IMPACT AND VALUE IN CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING:

Learning from the InterCement Volunteer Program

Frances Hansford



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Preface

How can we change the world? I believe that the answer to this question begins with one's own path, one step at a time and, as Gandhi rightly put it, being the change you want to see in the world.

I am honored to work for a corporate institute dedicated to community development and through which we witness the most beautiful and powerful change of all: the power of ideas put into practice to improve the living conditions of those who are most vulnerable.

There are countless examples of social transformation, and the legacy is seen in many areas: the renovation of parks, squares, schools, health centers; new athletes who emerge after sports classes; new artists dedicated to local culture; children and young people with regular access to sports and leisure activities; and improvement in the well-being and health of the population of more than 30 communities, in more than seven different countries, where InterCement has or had operations. It never ceases to amaze me over the years that although we, as a company, have already made many changes, the feeling of belonging and the ability to contribute to positive transformation overcomes cultural barriers, and we can definitely say that it is part of our culture.

Our shareholders have always inspired us at the InterCement Institute to be a positive influence and to encourage the strengthening of local assets and, as a result, empower communities. We are witnessing this increase in civic participation and its dissemination, which leads to lasting changes, particularly when aligned with the priorities identified by our partners, through interventions that are designed based on local assets and improved through the engagement of multiple stakeholders, where all offer their best abilities and everyone is mobilised to serve.

In this study, many of our employees expressed the value of leading by example - starting at home, when children are part of their parents' volunteering efforts - and there are many testimonies about how that example, years later, influenced those children, now adolescents, as promoters of change in their communities.

We hope that this report will inspire you, your company and organisation (public or non-profit) to join the movement and put words into action. It is intended to share our experience, lessons learned and suggestions for improvements. We hope that the content may be useful to engage you and your organisation, and add more positive examples that improve society and our world that faces such need!

Carla Duprat

Director of the InterCement Institute

December 2020



1. Introduction

A core value of the InterCement with InterCement staff. Interviews were Institute ('the Institute') is the systematisation and sharing of learning from its experience. The present study was commissioned in line with this value, as a means of capturing, organising and communicating perspectives about the impact and value of the Institute's corporate volunteering model. The study aims to promote reflection and learning about the value of corporate volunteerism, and to inform policies and practice at InterCement and, more broadly, across corporations and organisations interested in maximising the impact and value of their volunteer programs.

The study was conducted by Frances Hansford, a consultant specialising in the evaluation of social impact, in collaboration

conducted with staff members and community volunteers,¹ and a survey was sent to all InterCement staff, in the six countries in which the program operates. All data were analysed by the consultant. The study also drew on key documentary sources, including a book which describes the development of the volunteer model (Azevedo, 2017).

The total number of interviewees was 174 and the total number of survey respondents was 1,543 (24% of all employees) (see Table 1). As there was some overlap between interviewees and survey respondents, and since the survey was anonymous, we cannot report the total number of stakeholders consulted.

	Table 1: Number of stakeholders consulted in each c
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	Company staff	Volunteer committee (CIVICO) members	Volunteer group (GAIV) members	Community volunteers	Survey responses
Argentina	3	20	22	25	406
Brazil	7	16	21	20	540
Egypt	1	1	1	2	250
Mozambique	2	2	4	0	139
Paraguay		2	3	2	31
South Africa	3	8	7	2	177
TOTAL					

Survey respondents included directors and managers, coordinators, analysts, assistants and others. Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents had been with the company for four or more years and just over three-quarters were male. Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents were company volunteers at the time of the survey, or had been a company volunteer in the past (see Table 2).

Table 2: Proportion of survey respondents that have been an Intercement company volunteer





''Community volunteers' are residents who volunteer their time during activities promoted by the InterCement volunteer program, although they are not InterCement n employees. They may include employees from partner companies and former InterCement employees, as well as others with no direct link to InterCement.

² Note that some respondents skipped some questions in the survey

countrv

Percent and number of survey respondents²

2. Background: Evidence on the Value of Corporate Volunteering

The United Nations defines a volunteer as 'a young person or adult who, due to their personal interest and civic spirit, dedicates part of their time, without payment, to diverse activities... in social well-being or other fields' In 2018, the global volunteer workforce was estimated to be 109 million full-time equivalent workers (UNV, 2018: 11). According to the UNV's 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report (p. 19), private sector actors have become more prominent in volunteering, as more businesses see volunteering as a core component of their social responsibility. This is all the more so as businesses recognise their role in addressing social problems and seek to align their investments more closely and strategically with the UN's Social Development Goals (SDGs), in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (CIEDS, 2018: 35; Hartnell and Milner, 2018).

The benefits of volunteering for individual volunteers and for the communities that receive volunteers are widely recognised. For individual volunteers, these include taking on new roles, development of new skills and confidence.

career progression, enhanced employability, improved relations with colleagues and neighbours, a stronger sense of belonging in their communities and a greater appreciation of the reality of others, especially disadvantaged individuals and communities (Santo Caos, 2017; Mayer and Costa e Silva, 2017; BISC, 2019). For the communities where volunteer programs operate, the benefits include access to company human and financial resources, stronger community organisations with improved management processes, stronger civil society and ultimately improved quality of life (CIEDS, 2018: 15).

