « réserve » suffisante.

**L’investissement : un choix responsable ?**

L’investissement socialement responsable est un autre levier important pour exercer notre responsabilité personnelle. Ces types d’investissements tiennent compte de facteurs environnementaux, sociaux et de gouvernance. S’ils ne représentent encore qu’une part réduite du total des investissements, ils progressent et permettent de favoriser de meilleures pratiques.

Le choix parmi ces investissements peut toutefois s’avérer difficile. Faut-il investir dans des fonds qui excluent des sociétés actives dans la vente de tabac, d’alcool ou des jeux de hasard? Est-ce responsable d’investir dans une centrale polluante mais qui offre des emplois? En tant qu’investisseur, on a la possibilité d’engager un dialogue avec l’entreprise via un actionnariat « activiste », une alternative plus radicale consistant simplement à retirer son investissement en cas de désaccord.

**Responsabilité et conscience**

L’émergence de la RSE est étroitement liée à l’intégration croissante de notre planète et à une plus grande prise de conscience, à la fois individuelle et collective, de nos impacts. Chaque composante endosse une part de responsabilité, toutes proportions gardées. Il est en effet facile de se sentir impuissant ou démuni face à des phénomènes ou des entités qui nous dépassent. On peut également ressentir une certaine fatigue, voire même une saturation, face aux discours alarmistes ou contradictoires qui nous sont régulièrement assenés pour agir de façon plus responsable ou se sentir plus concernés. Choisir c’est aussi renoncer: il y a des limites.

Au bout du compte, être responsable de ses actions et de ses décisions revient à rechercher un équilibre dans un contexte mouvant. La somme des intérêts individuels ne correspond pas nécessairement à l’intérêt général. Il s’agit donc moins de choisir entre un intérêt individuel et le bien commun que de développer cette prise de conscience globale.

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1 License to Ill: The Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on CEO Moral Identity on Corporate Social Irresponsibility; MARGARET E. ORMASTON, London Business School and ELAINE M. WONG, University of California, Riverside; Personnel Psychology, Volume 66, Issue 4, pages 861–893, Winter 2013
One sled from
La Grande Odyssée
Savoie Mont-Blanc

Last year my friends invited me to accompany them for the week-end in the French Alps (Haute-Savoie). Friends also added that I should take neither ski nor sleigh... Mystery was in the air.

CHRISTINA BRANDES-BARBIER, WHO

Here we are! Saint-Gervais-les-Bains welcomed us with beautifully decorated streets. A smell of fondue made us hungry and we could not help eating the traditional Savoyard dish in a cozy little restaurant. The idea of doing any sport (except a “nap-on-the sofa” marathon) after such a rich and heavy lunch did not seem very bright.

Anyway, none of us wanted to be considered as lazy and old, so we mobilized our internal resources (working in an international organization makes one spiritually strong and particularly inventive in the field of resource mobilization), had few more cups of coffee and drove further, to Saint-Nicolas-de-Véroce. Before our arrival, I could not imagine what attraction I would have in this small village situated in the “middle of nowhere”.

First, I heard a barking, actually, several dogs barking. Then I saw an endless steppe-like field, covered with sleigh traces on the snow. One could not be mistaken, we were there to have a real sled dog racing!

Nevertheless the “sleddogs” are not a traditional alpine sport or...
a mean of transport as in Canada, Alaska or Northern Russia, so the idea of trying something new and unusual was great. It was a first time for my friends and myself therefore we chose a so-called “baptêmes en chiens de traîneaux” (initiation to sled dogs). Emotions, fresh crispy air, fun and speed were unforgettable.

A lot depends on the skills and experience of “the coachman” or the musher, the person who “drives” the sleigh. He stays behind the sled and gives short commands to the dogs. And believe me, it looks like these “man’s best friends” react and respond even on the musher’s thoughts, not only his words. It is interesting to know the origin of the word musher. France was the first European power established in the Canadian Shield.

The voyageurs of New France used the French word “Marche!” meaning “go”, as to command to the team to commence pulling. “Marche!” became “Mush!” for English speaking Canadians and later spread worldwide as a specific term for the dogs sled’s “coachman”.

