TOOLKIT

MOVE IT FORWARD+

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Fundraising

Erasmus+

move it forward
female digital starter weekend

PREPARED BY

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INTRODUCTION

A company is defined as an "**economic agent**" and in the neoliberal economic definition of the "enterprise", it is seen as a profit-making body serving stakeholders. Historically, the opposition has been established, in Marxist terms, the major issue is the division and opposition between **"profit"** (shareholders) and **"salary"** (employees).

A company is also a project of people, **"a collective adventure"**, started by individual entrepreneurs (or the State) to create new products or services to serve a market and an existing demand (consumers).

People who own and work for companies are driven by reasons beyond making money.

There is also an increasing demand for "purpose" at work, especially from the younger generation. Recent developments, especially from the social economy sector, shows that a company can also have limited lucrativity and aim to achieve more than profit with a triple bottom line, **People, Profit, Planet.**

Companies produced both **positive and negative effects** and externalities such as:

POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES	NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
Availability of goods and services	Social and income inequalities
Creation of wealth, jobs and employment	Poor quality jobs
Innovation	Poor working conditions, health, social and psychological consequences on staff
Salaries and income	Negative effect of the environment (CO_2 emission, chemicals, threats to oil and gas resources)
Contribution to social systems	Sur-use of limited resources for the production cycle
Tax and fiscal income	Human rights

This guide aims to provide an overview and practical tips on corporate social responsibility, fundraising and cooperation possibilities with companies as well as corporate volunteering.

Part 1: Corporate social responsibility

This section aims to give an overview of Corporate social responsibility (CSR) to better understand how this works for companies.

1 - DEFINITION OF CSR

A Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined by the European Commission as the voluntary integration by companies of social and environmental concerns into their business activities and their relations with stakeholders. A company practising CSR will therefore seek to have a positive impact on society while being economically viable.

ISO 26000, an international standard, defines the scope of CSR around 7 central questions:

- The governance of the organisation
- Human rights
- Labour relations and working conditions
- The environment
- Fairness of practices
- Consumer issues
- Communities and local development

The European Commission has previously defined Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis".

Corporate social responsibility concerns actions by companies over and above their legal obligations towards society and the environment. Certain regulatory measures create an environment more conducive to enterprises voluntarily meeting their social responsibility.

The Commission puts forward a new definition of CSR (2011) as **"the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society"**. Respect for applicable legislation, and for collective agreements between social partners, is a prerequisite for meeting that responsibility.

To fully meet their corporate social responsibility, enterprises should have in place a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders, with the aim of:

- **Maximizing the creation of shared value** for their owners/shareholders and their other stakeholders and society at large.

- **Identifying, preventing and mitigating** their possible adverse impacts.

The complexity of that process will depend on factors such as the size of the enterprise and the nature of its operations. For most small and medium-sized enterprises, especially micro-enterprises, the CSR process is likely to remain informal and intuitive.

To maximise the creation of shared value, enterprises are **encouraged to adopt a long-term, strategic approach to CSR**, and to explore the opportunities for developing innovative products, services and business models that contribute to societal wellbeing and lead to higher quality and more productive jobs.

To identify, prevent and mitigate their possible adverse impacts, large enterprises, and enterprises at particular risk of having such impacts, are encouraged to carry out risk-based due diligence, including through their supply chains.

Certain types of enterprise, such as cooperatives, mutuals, and family-owned businesses, have ownership and governance structures that can be especially conducive to responsible business conduct.

2 - WHY DOES CSR MATTER FOR COMPANIES?

It's obvious that economics and social activities in companies also create a responsibility, starting with the security and well being of people working in the company. Companies also have to integrate a wide range of stakeholders: clients, shareholders, employees but also local and national governments, suppliers, social partners, regulators, NGOs... In the long term, companies need to do **strategic planning involving sustainability issues.**

On a shorter-term, CSR can be a strategic advantage such as compensating or starting the most "negative effects" of its production cycle. In the same time, CSR is becoming important for communication and branding as customers and stakeholders pay more and more attention to these issues.