More recently, there has been a growing recognition that corporations sponsoring volunteer programs also benefit (Azevedo, 2017: 13). These benefits include: enhanced skills, creativity and teamwork among employees; stronger employee identification with company culture; more motivated, engaged and productive employees; attraction and recruitment of the best talent; and a better public reputation, stronger branding and stronger relationship with the community (CIEDS, 2018: 15;



Mayer and Costa e Silva, 2017; BISC, 2019; Hartnell and Milner, 2018). Higher employee engagement has, in turn, been shown to correlate with higher quality work, better customer service, better safety, and lower turnover and absenteeism, all of which may translate into higher sales, revenues and profit (Kruse, 2012).

Corporations worldwide invest millions of dollars every year in their volunteer programs. However, measurement of the results and impacts of these programs is limited. A study of 47 corporate volunteer programs across five continents in 2017 found that most corporations use only basic metrics to record short-term results (number of volunteers, volunteer hours, volunteer activities, organisations, and beneficiaries reached, etc), and some measure volunteer satisfaction. Very few measure midterm and long-term results (for example, skills developed due to volunteering), and none measures impact in terms of changes that occur among volunteers or the beneficiaries of volunteer actions (Itaú Social, 2017: 54-60).

There has also been very little work to estimate the return on investment generated by corporate volunteering. The lack of evidence of impact and cost-benefit analysis makes it difficult for business leaders to recognise the value added by volunteerism and to justify new investments in workplace volunteerism, particularly when resources are limited. Mayer and Costa e Silva (2017) developed a model for estimating the 'whole value' of corporate volunteering in order to fill this gap. Their model builds on and extends the International Labour Organisation's (ILO's) methodology for estimating the economic value of volunteer work,³ by capturing private value (for individual volunteers and for corporations) and social value (for society as a whole). Application of the model to a global corporate volunteering program⁴ estimated a return on investment of 3.55 Euros for every Euro invested.5 The authors stress that if companies recognise the magnitude of the private and social value generated by their volunteer programs, they are more likely to continue to invest in them.

³The ILO methodology, used by national statistics agencies, estimates the value generated by volunteer actions in terms of produced service (Mayer and Costa e Silva, 2017.98)

⁴The program is run by the Energias de Portugal (EDP) Group, a medium-sized energy company present in 14 countries. ⁵The authors note that their estimate is conservative, because some dimensions of value were not quantified and included in the model. Full details on the model are available in Mayer and Costa e Silva (2017).

Figure 1: The volunteer program in numbers

3. InterCement's Volunteer Program



3.1 The Volunteer Program in Numbers

is carried out in the cities where the company has operations. In each location, incentives to voluntary participation are developed and resources are made available that contribute to the development or strengthening of initiatives promoted based on the professionals' interest. In 2019, there were nearly 14,000 instances of

InterCement's volunteer program participation by community volunteers and over 5,500 instances of participation by company volunteers, and their work reached over 250,000 beneficiaries (see Figure 1).

> Thirty-seven percent of employees were involved in the volunteer program in 2019.



Source: data provided by the InterCement Institute

The London Benchmarking Group (2017: much lower'. The 2019 BISC survey found 4)⁶ estimated that 14% of employees in its that around 8% of collaborators (including 100+ member organisations undertook paidtime volunteering in 2017. Benefacto, a social enterprise promoting corporate volunteering in the UK, states that 'most firms see 20% staff participation as an acceptable target, and in many cases, this is much, of volunteering varies across organisations.⁷

⁶The London Benchmarking Group, set up by the Corporate Citizenship consultancy, unites over 100 international and local businesses with volunteer programs. ⁷For example, whether volunteering includes 'paid-time volunteering' undertaken during working hours; whether former employees, retirees, and/or other collaborators are included; etc.

employees and others, such as supplier employees) in 271 surveyed businesses participated in corporate volunteerism. It is worth emphasising that care needs to be taken when benchmarking, as the definition

Instances

of volunteer

participation

(employees)

5,607

3.2 The Institutional Context

InterCement is among the ten largest producers of cement in the world. In 2019, the volunteer program had activities in five countries, on two continents, where the company has operations (see Figure 2), as well as Paraguay (where the company operated until

August 2020). More than just generating value in local economies through job creation, profits and taxes, the company seeks to contribute meaningfully to transformative cultural, social and economic development in the communities where it operates. It does so through

Figure 2: Countries where InterCement has operations



⁸Until 2015, the Camargo Correa Institute was responsible for the private social investment agenda for InterCement and other companies in the Camargo Correa Group

the InterCement Institute, created in 2015 as the vehicle for the company's social investment.

The Institute is a separate legal entity from the company, responsible for defining the guidelines for the volunteer program throughout InterCement and disseminating strategies to foster individual participation, in addition to consolidating and systematising information and results of what is achieved, which takes place in line with teams from each location.

The current operating model was developed back in 2009, by the Camargo Correa Institute,8 in the Brazilian cities where the company operates. From 2015 onwards, the InterCement Institute has been responsible for the company's social investment agenda, adopting previously successful methodologies, which have been disseminated gradually to the other countries in which InterCement operates.