After an excited ride we were cold and covered with snow. Our imagination draw pictures of vin chaud. In a minute, we smelt a familiar mixture of cinnamon, cardamom, cloves and orange zest and wine. As if in a fairy-tale, we stopped in front of the yurt, where we could enjoy both a warm reception and a much expected drink. That was a nice (happy) end of that wonderful day.

To organize your sled dog race initiation until 13 March 2014, please visit the following site www.saintgervais.com/fr/sport-et-montagne/agenda-sportif-sitraEVE873150-bapteme-en-chiens-de-traineau.html
The future of Corporate Social Responsibility

Towards greater employee engagement and socially responsible recruitment

OMAR BAWA

With consumers more aware and beginning to make purchasing decisions based on their environmental and ethical concerns, the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR), also referred to as corporate conscience, can no longer be ignored.

CSR is increasingly practiced as part of standard business strategy and is now going beyond simple compliance with ethical and environmental standards. Companies and organizations are proactively implementing concrete actions to increase social good. Corporate success and healthy eco-friendly social welfare are interdependent, creating shared value (CSV). Companies that are environmentally sustainable (recycle, manage water efficiently, utilize reusable resources) and involve their local communities (raise funds for local charities, engage in fair trade practices), have experienced greater employee engagement and higher profits.

That said, CSR has its risks, particularly when it comes to promotion. Certain companies have been criticized for their high-profile CSR advertising campaigns that potentially distract the public from ethical questions posed by their core operations. Some have been accused of “greenwashing”: deceptively promoting the perception that their activities and products are environmentally friendly.

Ed Jones said in his forward to Saatchi & Saatchi’s Social work “more and more commercial advertisers are realizing that the way to gain the trust, loyalty, respect and affection of their audience is simply to tell the truth. Of course for this to be an effective commercial strategy, you will require a product whose truth, if told, is persuasive. But why produce any other kind of product?”

When promoting CSR, a company should share its projects and activities on a regular basis, building a relationship with consumers. It is important to include them in the conversation by welcoming discussion and constructive criticism. CSR should go beyond promoting a company’s socially responsible activities, to include encouraging its employees, based on their skills, to volunteer together and actively contribute to society. This can be achieved by connecting the company’s employees with local NGOs, schools and social enterprises through concrete projects like “running the Escalade to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS”, “painting the walls of a children’s hospital”, “hosting an event to raise funds for cancer research” or “providing pro bono advice and services”.

As proven by VolunteerMatch, such a system can transform a company’s social image. Socially conscious employees act as brand ambassadors: they share their good actions with their friends and communities in person by word of mouth and via their personal social networks. Research concludes that 92 percent of people trust information from people they know (Nielsen Report on Global Trust in Advertising and Brand Messages, April 2012) and word of mouth is the primary factor behind up to 50 percent of all purchasing decisions (McKinsey Quarterly, April 2010).

This CSR strategy also boosts team-building and company spirit. It improves employee performance, retention, productivity and loyalty, increases job satisfaction, attitude and morale, promotes leadership and skill development and facilitates corporate communication. According to a study carried out by the City of London in 2010 on the Benefits of Corporate Volunteering, 94 percent of companies surveyed agreed that employee...
volunteering raises employee morale and performance. Several companies including UPS and Deleite have already pioneered similar strategies. “Companies love to have their employees feel engaged in meaningful and important work”, says Jeffrey Pfeffer, who teaches organizational behavior at Stanford University. When a company’s employees are socially conscious and involved, so will the company’s products and services. The company improves its social image and gains the trust, loyalty and admiration of its clients and community.

That said, the most cost-effective and time-efficient solution with the greatest social impact is to implement a socially responsible recruitment policy by vetting future employees for community engagement. Ideally, a company or a UN organization could request candidates include a “humanitarian CV” in their application to showcase all their good actions and experiences over the past few years.

**Engaging go-getters and passionate change-makers not only improves the company’s future performance and internal decision-making, but greatly impacts society by changing our mindset and incentivizing schools and universities to rethink their curriculum to ensure community involvement and socially responsible decision-making are at the heart of the next generation’s learning experience.**

In a world where the power of companies is as important as countries, when companies choose to change, the world changes.