At the same time, employer branding or the ability to attract and retain talent, increasingly demand to take these elements into account. There is an increasing demand from the youngest generation to know if the company they could be working for to care about sustainability and diversity.

3 - DIFFERENT KINDS OF CSR IN COMPANIES

CSR activities may take different forms. Ideally, CSR activities should not be "additional" but **embedded and transformational in all business activities**, to become "sustainable".
However, CSR typically materialises into:

- In-kind support (space, help for marketing and logistics…)

- Donations (not expecting anything in return)

- Sponsorship (marketing provider)

- Philanthropy via foundations

- Skill-based volunteering

4 - INTERNAL ACTIONS:

Many actions are taken towards the employees aim to improve the quality of work, such as more flexibility, work/life balance (parental support), improvement of working conditions, a new type of management given more autonomy and promoting **creativity, promoting "intrapreneurship", empowering employees, sustainability at work** (encourage staff to reduce resources consumption…)

5 - EXTERNAL ACTIONS:

These are the actions involving (or benefiting) other external stakeholders. This can involve associations or NGOs, social enterprise, and also sustainable procurement, **respect for child labour and ethical working conditions in developing countries**.

Companies are also increasingly willing to obtain "labels" to certify that they are doing well in **sustainability procurement, work environment**, etc. These labels are often run by private companies. There is also a tendency by companies to create their own associations or offer activities usually offered by independent associations.

6 - HOW CAN COMPANIES WORK WITH NGOS AS PART OF THEIR CSR?

CSR is still mainly addressed in two ways when working with NGO and non-profit associations:

- As a communication strategy focusing on communication on **"good" actions**
- As a real integrated strategy with the triple bottom line, **People, Profit, Planet**

Associations and NGO can benefit from these initiatives to get support for their activities.

There are many ways for companies to cooperate, the most common are:

- **Charitable donations:** children charity, cancer/diseases, mental health/hospital, major charity such as Red Cross… Some organisations have managed to develop a major fundraising event involving many stakeholders, media and the public to be able to raise a majority of funds during a one big important event/action.

- **Project-based collaboration:** a company collaborates with a non-profit organisation for a specific project for a limited duration with specific objectives defined and measured.

- **Major partnerships:** companies might select one or more non-profit organisations and support them yearly (including working capital).

- **Philanthropy:** often going through Foundations where funds (given by donors, wealthy individuals and/or companies) are distributed according to specific objectives are available, sometimes via an open call for projects.

- **Impact investing:** the action of investing money in order to obtain a social and often a financial return, which can be reinvested in other social ventures. In this case, the capital given must be returned to the owner at some point.

- **Corporate or skill-based volunteering:** corporations can get involved with organisations to allow their employees to take part in social projects in their own time.

There are different types and collaborations can be a mix of the different types listed above.

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There are several ways to approach a company to support you to organise a "*Move it Forward'' - Digital Starter Weekend*: **in-kind sponsorship for space, catering and/or prizes** are probably the easiest to secure and will help you to put your event together. **Corporate volunteering** is also a great way to recruit the coaches and mentors you need.

Starting with a first collaboration like a specific event is great. Knowing each other is always a good idea before planning new actions in the future.

It's also important to keep in mind that many companies do not have yet a structured approach to CSR and they are many barriers to create relationships on CSR basis such as:
- No clear management support to conduct these kinds of actions
- No or low budget (often mixed with marketing and communication budget)
- No process, clear ownership or defined person in charge

7 - MAPPING MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

It's important to map and identify who are the main stakeholders in the organisation.

Why? → to make sure to contact the right person.

Make sure to speak to a person who can say YES and not those who can say NO.

Who are the people who are in charge of companies? Who do you need to speak to?

This is different in every company and often different country to country for the same companies.

- **Board level:** group of senior people not always involved in daily operational management but who are guiding the influencing the strategic decision

- **Top management, C-suite:** decision-makers

- **Human resources:** staff in charge of recruitment and management of staff

- **Communication - Marketing:** staff in charge of promoting the organisation internally and externally

- **Employees and staff:** can be employees who have an interest in your organisation and can be internal "supporters" of your organisation

8 - HOW CAN COMPANIES INTEGRATE ASSOCIATIONS/SOCIAL ENTERPRISES INTO THEIR CSR?