The

InterCement

Institute

The Institute is responsible for establishing guidelines and strategies for social investment activities and governance in InterCement companies. It is a resource for managing technical knowledge, disseminating content, as well as organising information and results relating to the implementation of activities in all countries.

As a strategy for implementing social investment, the Institute and the company have defined three structures for participation: the CIVICOs, the CDCs and the GAIVs.

3.3 The Operating Strategy

CIVICO Committee to Incentivise Volunteering and Interaction with the Community

This is a group of InterCement professionals that is to be formed in each of the company's units, with the aim of managing social investment, along with the InterCement Institute, in a certain territory.

Each group is made up of at least five professionals and acts as an extension of the Institute in the production unit. Participants undergo regular training to develop and enhance abilities and competencies needed for social mobilisation.

CDC Community Development Committee

This is a group made up of representatives from local government, citizen organisations, community leadership, companies and a CIVICO to define strategies and promote activities that contribute to community development.

The role of the CDC is to quide, plan, follow and mobilise partnerships and resources and to evaluate projects and activities that promote continued community development in their location. It should actively seek connections and relationships with the most diverse sectors in the territory in order to increase the impact of the activities.

It is the Institute's mission to be a catalyst for community potential wherever InterCement operates, creating partnerships and innovative solutions that strengthen people committed to overcoming their challenges.

Within the scope of the corporate volunteering program, the Institute develops strategies that seek to promote the value of volunteerism for professionals, as well as for the company and beneficiaries. To this end, it makes available methodological and financial resources, in addition to ongoing technical assistance to mobilise and support voluntary engagement among employees. It also helps to create and strengthen community partnerships that also involve external volunteers.

In terms of support materials, for example, the Institute produces and distributes good practice guides, guidance on planning workshops and tools, and strategies to recognise and celebrate volunteers, based on alobal good practice in volunteerism. Also, Institute staff monitor program results and statistics, and report to stakeholders across the organisation.

The Institute uses two organisational structures to promote and organise volunteerism. The first is the CIVICO (Committee to Incentivise Volunteering and Interaction with the Community). Every organisational unit (office or plant) has its own CIVICO. Each CIVICO is made up of five or more employees representing different functions (such as HR, production and administration, among others) and includes the office or plant manager. Whenever possible, employees native to the community are included, so that the CIVICO has a grounded

⁹Volunteers based in large cities, where the time required to travel to a suitable project may present a barrier to volunteering, can participate in 'virtual volunteering' via an online program. One example is the practice of mentoring young people for access to the job market.



GAIVs are to be formed spontaneously by professionals, friends, family members and community agents who feel motivated to organise and carry out volunteer activities. The leadership of these groups must always be composed of InterCement professionals.

understanding of the local context. CIVICO employees undertake activities to support volunteerism during working hours. They may also be involved in voluntary activities outside of working hours. There were 37 CIVICOs across the company's international operations in 2019.

The second structure is the GAIV (Ideal Volunteer Action Group). Volunteers selforganise spontaneously as GAIVs of four or more volunteers that wish to work together on a shared project in their community. GAIVs can include community residents that are not employed by the company, as long as at least one group member is an employee. GAIV members who are employees are allowed to plan and organise voluntary activities during their working hours and using company resources; however, voluntary activities must be undertaken outside of working hours. There were 50 GAIVs across the company's international operations in 2019.

GAIVs choose the activities they want to undertake - these are not prescribed by the Institute or the CIVICO - although the activities must be developed within the territory in which the office or plant is located.9 The key recommendations are that the voluntary work proposed must be planned in advance, must be ongoing (as opposed to a one-off event) and must be undertaken as a group, and the GAIVs must secure counterpart contributions (financial or in-kind) from local organisations. If necessary and approved, the GAIV receives financial assistance from the company in order to implement the proposed volunteer activity.

bique), the work of GAIV volunteers is recognised with a bi-annual prize, the Idealist Award, which recognises work that is innovative, strategic, scalable and/or achieves high impact at low cost. All GAIVs that have achieved over 350 hours of voluntary service in the previous six months are eligible for the award. In Brazil, the award criteria include: proactive community

In two countries (Brazil and Mozam- participation; involvement of young people as volunteers or beneficiaries; respect for cultural and religious diversity; prevention of health, safety and environmental risks; and mobilisation of partner contributions. A cash prize is awarded to a community organisation nominated by the winning GAIV, to be invested in the development of new volunteer activities.

Figure 3: Types of activities undertaken by volunteers in Brazil in 2019



Volunteers are encouraged to develop ongoing activities throughout the year, so that volunteerism becomes an embedded part of corporate and community culture. Figure 3 shows the kinds of activities that were developed as part of ongoing projects during 2019 in Brazil. They included: sports and leisure; education and culture; human rights; public spaces/facilities; and health, safety and the environment.

The Institute also stages a large annual celebration of volunteer work in each country, called the Day of Doing Good (DODG). The DODG brings together volunteers from InterCement and its suppliers, from partner companies, and their friends and families, as well as volunteers from the local community, to provide a day of voluntary service in each location. Projects have included, for example, making a public square accessible to people with disabilities, making improvements to

voluntary work.