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**SOCIÉTÉ/SOCIETY**

**Silver economy in a reshaping world**

**MARIA-ANGELES MARTIN GIL**

If you thought that silver economy is about a precious metal market you will be astonished discovering that it refers to all the services and products covering the needs of the elderly – or silvered hair seniors. Considering all the research and warnings produced around the aging population in OECD countries and its consequences for the global economy, we can conclude that is not a trivial sector for the economy but that perhaps, its relevancy has been overlooked, as it is one of the big factors reshaping the world in the next decades.

The OECD-APEC Workshop1 in 2012, aimed to picture how governments, the private sector and society in general, were facing the situation of longer life expectancy and drop of birth rates and it also wanted to encourage debate on how to tackle the challenges to come.

The reality is that for governments, it represents mainly rising pension and healthcare costs, and it will force them to focus on providing basic social services needed to restructurating their pension schemes and allocating more effectively their budgets. However facing elder population has become a postponed point in the political agendas where the financial crisis imposes a drastic reduction in public expenditure.

For big companies this is not that straightforward. Not all of them consider the consequences for the work force so far, this has been done only by the ones that are already impacted (i.e. a manufacturing car plant in Germany is redesigning their production lines, adapting tools for older workers). On the other hand, the main mantra that silver economy represents a big business opportunity, looks obvious for sectors like health and pharmaceutics, wellness, and finance but not for others like leisure, communications or electricity. In our globalizing economy, technology and innovation have a primary group of consumer focus: the youth and the big producers of goods and services have in mind the current or following generations of young people when designing their next technological development, pressured for the quickest possible return on their investments. Surveys across sectors show however that big companies like GE, Danone or Intel are now setting up dedicated research into the needs of the elderly consumers. Surprisingly the smaller companies (annual revenue under US$500 millions) are the ones pioneering the creation of specific products or services in spite of the scalability problem, forcing many of them to abandon their innovative ideas.

So exploring the situation from a micro perspective, in other words, at a more local level allows us to find real examples of silver economy based activities: motivated for a positive outlook of the sector, the Sol’age association, with the support of their local Government, plans to create this year in France the “silver valley” to help in the start-up and development of their projects. LifeCare Residences a real estate company (in one of the most affected sector by the crisis), have found a very profitable niche offering high-end accommodation for urban retirees in the United Kingdom.

Definitely silver economy matters globally but a global economic approach seems not to be the most effective way to face it. Quoting Dr. Joseph Chamie2, “the change[in demography] is so profound that people cannot understand what it will mean”. Therefore the role of the +65 in every country requires a much deeper understanding in order to assess their needs and only then, the big players will be prepared to ride the silver tsunami.

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1 www.oecd.org/sti/ieconomy/workshoponanticipa-tethespecialneeds ofthe21stcenturysilverecono-mytransmarttechnologiesoservicesinnovation. htm#part2
2 director for research at the Center for Migration Studies and former head of population research at the UN

For further reading:
www.ft.com/wealth (winter 2013)
www.lemonde.fr. 28-Apr-2013
84ᵉ Salon international de l’automobile de Genève

Vitrine prestigieuse de l’industrie automobile

Le Salon international de l’automobile de Genève se prépare à accueillir le public du 6 au 16 mars prochain dans les halles de Palexpo. Ce salon représente l’une des plus importantes et des plus séduisantes vitrines du monde automobile.

Il figure parmi les « Top 5 » mondiaux. Il est en outre le seul salon annuel en Europe qui soit reconnu par l’OICA (Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs Automobiles).

Près de 250 exposants, dont tous les grands constructeurs, de nombreux designers, équipementiers, carrossiers, ainsi que d’importants fournisseurs industriels présenteront quelque 900 voitures sur les 110 000 mètres carrés des sept halles de Palexpo à Genève. Organisé chaque année au printemps, saison de reprise des ventes, sur terrain neutre, le Salon de Genève est la manifestation favorite des constructeurs pour présenter leurs dernières créations à la veille de leur lancement sur le marché. Chaque année près d’une centaine de premières mondiales et européennes sont dévoilées.