Companies have an interest to work with non-profit organisations.

It depends very much on the priorities of the company. It will help if the company has a real strategy for CSR and sustainability. There is an opportunity for nonprofit and social organisations to fill the "gap", support companies in their strategy and benefit from resources.

Companies can work with non-profit or social enterprises to develop sustainable external actions:

- **Outreach:** Benefit from the organisation network and expertise in an area which is not their core business. Access to a special target group, especially underserved communities

- **Communication and visibility:** Be associated with social organisations to promote values alignment and values of the company

- **Employee and social engagement:** This can also have an impact on internal affairs such as increasing staff motivation, health and wellbeing as well as reducing costs, waste and ecological footprint

- **Sustainable procurement:** Companies can work with social enterprises to develop sustainability in their procurement process (buying socially responsible products and services, fair trade and ecological products)

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Before approaching a company, make sure to identify the added value for a company to support you in the organisation of the "Move it forward" Digital Starter Weekend.
Ask yourself, why supporting women entrepreneurship could be beneficial for this company?

CONCLUSION

CSR remains often perceived as **communication or worse, "green or social washing"**, meaning that companies are giving visibility to "good actions" to cover the rest of their more socially negative ones. **CSR** can be seen as the **continuity of philanthropic activities**, corporations increasingly put sustainability issues on top of their priorities if they want to keep both employees, market and shareholders trust.

Companies are also willing to become more and more involved in public affairs, take an active part especially regarding **economics, and environmental issues** to influence and avoid regulation.

Today, companies need to align the creation of economic value with Corporate Social Responsibility. A company cannot disregard externalities such as **consequences on workers, customers, environment, business and social conditions**.

Part 2: Strategy for fundraising for women entrepreneurship

This section aims to define a strategy for organisations to develop a structured and consistent strategy and decline an action plan.

Non-profit organisations as well as social enterprises need to develop resources to sustain their activities, serve their beneficiaries and community, sustain their organisation and create an impact. Searching for a public source of support might not be sufficient to secure the support and resources needed to sustain new and existing initiatives.

There is also an increasing interest for corporations to get involved with women organisations. Creating a successful partnership and managing to fundraise is a process which needs to be planned by the organisation to be successful.

1 - OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ORGANISATIONS ACTIVE IN SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Companies can be interested in developing collaboration on topics such as:

- Women empowerment, leadership
- Support entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship
- Motivate, engage employees, give opportunities to use skills in a different environment serving a cause
- Develop innovation skills, collaboration and teamwork or intrapreneurship
- As many people dream and consider to become entrepreneurs, this fits with the demand for staff to get an experience in the creation of a company. This can also be promoted to support external mobility (people leaving the company to create their company)

2 - WHY COMPANIES SHOULD BE SUPPORTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Companies are also well aware that **inequalities remain between women and men**, in the workplace and the economy. A well-known gap is the paid gap between women and men but data show many other gaps such as a **low number of women in leadership positions in many fields**.

- **Gap in entrepreneurship:** many studies (OECD, EU Commission, Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring) show that women entrepreneurs are still a minority. There are consequences for the women and the economy where there are many "missing entrepreneurs". This translates into lower value creation and GDP. It is also known that women tend to create smaller businesses generating less income.

- **Leadership and women empowerment:** many companies are willing to act given the context toward women empowerment. They need to have a pipeline of women in leadership, they are aware of a lack of diversity on boards, need for diverse talent pool, and are also influenced by the #meetoo movement and the media.

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Move it forward is a great format to support women entrepreneurship. It's a proven concept and format, organised since 2015, in 6 different countries, and with 91 business projects developed. Partnering in an event which has been proven successful and has an international presence is a great opportunity for a partner to create a local impact!