¹⁰The award is made by the Brazilian Association for Business Communications for innovative and inspiring communications strategies or campaigns. The volunteer program was still hosted by the Camargo Correa Group at the time of the award.

spaces that serve the population (schools, health units, etc.), creating a shelter for pregnant women waiting to be admitted to hospital to give birth and numerous other activities to promote social well-being and encourage

The DODGs are large mobilisations which serve to illustrate the reach of the volunteer program. The Institute estimates that 11,699 volunteers were involved across all countries in the 2019 DODG. The effects of the DODGs go far beyond a single day of activism: they provide a vehicle to make visible and to celebrate voluntary work conducted throughout the year; they mobilise new volunteers, many of whom go on to engage with ongoing voluntary activities; and they provide media exposure to volunteerism, helping to awaken an interest in volunteerism among other companies and organisations. The DODG received the Aberje National Award for Special Events¹⁰ in 2011.

3.4 A Conceptual Foundations

One of the first steps in our study was to capture the conceptual foundations underpinning the volunteer program in a formal theory of change (ToC) (see Figure 4).

A preliminary ToC was designed during a workshop with 19 staff members from InterCement, in Brazil, in December 2019. Participants were asked to think about the

Volunteers

Business

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

long-term impact to which they want the volunteer program to contribute and the pathways by which the program can contribute to impact, for three groups: volunteers, communities and the company. The ToC was used to guide data collection and analysis for this study and will be used to facilitate future results monitoring. It was revised at the end of the study to reflect the views of interviewees.

The ToC reflects InterCement's commitment to move beyond the generation of economic value (jobs, profits and taxes) to generate 'shared value': value for society ('social value') and for the company. The company aims to contribute to the first of these, social value, by providing resources and support for individuals to exercise their citizenship, grow personally and professionally, and feel empowered to

The voluntary actions of groups help to build social capital in communities (the networks, trust and reciprocity of a strong civil society), which can, in turn, promote autonomous community development. This provides benefits, or value, for individuals and for communities.



Figure 4: Theory of change for the volunteer program

improve the quality of life in their communities.

individuals and communities, the company builds legitimacy, credibility and trust in the locations where it operates. This allows it to achieve the second aim, value for the business, by securing and maintaining community acceptance and support for its activities, sometimes called 'social license to operate' (SLO) (see Figure 5). SLO helps a business to gain and maintain access to the resources

By supporting the development of it needs (for example, a workforce, finances, use of public infrastructure and services) and to mitigate the social and political risks of operating in a given community.

> The value or benefits generated across the three strands - individuals, communities and the business - are syneraistic, with each strand drawing on and reinforcing the others.

Figure 5: Social License to Operate model (adapted from Boutilier and Thomson, 2011)



Source: https://socialicense.com/definition.html

4. The Impact of Volunteerism on Volunteers, **Communities and Businesses**

We asked company and community volunteers to tell us about the benefits they believe the volunteer program generates for individual volunteers, communities and the InterCement business. Their responses are summarised below. The results presented came from 174 interviewees and 1,543 respondents to an online survey.

4.1 The Impact of Volunteering on Individual Volunteers



New skills and capabilities

Most interviewees and 87%¹¹ of survey respondents stated that they learned new skills and capabilities while volunteering. These included hard skills, such as planning and organisational skills, managing people, resources and time, project management and fund-raising, along with soft skills, such as leadership, communications, networking, influencing and motivating others, problem resolution and teamwork. Some community interviewees indicated that they learned practical skills that were useful to them at home, such as painting, horticulture, and teaching and looking after children.

Of survey respondents, 61% indicated that they had taken on a new role in their workplace or community due to experience gained during volunteering, and 57% of survey respondents stated that volunteering had contributed to their ideas or plans about future studies or careers. One interviewee felt that learning new skills during volunteering could help with career progression in the company. Some community volunteers indicated that volunteering had helped them to return to academic life, and one unemployed community volunteer believed that volunteering might help him to find employment.

¹¹All percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. All percentages in section 4 represent: (1) combined responses from current and pasi volunteers; (2) responses of 'a lot' and 'a little' combined (leaving out responses of 'not at all'). We note that a high percentage of respondents answered affirmatively on most of the indicators reported in this section, which demonstrates the positive results of the program. In addition, we note that this happened because we combined the responses for 'a lot' and 'a little'. It is also possible that employees with a positive experience of the volunteer program were more likely to respond to the survey.



Better relationships with colleagues and workplace engagement

Of survey respondents, 89% indicated that they have better relationships with their colleagues, and 86% stated that they have felt more engaged with their work since they started volunteering. Interviewees explained that volunteering improved their relationships in the workplace and helped them feel more engaged because they got to know each other better, built relationships with employees they didn't previously know, and felt more camaraderie with their superiors from working with them in a non-hierarchical setting. Employee engagement was also enhanced for some for whom the volunteer program demonstrated that the company cared about the community in which they lived and worked.

Many interviewees said they felt empowered by choosing to contribute in their community and influencing others to do the same. Some indicated that they became aware of the difficulties faced by others, which helped them to develop empathy and tolerance, as well as greater appreciation and gratitude for their own, more fortunate circumstances. Volunteers in Egypt also indicated that volunteering contributes to their spiritual well-being, as helping others is a core tenet of Islam. Underlying all of these facets is the awareness that, in helping others, volunteers in fact help themselves.