André Hefti, Directeur général du Salon, se réjouit : « l’industrie automobile mondiale donne souvent sa préférence au Salon de Genève pour son ouverture aux marchés sans protectionnisme, son attrait médiatique planétaire, sa faculté de proposer la vitrine internationale la plus complète dans un environnement haut de gamme à dimension humaine. »
L’offre couvre des voitures adaptées à tous les besoins et à tous les goûts, le nec plus ultra de la technologie automobile et des carrosseries belles à couper le souffle. Un nombre croissant de modèles propose des modes de propulsion alternative et annonce des consommations de carburant de plus en plus bas. Un dépliant dans lequel figurent tous les véhicules exposés sur les stands qui affichent des émissions de CO₂ inférieures ou égales à 95 g/km permettra d’ailleurs au visiteur de trouver rapidement les véhicules les moins gourmands en énergie.

La remise du prix constitue en quelque sorte le signal de départ pour le Salon de l’automobile. Après les deux journées réservées aux quelque 10000 représentants des médias venus du monde entier pour couvrir le Salon, les 700000 visiteurs – dont plus de 40% vient de l’étranger – pourront enfin découvrir ces bijoux technologiques et leur part de rêve.

Le Salon sera ouvert au public durant 11 jours, de 10h à 20h en semaine et de 9h 00 à 19h 00 les week-ends. Pour mieux répartir le nombre de visiteurs durant la journée et ainsi améliorer leur confort, un rabais de 50% sur le prix de l’entrée est accordé dès 16h 00.

Dans l’enceinte de la manifestation, à plus de 25 snack-bars et dans 6 restaurants (2500 places servies à table) les visiteurs pourront se restaurer. L’offre va du traditionnel jambon-beurre au menu gastronomique et propose aussi des cuisines du monde. Les restaurants servent de 11h 00 à 16h 00 et les snack-bars sont ouverts sans interruption durant l’exposition, afin de permettre des en-cas à toute heure.

Des arrangements conclus avec les chemins de fers suisses (CFF) et les Transports Publics Genevois (TPG) permettent aux visiteurs de se rendre confortablement et à moindre frais aux portes du Salon de Genève sans sortir leur véhicule du garage.

Pour préparer la visite, découvrir au fil des semaines les nouveautés présentées et même acheter le billet d’entrée en ligne, rendez-vous sur le site officiel du Salon qui est actualisé en permanence : www.salonauto.ch.
Indonésie
Les forçats du Kawah Ijen

A l’Est de l’île de Java, plusieurs volcans sont en activité. Le Bromo, d’où s’échappent de gros panaches de vapeur d’eau et de gaz sulfureux est le plus connu, car son ascension est aisée et tout le monde peut l’escalader.

Il n’en est pas de même pour le Semeru, point culminant de l’île avec ses 3676 mètres de haut. En activité depuis 1818, il est considéré comme très dangereux (250 victimes en 1981), et parvenir jusqu’au cratère demande une sacrée forme physique. Des mètres de dénivelée, avec des pentes avoisinant les 60°, sont à gravir dans une cendre très fine qui se dérobe sous les pieds. De grosses explosions secouent le Semeru toutes les 30 minutes, avec des projections de pierres qui retombent sur ses flancs. Mais, le plus spectaculaire de tous est certainement le Kawah Ijen dont le sommet culmine à 2386 m. Le volcan crache en effet quotidiennement douze tonnes de soufre d’une pureté de 99%. Le précieux liquide, qui se solidifie très rapidement, provient directement du noyau terrestre. Il est récolté chaque matin par 120 ouvriers qui descendent au fond du cratère, prenant tous les risques, et cela pour quelques euros. Deux éruptions en 1976 et 1989 ont tué 74 d’entre eux. Ce soufre est destiné à la fabrication de médicaments, servira au blanchiment du sucre de canne et à la vulcanisation du caoutchouc et sera utilisé pour fabriquer de la poudre à canon et des allumettes. Ajouté à de la chaux, il donnera également des fongicides, sa principale utilisation.