3 - DIFFERENT PARTNERSHIP MODELS AND TYPE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

Are seen in the previous chapter, there are many ways to get support from companies:

- Exchange of visibility
- In-kind donation such as lending space for an event
- Charitable Donation
- Donations or philanthropy organised via foundations
- Sponsorship for an event or programme
- Annual partnership
- Impact Investing
- Corporate volunteering

Creating a partnership will always be a unique journey, but being prepared in the process will help you to be more successful.

4 - IMPORTANCE OF DEFINING THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE ORGANISATION

Firstly, it's crucial to define your mission and vision:

VISION = how you are changing the world

MISSION = what you do every day to achieve the vision

It's very important to clarify mission and vision with your board and the team.
It will allow you to communicate well on the objectives, both internally and externally.

You also need to **define why you want to involve companies in your organisation.**

The vision and mission of Move if Forward are:

- *To achieve a more diverse, gender-balanced society and economy thanks to female digital entrepreneurship*
- *To support women in providing them with the tools to become a digital entrepreneur and take control of their own life*

5 - PREPARING FOR FUNDRAISING: ORGANISATION, PROCESS, FOLLOW-UP, PITCH AND MATERIAL *(PRACTICAL EXERCISES)*

A. HAVE A "PITCH" READY WITH PITCH DECK TO SEND

Have a base presentation with a few informative slides, key data, achievements, existing partners, collaboration...

What should a presentation/brochure include?

- Describe the benefits for the companies and the impact created.
- Include achievements to dates.
- Do not forget to include engaging pictures of your activities (with people in action)
- Be concise and impactful, and focus on key points. Leave extra information for future meetings.
- Pay attention to details, quality of logos and images, consistency of fonts, spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Always have several people to check for grammar and spelling mistakes.
- Custom the presentation to the company you are addressing it to. Add their name, put a focus on certain activities which are more relevant...

B. DEALING WITH COMMON OBJECTIONS

Be ready to hear many kinds of NO's:

"Your organisation is too new/too big"

"Our management said no"

"We think this is "positive discrimination""

"You are too "niche""

"I did not get the budget"

"You do not fit into our priorities"

...It's not about you nor the work you do.

Many organisations are fundraising and you are in a competitive space. Often you will meet "allies" in companies who are very enthusiastic about your mission but it's different to get a YES from decision-makers (often several people with several views …). It's also difficult for small organisations lacking time and resources to keep up with sophisticated processes and expectations from companies.

Fundraising with a streamlined, consistent process is the best way to lead to success.

Fundraising is challenging and getting NOs is part of the process. However, with a consistent approach, you should achieve success and develop good relationships with organisations.

Be also aware that you are more and more competing with companies selling events packages around the topic of women empowerment and you have to compete with professional services companies whose job is to do marketing.

"COMPETING? I AM IN THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR!"

Yes, because there is a limited amount of resources and money available. Major NGOs have marketing/communication teams, run ads on TV, use intensive mailing campaigns… Many causes are nobles and many initiatives are needed but they need to convince donors what they are their priorities and that you deserve to be funded.

BEFORE STARTING FUNDRAISING, BE CLEAR ABOUT:

- Know what you want (what you need / what you do not want)
- Only accept a win-win deal
- Dare to ask money if you need it
- Say NO if needed
- Align with your operational capacities and values
- Have a fundraising team with divided responsibilities: divide the work by companies or by stage in fundraising (eg. who is going to meetings?)

C - GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND MEETINGS

There are two typical scenarios when approaching a company:

- **Your organisation is contacted** by a company which has an interest in your work, this is good news since there is interest in your organisation

- **You are approaching a company** on a proactive basis. Always keep in mind that companies are approached by many organisation for sponsorship

First contact: never miss an opportunity to create a good first impression.

First contact or a first meeting can be done by phone or with a meeting in person. To save time and **make sure your objectives are aligned**, a first phone call can be efficient and help you to save a lot of time.

If meeting in person, also consider the time spent on transportation. A meeting usually takes half a day, including **preparation** and **follow-up**.

A first phone call can help to set-up expectations and screen the requests, especially if you have limited time for fundraising. It's recommended especially if you are contacted by the company.