Stronger family relationships and friendship ties

Many interviewees indicated that involving family and friends in their volunteer activities helped to strengthen family relationships and friendship ties. Employees who bring their children to volunteer activities indicated that they are glad to pass on values like empathy and solidarity to their children, and believe that it helps their children to understand that others are less fortunate than they are. One employee pointed out that involving children should ensure the longevity of volunteerism, as children who volunteer are more likely to volunteer as adults. Survey responses supported these views: 85% said that the volunteer program gave them the opportunity to exemplify important values to their children, and 88% stated that they felt a greater sense of engagement with other residents in their community.

Personal growth and improved well-being

Almost all interviewees indicated that volunteering contributes to their well-being. This was expressed in many ways: happiness; fulfilment; a sense of belonging; feeling useful; greater self-confidence and self-esteem; and personal growth. Survey responses supported these views: 90% of respondents said their self-confidence had improved and 75% said their mental health had improved (meaning lower anxiety, depression and/or stress), as a result of being a volunteer.

4.2 The Impact of the Volunteer Program on Communities



Access to resources

Some community volunteers indicated that volunteer projects provide their communities with access to resources that they would not otherwise have. This includes the financial resources provided by the Institute to implement projects, and the technical know-how of company volunteers, such as electricians, carpenters, plumbers, health professionals and others who work on community projects. This is especially so in small, resource-poor towns and municipalities, where funding for social projects is scarce, and many skilled residents migrate to larger towns and cities with better professional opportunities.



Participation in decision-making forums

Of survey respondents, 84% indicated that the volunteer program had helped to improve community participation in committees and forums where decisions about the future of the community are made. Some GAIV interviewees underlined this, saying that volunteer projects have provided forums for residents

to voice their opinions and provide important insights on local needs, which help to ensure that volunteer projects, and the work of other community organisations, are relevant to the needs of residents.



Autonomous community development

Of survey respondents, 82% said that the volunteer program had helped the community to become more autonomous and empowered in determining its own future. Many interviewees concurred with this view, indicating that participation in volunteer activities provided community residents with a sense of agency and a belief in their own capacity to improve life in their community. This, in turn, was observed to reduce passivity and dependence on others to solve local problems or improve local conditions.



Stronger civil society

Many interviewees indicated that volunteerism in the community contributed to a stronger civil society. This took many forms: greater trust among individuals, organisations and institutions; connections among individuals who might otherwise not meet; stronger networks underpinning collective action; and a stronger sense of community identity. Similarly, 94% of survey respondents reported improved social interaction, trust and cooperation among people in the community.

Some interviewees indicated that previously weak community organisations were revitalised through the opportunity to implement projects. They described new capacities in their community organisations, such as community mobilisation, collective decision-making, and negotiations with local authorities and businesses. Similarly, 92% of survey respondents reported that the volunteer program had helped to strengthen community organisations and leaders. Some interviewees observed that the condition that community organisations must find matching funds locally had helped to foster community philanthropy. This was also reported by 85% of survey respondents.



Better quality of life

Community volunteers indicated that many community residents benefit from volunteer projects in terms of better quality of life. This may be in the form of improved physical infrastructure, better child development, improved educational opportunities for children and adults, and/or better health. Some GAIV members suggested that involving community residents in projects means that residents are more likely to recognise and appreciate the improvements and to do what they can to sustain the benefits over time.

4.3 The Impact of the Volunteer Program on InterCement

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Better qualified employees

Of survey respondents, 71% indicated that employees had used skills or knowledge learned from volunteering in their day jobs and many interviewees indicated the skills and capabilities they developed during volunteering were useful to them in their jobs. One employee indicated that the volunteer program can be a platform to identify potential among employees that might otherwise go unnoticed, such as leadership capacity or the ability to convene and influence others. Another reported that Human Resources departments sometimes encourage staff members to volunteer in order to develop competencies needed to meet the requirements for another position.



Attraction and retention of talent

Offering the opportunity to volunteer may give businesses a competitive edge in the job market, helping to attract and retain the best talent. Some interviewees pointed out that younger employees, in particular, want to work for a company that offers them a way to contribute to society and is committed to the triple bottom line (that is, it focuses on social and environmental concerns as well as profits). One interviewee similarly suggested that the most capable workers in small towns may be more likely to work for a business that demonstrates its commitment to the community through volunteer activities and social projects.



Employee motivation and productivity

Many survey respondents indicated their belief that the volunteer program had helped to improve employee motivation (80%), productivity (69%) and attendance (that is, taking less sick leave) (49%). Many interviewees concurred that employees who volunteer feel greater job satisfaction, are more motivated on the job and are likely to be more productive. They indicated that this comes about due to the better relations among colleagues who volunteer together, as described earlier, and the belief that the company cares about them and their community.

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Social License to Operate (SLO)

Many interviewees and 95% of survey respondents indicated that volunteer activities help to create SLO for the company by building legitimacy, credibility and trust among community residents and local authorities, and an understanding that the company creates social, as well as economic, value. One interviewee believed that many stakeholders see the donation of time and skills through company volunteering as more meaningful than financial donations.