Le Kawah Ijen, une bombe à retardement
Le fond du cratère du Kawah Ijen est occupé par un très beau lac ovale, d’un kilomètre de long et de 600 mètres de large, de couleur émeraude. Mais il ne faut pas se fier aux apparences, car c’est le plus grand réservoir d’acide sulfurique au monde. Profond de 350 mètres, il en contient 37 millions de m3. Il s’en dégage des gaz toxiques, et lorsque le volcan vient soudainement à se mettre en éruption, une énorme bulle, pouvant atteindre 50 mètres de diamètre et 20 mètres de haut, se forme à sa surface. En une fraction de seconde, elle éclate, libérant des gaz mortels et projetant de
l’acide tout autour, ne laissant guère d’espoir de survie aux ouvriers qui travaillent au fond du volcan.

A proximité des berges du lac se trouve une solfatare qui produit donc de grandes quantités de soufre qui se solidifie après avoir été émis sous forme de vapeurs. Ces vapeurs jaillissent à une température d’environ 200 °C et sont principalement composées de dioxyde de soufre, de sulfate d’hydrogène, d’acide chlorhydrique ainsi que de vapeur d’eau. Sortant de terre à l’état gazeux, le soufre se refroidit et passe à l’état liquide (d’une température de 115 °C et de couleur orange), avant de se cristalliser en formant des concrétions de couleur jaune citron. Afin de faciliter la production du minerai, les exploitants du volcan ont installé des tuyaux qui canalisent les vapeurs, ce qui permet une cristallisation plus rapide et plus abondante. Mais, quotidiennement, ces vapeurs s’enflamment dans ces canalisations, et l’équipe de maintenance (composée d’anciens ouvriers ne pouvant plus transporter le soufre) a beaucoup de peine à éteindre ces incendies, n’ayant souvent que de simples seaux remplis d’eau pour le faire.

L’origine de la solfatare s’explique par l’eau du lac acide qui s’infiltre dans le volcan, puis se réchauffe au contact du magma avant de se transformer en vapeur qui remonte ensuite à la surface. C’est dans cette atmosphère irrespirable, au milieu des émanations toxiques, que travaillent les forçats du Kawah Ijen.

Un véritable calvaire

A coups de barre à mine, les “forçats du Kawah Ijen” décollent les plaques de soufre du sol sur lequel elles ont adhééré après avoir refroidi. A la fois, chaque mineur remonte du volcan de 80 à 110 kg du précieux minerai. Il le charge dans
Au milieu des gaz toxiques, protégé par un simple mouchoir devant la bouche, un mineur transporte un bloc de soufre qu’il vient de débitier à la barre à mine.

Avec 80 kg de soufre sur les épaules, les mineurs du Kawah Ijen doivent escalader le cratère du volcan.

Guy de Saint-Cyr est donc volcanologue et il se propose de faire partager sa passion en organisant des expéditions sur les volcans. Sans lui, et son agence “Aventure et volcans”, qu’il a créée il y a bientôt 30 ans, cette Aventure au Kawah Ijen n’aurait pas pu être menée à bien.

A l’usine, le soufre est refondu à 260°C afin d’améliorer la qualité, puis conditionné en sacs avant d’être transporté en camion jusqu’à une usine de transformation située à Surabaya.

Coulée de soufre à une température de 115°C.
A Winter Train Journey

The school year is over. The exams are behind me. Today is the first day of my school’s winter holidays. I am the happiest little girl on this planet!

The sky is black with steely clouds and the temperatures have plunged down to –20. The water in the taps at home has turned to icicles. Our family is traveling the fastest train Teezgam to spend the harsh cold Quetta winter with my Uncle and his family in Hyderabad. I can hardly wait to join my cousins under warm and sunny skies, riding bikes for long days, eating heavenly cakes from Bombay Bakery and the Swiss chocolates my Uncle brings home every time our horses win the races.

Our family has an entire compartment to ourselves. There are four sleepers, two seats below by the windows on either side of the compartment and two sleepers above these. I rush to the window seat and stick my little nose against the cool glass. Bibi, Agah Jan and Mama spread the rug on the floor. Bedrolls are opened and blankets and pillows handed out.

With a whistle and a wave of the flag from the uniformed Station Master, the train rumbles out of the station. I see people running alongside our train, waving goodbye to friends and family. I watch in delight as snowflakes twirl and swirl down lazily. The train quickly picks up speed and soon we are rushing past barren landscapes and majestic snowy mountains, through the dark tunnels of the Bolan Pass.