Anyways, always prepare the following:
- To introduce yourself
- To introduce the organisation, the mission, the vision, key staff and board members, what you have you have achieved so far
- Do not hesitate to use "storytelling techniques" (how the organisation started, major challenges and successes…)
- Have a standard offering that you can adapt and work from
- Design specific packages with different level of financial commitment

D - HOW TO HANDLE THE MEETING?

A first meeting aimed to get to know each other and see if there is a possible fit.
Always ask for an introduction of those who are attending the meeting, it's important to know who is in the meeting.

During a first meeting, do not hesitate to start by asking many questions to understand better the environment and see where a possible alignment is possible for both organisations. You will have to adapt to your audience.

During the meeting, **identify common ground or interest** and use it as a conclusion of a meeting. At the end of the meeting (one-hour meeting should be sufficient), **always leave the room with a "next step"**.

E - IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING UP

Keep track of the company you meet, using spreadsheets or use a Customer Relationship System (CRM), some software companies even offer deals for nonprofits.

Track **dates, names and functions** of people you have met, the **outcome** of meetings and **follow-up actions**.

After a meeting, it's important to follow-up with:

- **An email to be sent 1 or 2 weeks maximum after the meeting**, with ideally a document such as a presentation) that can be shared internally, to help to promote the project to other colleagues, management and decision-makers.

- **Set up a follow-up time frame** to schedule a call or email after 2 weeks if you have not heard back.

- **Always follow-up**: people are busy and might skip your email or call. Following up is part of professional life. Some people will only respond to people that follow up as it shows their motivation.

Avoid having "cold commercial calling selling techniques", especially if you are not comfortable with it, and which might not reflect the non-profit work.

Always be honest and authentic, communicate your commitment, your values and the importance of your work!

F - DEVELOPING A STRUCTURED STRATEGY TO APPROACH COMPANIES

You might decide to adopt a proactive approach to companies to secure new partnerships and resources to sustain your activity as a non-profit/social organisation. This means planning a fundraising strategy which includes contacting companies which can help you.

Be aware that **fundraising is also often a matter of personal network and relationship.** It will be easier to approach a company where you know someone rather than approaching companies that you do not have any connections with.

When planning a call calling or fundraising campaign, consider to:

- Use **LinkedIn** to identify the name of the people you could speak to.

- Attend **events and networking** as it is a great way to meet potential supporters and partners. Use your network and do not hesitate to ask for recommendations or introduction.

- Use **your network** and do not hesitate to ask for recommendations or introduction.

There are many companies that you could be approaching, you will have to select the companies that make the most sense for you:

- **Make your list**: identify the top (top 3, top 10, long list…) companies that you are interested to work with. Identify whom you wish to contact within the company.

- **Avoid trying to contact different people in the organisation at the same time**. You can try to contact someone else only if you have tried several times and did not get the answer.

- Decide on the best way to approach them.

What are the traditional ways to approach companies?

- **Phone call, cold calling:** in that case, be ready for your pitch and be clear on what you want to get. Expect to find it difficult to reach the person you want to talk to (always call with a name to reach).

- **Emailing:** prepare a professional email (short and concise) and preferably include relevant weblink and a short presentation/brochure.

Ask for a meeting or a follow-up action. Always follow up as mentioned earlier!

Part 3: Corporate volunteering

1 - WHAT IS CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM? WHY ARE COMPANIES INTERESTED IN OFFERING CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS?

Corporate volunteerism aims to motivate and enable employees to support NGO needs through the leadership of the employer. It is a component of a company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) involvement and is a good way to develop these policies by increasing engagement and retention. It's a win-win for both NGOs and companies.

- It offers opportunities to **engage employees** and allows them to **work on something socially meaningful** and **different**.
- Employees come back to work with **enhanced skills and talents** from their volunteering experience.
- Staff are looking for a **purpose in their jobs**, and corporate volunteerism is a good way to attract potential employees by illustrating organisational values in action.

For big companies, especially in professional services, this can utilise otherwise-unused staff time between client projects or during slower times in business cycles. This unemployed time, rather than being wasted and lowering morale, can be used profitably to create a positive impact with corporate volunteerism.