Interviewees indicated that building SLO means that residents affected by business operations are more willing to accept some disruption and inconvenience (noise, air pollution, heavy traffic and so on). As one interviewee put it, it's a way of saying, 'Thanks and sorry'. Interviewees also indicated that SLO makes it easier to navigate and resolve problems or conflicts if they arise, to get access to local authorities (for example, the town mayor) if needed, and to undertake difficult actions, such as redundancies, with fewer negative repercussions than might otherwise be the case. Some interviewees believed that the visibility of volunteer activities helps to create brand equity, that is, it drives customer preference and loyalty over other brands. This is especially important in highly competitive markets such as cement. One interviewee believed that it may also increase supplier loyalty, as some suppliers check whether other companies have social responsibility programs.

4.4 Oscar Uaieca's Story

The personal story of one GAIV leader illustrates the benefits generated by the volunteer program for volunteers, communities and the company.

Oscar Uaieca is a supervisor at a Mozambique Cement mine (an InterCement company) in the municipality of Salamanga, in southern Mozambique. He lives with his family in Matola, close to the capital city, Maputo, and makes the 60 km journey to and from Salamanga every week.

Oscar has worked for InterCement since 2010. In his first years with the company, he was a member of the Matola Volunteer Group (GAIV) and participated in the annual Day of Doing Good. In 2015, he became leader of the GAIV in Salamanga. When asked why he took up the post on top of his responsibilities as supervisor, he said, 'I could see that there was so much need in the community. I saw that we could help to alleviate the suffering. I saw the opportunity to help the community and transform the lives of the children'.

The Salamanga GAIV has 10 members: six of them are employees at InterCement or two other companies working at the mine; the other four are community volunteers, including two teachers. The GAIV meets during the working week to discuss local needs and plan projects with local organisations. Voluntary work is usually undertaken on Saturdays, although volunteers sometimes work on Sundays if there is a lot to be done. Community volunteers are mobilised by local organisations, such as neighbourhood committees, together with the GAIV. Turnout is usually high, averaging 20 or more volunteers at each session.

The Salamanga volunteers have worked with the local school and the health centre. At the school, they have improved the buildings and installed electricity and running water, built sports facilities and a playground, and created a vegetable garden. The school uses food from the garden to provide meals for the children. The teachers report that the meals have helped to reduce absenteeism and to improve the children's concentration and ability to learn.

At the health centre, the volunteers built a dormitory to house pregnant women waiting to be admitted to hospital to give birth. Many pregnant women from surrounding their due date in case of premature delivery or complications. The dormitory provides them with shelter, a bed and cooking facilities while they wait.

to be able to offer something we don't even have in my home community to others'. his colleagues and by the community, and this helps to drive his dedication, even if it

different now. I know how to clearly communicate an idea, a goal, an objective. This

improve relations between the company and the community. He states, I see the government structures and traditional leaders, and they are grateful. They wouldn't have the resources to do these things themselves'.

5. Lessons Learned and Success Factors

Our research allowed us to identify factors that have enabled the InterCement volunteer program to mobilise high numbers of volunteers (employees and non-employees) and achieve the transformational benefits and impacts for individuals, communities and the business that we described above. Some of these factors make the program distinct from other corporate volunteer programs.



The establishment of the Institute as a legal entity distinct from the company strengthens alignment with the community

The Institute operates as a separate legal entity, rather than a social investment program within the company, as some corporate social responsibility programs. This brings certain benefits, such as giving greater visibility to the development work of the company, demonstrating commitment to local development and providing a clear entry point for the community to engage with the company.

High-quality support from a dedicated team of third-sector professionals facilitates learning and sharing of best practice across countries

Each country, with the exception of Argentina (which has a team in the Fundación Loma Negra), assigns one staff member or a small staff team to run the in-country volunteer program. These staff members usually do not have formal, professional experience in the third sector, in community development or in volunteer mobilisation. Institute staff are on-hand to guide and support these staff members, aiming to ensure quality in all volunteer activities and alignment of practices, according to the institutional guidelines. This is done through formal training, directed technical auidance and provision of information materials about the subject and/or inspiring practices. As the Institute team has a 'bird's-eye view' across all countries in which the program operates, it also facilitates sharing of initiatives and 'what works' across countries.

A structured approach to volunteerism, 0 including the provision of tried and tested methodologies and tools, provides a readymade platform for organised volunteer action

The work done by the CIVICOs and GAIVs to organise the Day of Doing Good and ongoing volunteer projects means that employees and non-employees looking for the opportunity to volunteer can readily engage with minimal additional effort. The approach and methodology have been refined over time on the basis of experience and systematic learning from tailored research¹² and periodic feedback. They have been found to be broadly effective, independent of culture and context, meaning that there is no need for each country and plant to 'reinvent the wheel'.

Engagement in voluntary activities among \odot managers and shareholders helps to motivate employee participation

Many shareholders, managers and directors participate in the annual Day of Doing Good, and some (although fewer) participate in ongoing volunteer projects. Some managers also actively encourage volunteerism among their staff and ensure that resources are available to them. GAIV members reported that it is easier to mobilise employees and community volunteers when plant managers are directly involved in GAIV activities and provide regular communication about volunteer opportunities. The demonstration of support for volunteerism from senior leadership (actions not words', as one interviewee stated) and the levelling of organisational hierarchy during volunteer activities (all employees work sideby-side) have helped to motivate employees to participate.