Bibi unpacks her tiffin carrier with enough food to feed a small army! She brings out cold roast chicken, cucumbers, radish, mint, fried spinach and naans still warm from the Tandoor. It’s the most delicious meal ever, followed by delicious cakes, nuts and raisins.

While I munch on pistachios and watch a white curtain of heavy snow cover the world outside, the grown ups play cards, drink chai and listen to Kabul music. It slowly grows dark outside and I fall asleep to the comforting rhythm of the moving train.

From time to time the train stops at a station and in my sleep I hear the vendors outside calling out in loud voices: selling hot chai, cold drinks and sugar cane. I hear Bibi buying local sweets Mithai in Shikarpur. I wake up in the morning to the sandy desert plains of Sindh under a yellow bright warm sun. We have left behind the snow-clad mountains of Quetta. A waiter dressed in white wearing a red and gold turban appears with trays laden with porridge, eggs, tea and toast. Breakfast never tasted better!

“I can only note that the past is beautiful because one never realises an emotion at the time. It expands later, and thus we don’t have complete emotions about the present, only about the past.”

— Virginia Woolf
Pourquoi ne pas le faire?

Parc National Suisse

Je vous propose des petites balades à des degrés de difficulté différents, pour vous changer les idées, vous oxygéner et vous déstresser. N’oubliez pas: ne rien faire nuit à votre santé. Je vous souhaite des journées de marche et de détente agréables et ensoleillées.

TEXTE ET PHOTOS ANDRÉ ROTACH


Munt La Schera


Ne pas oublier de vous équiper de bonnes chaussures de marche et de vêtements adaptés à l’altitude et à la saison.

BONNE RANDONNÉE.

ET (S)PORTEZ-VOUS BIEN.
Why Not Do It?

Parc National Suisse

I am proposing a few small hikes of varying degrees of difficulty, to let you see new things, get some fresh air and relax a bit. Don’t forget: doing nothing is bad for your health. Hope you have fun hiking in pleasant and sunny weather.

ANDRÉ ROTACH
English translation by David Winch

The Swiss National Park (Parc National Suisse) is located in the Canton of Grisons. Established in 1914, it was the first national park in Europe. Zernez is its main hub. The centenary celebrations will take place in 2014. The routes are of varying difficulty, between 1,400 and 3,200 meters. Its rules are very strict: no dogs, it is forbidden to leave the marked trails, and picking fruit or nuts is prohibited. This allows us to see not only the edelweiss, but many other animals: deers (about two thousand in the park), chamois (one thousand five hundred), goats (one thousand five hundred), marmots (three hundred and fifty), chamois (one thousand five hundred). All these animals are all used to seeing hikers not leave their path. A pair of binoculars is essential… both to observe these animals as well as for example two pairs of vultures nesting in the park or the golden eagle. A visit to the National Museum is recommended because it is full of information and of interesting explanations. It is also fun for children.

Munt La Schera
After Zernez, take the Postbus to Buffalora (1,968 meters), the starting point. Go in the direction of Munt la Schera, and follow the red and white markings. You will be at the summit in two hours thirty minutes after a 6.7 km climb. There is a superb 360-degree view from a small platform. The descent is via Alpe Schera (2,091 meters) and it takes fifty-five minutes. Follow markers for Punt La Drossa. You will arrive in two hours for a total hike of four hours thirty minutes. My GPS showed 12.72 km total and 635 meters change in altitude. You can return to Zernez on the postal bus.

For more details, see Guide des sentiers pédestres du Parc National Suisse, Klaus Robin. Also: an official map sold with the hiking guide is indispensable.

Don’t forget to wear good hiking boots and weather-suitable clothing.

Good trekking! ■
SOCIÉTÉ/SOCIETY

Good resolutions

Ten Resolutions to do Good

A month ago, we welcomed 2014 with fireworks and made New Year’s resolutions to change our lives for the better. By the end of January, you probably forgot your resolutions or abandoned all hope in achieving them. This article gives you a second chance by suggesting ten resolutions that will positively impact our society. Perhaps doing good will give you the incentive to keep your resolutions!