Corporate volunteering can be **ad hoc or more organised and structured.**

- **Ad Hoc/Unstructured =** based on an opportunity, a need from an organisation, someone in the company will take the lead and find the relevant resources to help the NGO on a one-off or more regular basis. No formal agreement between company and employees; no specific instructions for employees other than providing information on opportunities.

- **Structured =** encouraged at the corporate level, with a person in charge of developing the programme in partnership with the organisation (communication, recruiting, providing information on volunteering, ensuring the matching profiles and follow up on the planning). Specific "charter" for employees. Allocated time per employee to volunteer during their working hours (generally from several hours to several days per week, although sometimes more).

COMMUNICATION/EMPLOYER BRANDING

Corporate volunteerism is often led by:

- Communication
- Human resources
- CSR business units in the company

Every company defines its own corporate volunteerism program in specific areas that they want to be involved in.

To succeed, skills-based volunteering projects need:

- To be **staffed and supported by people who have experience** with project management, volunteer management, the vision and goals of the company and the project focus area.

- To have **quick access** to those with decision-making power within the organisation. People staffing for this part on both the company and the non-profit organisation should be using around 10 or 20% of their time in order to ensure conscientious project management.

- Before deployment, the project needs its **management documented** in order to effectively implement it.

That's why many businesses and non-profits, particularly those newer to skills-based volunteering, often engage an intermediary to help launch and run the program. A large number of big companies already work with corporate volunteering platforms to manage their employees engagement in mission-driven charities, programs, and events.

- It helps the NGO to **identify the right projects, to prepare and scope them**, and then to manage those projects because they know how to make projects successful.

- It is a **way to promote the NGO's needs** by adding the project to their pro-bono platform.

- **These platforms present the different associations** where employees can give time and provide tools to design, administer and manage corporate volunteerism. They include reporting tools that measure activity and program effectiveness, along with a dashboard with volunteer activity and efficiency.

For some organisations, employees are free to be part or not of corporate volunteerism but for others, corporate volunteerism is mandatory.

- Companies use various methods to recruit employees to volunteer, such as websites, bulletin board flyers, newsletters and internal events.

- Communication with clear, dynamic and attractive content has to be accessible to every employee in order to recruit volunteers.

- Testimonies of employees or ambassadors are a good way to spotlight the corporate volunteerism program.

To manage a good corporate volunteerism program, employees should be:

- Consulted in the design
- Be given the opportunity to select the activities they want to be part of

2 - BENEFITS FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Different types of "**corporate volunteers**", which are adaptable regarding the profile of employees:

- **Traditional volunteering:** for example, serving soup to homeless people, helping to paint a classroom; this volunteering does not require any specific technical skills, the main resources needed are time and goodwill to help. This type of volunteering can be done by any and all the employees of the company because it doesn't require specific skills. It helps the NGO to increase quickly and on-demand the number of volunteers needed for a specific action.

- **Skills-based volunteering:** using professional skills to support an organisation or its beneficiaries, with specific skills such as accounting, marketing; this usually involves more organisation (matching the volunteer to the need) and also a longer time frame (higher qualification means being included in a bigger project, difficult to be offered for just a few hours at a time...)

- **This is a short time commitment,** to discover and explore what is skills-based volunteering. It can be involvement for one day, for example. The digital women starters weekend, the intelligence corporate workshop or contribution on specific skills is an amazing opportunity to achieve this test. These actions allow a realistic involvement and not an important work to prepare it.

- **It is possible to create a long-term commitment** that is possible when companies use to work with the NGO because the corporate volunteerism fits into an employee's workday and business priorities.

3 - MOTIVATION FOR CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS

Corporate volunteerism is a real **win-win way to motivate employees** and to **increase efficiency**. There are many reasons for employees to participate in corporate volunteering. It calls for an intrinsic way of motivation:

- Altruism
- The search for meaning in personal life
- The organisation's corporate impact
- Increased well-being and happiness
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Increased self-esteem

They can **develop their own satisfaction** from participating as volunteers, for the learning they can acquire. Volunteering also increases motivation, self-confidence, leadership development, and other skills.