The freedom given to volunteers to select their own projects is key to volunteer mobilisation

This is distinct from many volunteer programs which pre-define the themes that can be funded. Many volunteers choose to support causes that are meaningful to them, such as improvements at their child's school or the town square that they frequent, allowing them and/or their families and friends to benefit directly from their efforts..

giving and solidarity to their children. It also means that volunteer activities undertaken outside working hours do not reduce time spent with family and friends.

The requirement to organise as a group helps to foster collaborative action

Volunteers must self-organise into groups of four or more volunteers, a combination of employees and community members. This condition helps to build capacity for collective action, to strengthen social capital (through values such as trust, reciprocity and solidarity) and, ultimately, helps communities to get on the path to more autonomous community development.

incentive to employee volunteerism

employees to volunteer. It provides a way for

employees to spend constructive time with

others that are important to them, as well as

an opportunity to teach important values about



The option to involve family members and friends in voluntary activities acts as a further This is distinct from some corporate volunteer programs that allow only their

12See, for example, Azevedo (2017) and Werneck et al (2012), both of which identify lessons learned from corporate volunteerism programs operated by the Camargo 28 Correa Group and the InterCement Institute.

GAIVs can draw on the expertise of other professionals within the company, enabling them to resolve unexpected challenges

For instance, they may need the advice or assistance of someone with expertise in marketing, administration or legal affairs. These professionals are allowed to provide assistance, whether as a voluntary contribution or during their working hours. This gives the community access to additional specialist resources and enables volunteers to move their projects through to completion, even when they come up against obstacles which they cannot themselves resolve.

The need to raise counterpart funding or in-kind contributions helps to mobilise community resources

The Institute sends resources only once counterpart contributions have been secured. This condition helps to develop skills, such as mobilisation of community partnerships and negotiation with other organisations to access resources, and helps to develop philanthropy (the donation of time, money and other resources) within communities.



The InterCement volunteer program has gone from strength to strength in the five years since the InterCement Institute came into being. In that time, it has achieved high employee engagement and driven transformational changes in communities with relatively low levels of investment. Satisfaction among company volunteers who responded to the survey is high – 47% said the program meets their hopes and expectations completely, and 51% said it meets their hopes and expectations partially. Below, Frances Hansford, the researcher, discusses some of the challenges facing the volunteer program, as well as opportunities for the Institute to continue to support evolution of the program and offer quality volunteer opportunities.

Maintain and extend employee participation

Compared with available benchmarks, the rate of employee participation in the InterCement volunteer program is relatively high. Nevertheless, almost all CIVICO and GAIV interviewees acknowledged volunteer mobilisation as a challenge. In the words of one CIVICO member, 'It's not easy; it's difficult, but it's not impossible'. Most interviewees observed that it was harder to engage employees than members of the community as volunteers.

There is a need both to sustain current levels of employee engagement and to mobilise new volunteers, particularly in countries with lower participation rates and where the proportion of employees who volunteer has fallen in the last two years. Some interviewees suggested that this fall-off in volunteer numbers is due to recent difficulties in the company, including a high number of redundancies and high turnover in senior leadership globally and nationally. It was suggested that the company needs to promote different and frequent strategies to value and recognise voluntary participation. This would help to re-establish employee identification with and loyalty to the company - an important pre-requisite to volunteer engagement - and to overcome the scepticism, voiced by some, that the volunteer program is about establishing brand equity rather than contributing to employee wellbeing.

awards.

offer VTO.

Interviewees and survey respondents suggested a number of ways in which employee participation could be increased. Two key strategies - diversification of volunteering opportunities and improved communications about the volunteer program - are discussed below. Others included: more formal training on volunteer mobilisation for CIVICO and GAIV members, alongside opportunities for them to share learning about what works to motivate volunteers across countries and plants: strengthening buy-in and active engagement in volunteer activities among managers and supervisors, and more proactive commitment to volunteerism among CEOs; and greater recognition of volunteers, particularly GAIV members and volunteers involved in ongoing projects, during plant meetings and with tangible forms of appreciation, such as certificates and

The most common reason given among survey respondents for not participating in the program was lack of time due to work or personal commitments. A few noted that volunteering was not compatible with shift work. Some interviewees raised the issue of Volunteer Time Off (VTO). Common practice among many corporations, VTO schemes allow employees to volunteer for a given number of working hours per year without a reduction in salary. InterCement currently chooses not to

Importantly, while there is a drive to continue to increase volunteer numbers, given the benefits that volunteering brings for volunteers, communities and the business, this should not come at the expense of a focus on quality in the volunteer program.



Consider further diversifying volunteer opportunities

While the criteria for project selection already provide a lot of freedom, some interviewees felt that they could be relaxed further to ensure that volunteers feel their ideas are valued. Some volunteers expressed an interest in new themes, such as combating drug use, addressing violence against women, supporting environmental conservation, strengthening cooperatives and neighbourhood associations, and promoting more entrepreneurship in the community. Some community volunteers suggested that there should be more consultation with community members, including the most disadvantaged, in order to understand local needs and define priorities.