1. Take the stairs, not the elevator
Climbing the stairs is not only workout for free but it is also amazing for your health, and it is also great for our planet. Every year, a typical hydraulic elevator in a three-story office building uses approximately 3800 kilowatt-hours: enough to power four houses for a month.

2. Ride a bike to work, take public transport or drive a hybrid
Riding a bike to work is also not only an amazing workout, but it can be seen a gift you give to the environment. It also provides you a moment to think in the morning before the intense workday begins. Plus, in the summer, you get to enjoy the sunshine. If you need a little help to get past that challenging uphill, invest in an electric bicycle. If it’s cold outside or you live too far from work or you are just too lazy, take public transport or, if you must, drive a fuel-efficient hybrid.

3. Change your light bulbs
Out with the old light bulbs and in with the new. If you want to save on your electricity bill and give our planet a better chance at surviving, invest in the compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). The funny-looking light emitting swirl might cost three times as much as a traditional incandescent light bulb, but it uses one quarter the electricity and lasts almost forever. If you want to be a first-mover, go a step further and invest in LED light bulbs. LED technology is already the standard for lighting smartphones, TVs and tablets, and thanks to a price drop, they will soon be introduced in households lamps and lights.

4. Eat organic local food and quit smoking
Why eat organic? Why eat local? Organic local food is fresher, healthier and tastes better than food that has been trucked or flown in from thousands of kilometers away. Just think of the immense carbon footprint of shipping your food across the world. By eating local, you will support your local economy and fair trade. Also do your best to avoid Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Finally, if you smoke, quit; you might just save your life or the lives of those around you.

5. Volunteer
Have a bit of free time after work or on the weekend? Volunteer for a soup kitchen (ex: Red Cross), an orphanage, a children’s hospital or a local charity. Volunteering will provide you a fresh perspective on life and is an incredibly satisfying experience.

6. Plant a tree
Trees are the world’s single largest source of breathable oxygen. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, we have already destroyed 80% of our original forests in the last decade. That’s why we have to start planting trees and lots of them, wherever we can. If you don’t like the thought of physical work or getting your hands dirty, you can always sponsor trees via sites like: www.greenpop.org; www.plantabillion.org; www.grow-trees.com A tree can make a great Birthday gift!

7. Run a marathon or climb a mountain to raise funds and awareness for a cause
Do you like to run? Why not run to raise funds and awareness for a cause? Run for cancer or run for HIV/AIDS. I would personally recommend running the Geneva Marathon for UNICEF: www.genevamarathon.org If you are a bit more adventurous, why not get sponsored to climb Mount Kilimanjaro to support a charity? Visit: www.charitychallenge.com; www.climbkilimanjaroforcharity.com; www.breastcancercare.org.uk/fundraisingevents/treks/trek-mount-kilimanjaro

8. Stay informed and share your voice
Take a moment once a week to stay informed about the good news and the progress made addressing social issues. With Internet and mobile technology, information has become really easy to digest. I would recommend visiting www.upworthy.com or www.goodwall.org Also, while participating in a protest in person can be a challenge, signing an online petition is really easy, visit: www.avaaz.org or www.change.org
9. Donate 10% of your salary to grassroots organizations
We all tend to give back at some stage, but why wait? Start today. Why not give 10% of your salary every month? Take the time to choose where to give. Think of it like shopping, only that in return you get pure happiness. Personally, I would recommend transparent high-impact grassroots organizations like Planting Peace (they save millions of children by providing medicines for deworming in Haiti, run orphanages and lead amazon reforestation efforts) and Partners in Health (read Mountains Beyond Mountains by Paul Farmer) or online microcredit organizations like www.kiva.org

10. Give someone a hug
Finally don’t forget to give someone a hug: a friend, a sibling, a parent or even a stranger. You will make someone’s day and they will probably make yours. As neuroeconomist Pau Zak presented in his TED Talk, when you give a hug, you release oxytocin, which is responsible for trust, empathy and other feelings necessary to build an amazing society.

To read more resolutions or suggest new ones, visit:
www.goodwall.org/communities/good-resolutions

1  www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/the_green_lantern/2009/04/energy_and_elevators.html
2  content.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354_1603074_1603095,00.html

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