

**Forum European Union - Latin America and the Caribbean
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and multi-sectoral alliances:
Contributions to competitiveness, innovation and sustainable development**

– 28 and 29 October 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina –

Working Table IV

Multi-sectoral alliances that promote training, research and development of sustainable technologies with the objective of social inclusion and development

We currently have an unprecedented opportunity to promote social cohesion in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean with a view to assisting the most excluded communities and fostering a fair and economically productive brand of sustainable development. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to mobilise all available resources and to promote intersectoral synergies between the main sectors, i.e. the public, private and education sectors and civil society. One of the key aspects of this process will be technological innovation and the changes that need to be made both at an institutional level and in the private sector in order to enable the promotion of training in, research into and development of sustainable technologies geared towards inclusion and development. To this end, it would be desirable for the different sectors to promote synergies and work together towards achieving long-term growth that fosters social, environmental and economic development and ensures the equity and social cohesion that are necessary for sustainable development to be possible.

In order to achieve this positive change through multisectoral alliances for the development of sustainable technologies, it will be necessary to strengthen output, training, dissemination and absorptive capacity in education and technological research across all the sectors.

No one sector will be able to close the current technology gap on its own. Consequently, the added value provided by multisectoral alliances is key to making significant progress towards promoting development, for example by improving infrastructure services so that they can provide a sound basis for technological development; enhancing higher education provision in the fields of science and engineering and thereby redefining the role of universities in society; promoting entrepreneurship in the fields of science, technology and innovation with the aim of fostering inclusion; and developing more inclusive and sustainable environmental and healthcare policies through the use of new technologies.

There are currently also a number of shortcomings that may restrict the development of multisectoral alliances in this area as well as countries' technological progress. Examples include insufficient industrial expertise with regard to technological requirements, a lack of incentives for scientists and institutions to promote knowledge transfer, excessive red tape hindering the development of alliances with the public sector and difficulty in obtaining credit for promoting research into new developments.

Consequently, it is necessary not only to promote a public-private framework for measures aimed at achieving these goals, but also to foster specific multisectoral alliances in order to ensure concrete progress towards generating technologies geared towards development and social inclusion. If these alliances are to achieve real and sustainable change, areas such as the following should be given priority: development of human capital and training of institutions' members and technical staff in the relevant technologies; development of a robust technology infrastructure framework geared towards research into and development and production of new products and services; and improving access to funding for developing new technologies so that it is easier to obtain and can be accessed in a more decentralised manner.

Key questions:

- 1) How can the experience of each sector contribute to promoting innovative processes?
- 2) To what extent do multi-sectoral alliances create added value?
- 3) How can the different sectors cooperate to promote training in, research into and development of sustainable technologies? What are the areas where each sector can maximise its contribution to the goals of development and social cohesion?