In addition, employers benefit from improving their image, improving their reputation, and the higher morale and new skills acquired by their employees. The employee will spread the word about company opportunities when they are proud to belong to an organisation that is supporting a cause and they get the chance to:

- Work on something with purpose
- Be able to help others
- Access selected volunteering activities
- Volunteer during the daytime and working hours

Create processes which work for your organisation. Building long-term relationships with companies and making corporate volunteers is an asset for your organisation.

4 - EVENTS FOR COMPANY

Companies are important partners for these projects because their employees can provide **practical knowledge and skills** to the women participants. They can also share **useful tools and real-world applications** that may help to develop the participants' projects.

The **empowerment of women and gender equality** generally combined are some of the fundamental foundations of sustainable development. According to the World Bank, these areas are an integral part of economic progress because they are a **vector of development to fight poverty and reduce inequalities**.

By supporting events that help women become entrepreneurs, the partners of Move it Forward can use their influence and key role in society to advance gender equality.

There are multiple ways to do this, through the **digital starters weekend hackathon**, **one-on-one coaching**, or by creating **company-focused events** after this main event, where participants can continue moving their project forward through the support of company volunteers.

A - EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN DIGITAL STARTERS WEEKEND

The **Move It Forward digital starters weekend** is a good way to engage companies in a long-term partnership. The company can not just support the event financially but also mobilize their employees to participate as mentors. It can increase employee morale, boost its innovation, and mobilize the collective intelligence of its employees to support women entrepreneurs.

THE BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES ARE NUMEROUS:

- Feel more connected to both their company and other employees

- Feel more confident in their skills and benefit from improved self-esteem, particularly for women employees

- Feel like they're supporting a good cause thanks to their company

- Transfer their skills while themselves learning new things

- Benefit from concrete experience in entrepreneurship, and take away good practices that apply to internal projects

- Feel inspired and motivated by women entrepreneurs

B - CONTRIBUTION OF SPECIFIC SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE OVER 2-4 HOURS OF COACHING ON A PARTICULAR ASPECT OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PROJECT

Companies could provide specific skills through their pro-bono employees who are experts in areas related to mentee's needs to answer women. The company proposes to its employees to work with women for a certain number of hours on their entrepreneurial projects in **one to one training**. These could include **mentoring on financial, legal, business plan**... These coaching sessions could be organised online or in person.

C - "COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE" WORKSHOPS WITH ONE OR SEVERAL COMPANIES, PARTICULARLY DURING SOLIDARITY COMMITMENT DAY (DEPENDING ON THE COUNTRY)

Groups of 3-10 people per participant/project. The company (or companies) offers its employees the opportunity to work with women entrepreneurs for a half or full day on their entrepreneurial projects through **collaborative workshops organised and run by a trained coach**.

The participants present their projects, their goals, and the main issues and opportunities before the team begins to work around the defined entrepreneurial challenges.

Following this work session in small groups, everyone come together to share what they learned with the others.

At the end of the workshop, a **networking time** with snacks and drinks could be set-up to promote informal exchanges and encourage knowledge-sharing amongst the groups.

CONCLUSION

This document aims to give you an **overview of what is corporate social responsibility**, what is taken to fundraise and how to benefit from corporate volunteering when planning an action supporting **Women Entrepreneurs such as the Digital Starter Weekend "Move it Forward"**. The given explanations and practical tips should help you to navigate through complex processes, especially for those who are not familiar yet with the world of corporations.

Hybridization of public and private resources will be most probably more and more needed in the future and involvement of companies and the private sector in women empowerment is only beginning.

These are guidelines that you can follow or just take inspirations from. You might only be able to use some parts and find others less relevant for you. Please feel free to adapt it to your needs. However consistency and monitoring quality is always important.

Every organisation is different and is key to understanding the social and economic environment. You need to be able to adapt to your own context to create opportunities and impact.

To help you to put in practice a **Digital Starter Weekend** or any other kind of internship, you will find below a **checklist** to make sure you are ready to create your own plan to approach companies to support you during the journey!