Some interviewees felt that exploring opportunities for skills-based volunteering would help to increase and diversify the volunteer

base within the company. This strategy, which is already encouraged by the program, might be particularly attractive to younger employees. Skills-based volunteering allows volunteers to offer their specialist skills to community organisations that have skills gaps, for example, in developing a business plan, creating a communication or fund-raising strategy, or building a website. This approach allows community organisations to develop new capacities and enhance their impact. It allows employees to develop creativity and problemsolving from working under the resource constraints faced in community organisations. It may represent the possibility for individual volunteer activity, which at present is not in the guidelines for InterCement's volunteer program. Thus, an adjustment to the strategy may allow for other forms of professional engagement that are not currently involved in volunteer practices.

Skills-based volunteering may help to overcome another barrier to volunteering observed by some interviewees and survey respondents - that of distance for employees who don't live in the communities where their plant is located and volunteer projects are implemented. Over a third of survey respondents suggested that they would like online volunteering opportunities that they could undertake wherever they are.

Improve communications about the volunteer program

Many company volunteers interviewed suggested that the Institute strengthen its communications in order to increase visibility of the volunteer program within the company and to mobilise more volunteers. They felt that important information was not reaching all employees. This included information about practical issues, such as how the program works, how employees can get involved and how to form a GAIV, as well as more strategic issues, such as the values which underpin the company's investment in corporate volunteering and examples of the transformative results that can be achieved in volunteer projects. Lack of information about volunteering opportunities was also identified as a reason for not volunteering among some survey respondents that have never volunteered with the company.

Survey responses on the reasons employees volunteer may be helpful in crafting messages to motivate new volunteers. Threequarters (67%) of respondents said they saw the volunteer program as an opportunity to contribute to their community, one-third (35%) said it was an opportunity to contribute to the company and 29% volunteered because they wanted a new social activity. Sixteen percent saw it as an opportunity to learn new skills. Personal recommendations were

staff meetings.



and felt

also important: a quarter of respondents volunteered because it was recommended by a friend, colleague or line manager.

Interviewees suggested that a variety of communication channels should be used in order to reach more employees, including email, the company intranet, regular newsletters from the Institute, a volunteer manual and a video. Some suggested that more information on volunteering should be provided during the induction of new staff. Some also felt it was important to ensure that managers and team leaders are well informed and provide information and encouragement during routine

Community volunteers suggested that better dissemination of information about volunteer opportunities in the community through local media, social networks and digital marketing would help to mobilise more volunteers in the community.

Ensure that CIVICO and GAIV members have adequate time, resources and support

Some interviewees from CIVICOs GAIVs stated that they sometimes overburdened and stressed with the

top of other commitments, and expressed frustration that many in their offices or plants do not contribute. There is a risk that CIVICO and GAIV members may experience burnout, and disengage as a result. It may be necessary to ensure that adequate time is allocated to CIVICO and GAIV members to plan and manage volunteer activities and stakeholder relationships during the working day. This may require transferring some of their other responsibilities to colleagues while they serve on CIVICOs and GAIVs.

Involving more volunteers across the company and preparing them to take on leadership roles on CIVICOs and GAIVs would also help to spread the load and ensure that more employees benefit from the opportunity to learn and practice the soft skills needed to mobilise volunteers and to organise volunteer activities. This may be particularly appealing to younger employees, especially if the opportunity to develop new skills and leadership capacity is

responsibility of organising volunteer work on well-structured, recognised by line managers and part of a clear path to career progression. This could be accomplished in collaboration with the Human Resources Department.

> It may also make sense to give employees the opportunity to elect to join the CIVICO in their office or plant, alongside those who sit on the CIVICO due to their job function. This would ensure that the CIVICO still had members with key skills and knowledge, such as Human Resources and administration, while sharing the workload more broadly and providing others with the opportunity to gain new experience. Rotating membership on, say, a biennial basis may also help to bring new energy to the CIVICOs.

Reinforce monitoring, evaluation and learning **Drocesses**

A number of interviewees stated that they assume the volunteer program generates benefits for volunteers, communities and the business, but without data they could not say so with certainty. The Institute already analyses trends in short-term results to assess the effectiveness of the program (for example, numbers of community and corporate volunteers, beneficiaries and volunteer activities, and the percentage of employees who volunteer). It could do more by periodically tracking progress against expected mid-term and long-term results and impact of the program, thereby verifying if the program has the transformative impact set out in the program ToC and identifying what more could be done to extend its impact.

One way to do this would be to repeat periodically some of the survey questions used

for this study, for example, by incorporating them into the organisational climate survey. Another would be to conduct research (interviews, focus groups or surveys) periodically with a wider group of stakeholders - such as project beneficiaries, community organisations, local authorities, customers and suppliers - in order to understand their perspectives on the effectiveness of the volunteer program. These processes could be expanded to assess all of the Institute's social responsibility activities, not only the volunteer program.

The Institute could go further still and use the methodology developed by Mayer and Costa e Silva (2017) (see section 2) to estimate the return on investment for every dollar spent on the volunteer program (or its wider social responsibility activities). This would demonstrate the magnitude of social value generated by the program and help to build a strong business case to justify continued investment in and development of the program.

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