

Engaging Employees in Corporate Social Responsibility Projects

A Case Study from the Lufthansa Group Showcasing Experiences and
Lessons Gathered in Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria and Columbia

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Lufthansa Group, Cultural Transformation, Germany

&

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CHC Higher Education, Brisbane &
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Sustainability by fostering Entrepreneurship
through Education





Sustainability by fostering Entrepreneurship through Education

- About 25% depend on small business sector for their livelihood
- Solution to poverty alleviation & unemployment
(Mead & Liedholm, 1998)
- Criticism of pure economic model & call to invest in education
(Stieglitz, 1998; Frese, 2000)

More than 15 years later...

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Study Motivation

- Investigate ‘**special case**’ of **CSR** combining qualification and social project: Lufthansa Group Impact Week
- Analyse effects and contribute to **stakeholder view** of CSR
- What makes ‘Corporate Social Responsibility’ (CSR) projects **successful** and **sustainable**?

LUFTHANSA GROUP
Campus

Embedded video here

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



Impact Week

2 Days: Learn Design Thinking @ Train the Trainer



- Learn Design Thinking process
- Supported by international innovation experts
- 40-50 faculty members and Lufthansa employees

4 Days: Apply Design Thinking @ Impact Week



- Apply and coach others
- Training of 100 – 150 students
- 5 winning teams

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Theory: Definitional Approaches

- According to Dahlsrud (2006), there is both “**uncertainty as to how CSR should be defined**” (p. 1), and “an abundance of definitions, which are, according to Van Marrewijk (2003), **often biased toward specific interests**” (Dahlsrud 2006, p. 1). Hence Dahlsrud posits that “it is not possible to develop an unbiased definition” (p. 2, attributed to Berger and Luckmann 1966). Even so, his **analysis of 37 definitions of CSR** identifies **five dimensions** that can be discovered (in whole or in part) in all definitional approaches: The stakeholder, social, economic, voluntariness, and environmental dimension (Dahlsrud 2006, p. 5).
- **His analysis concludes that “the challenge for business is not so much to define CSR, as it is to understand how CSR is socially constructed in a specific context and how to take this into account when business strategies are developed.” (p. 6).**

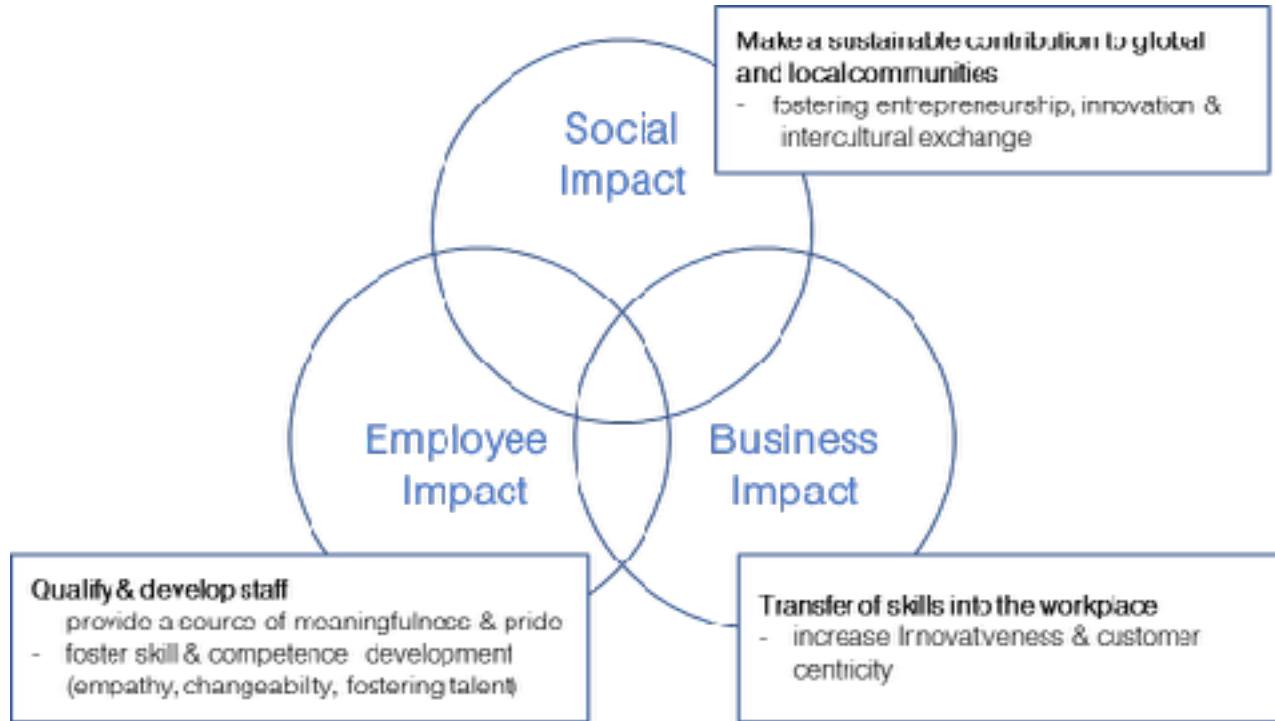
Theory: Selected Criticisms

- CSR can be open to the criticism that powerful corporate actors with strong business self-interests may be using 'Corporate Social Responsibility' as a front to **put their own social and/or sustainability 'spin' on their principal raison d'être: Profit maximisation** (Friedman 1970, 2007; Lenz et al. 2017).
- Other criticisms include the charges that CSR in practice promotes the so-called '**greenwashing**' or '**window dressing**' of unsustainable business practices (Fallon 2013, p. 48; White 2008), or may even be employed as a means to **pre-empt the watchdog function of national governments** seeking to regulate the actions of powerful multinational corporations (Shamir 2011; White 2008).

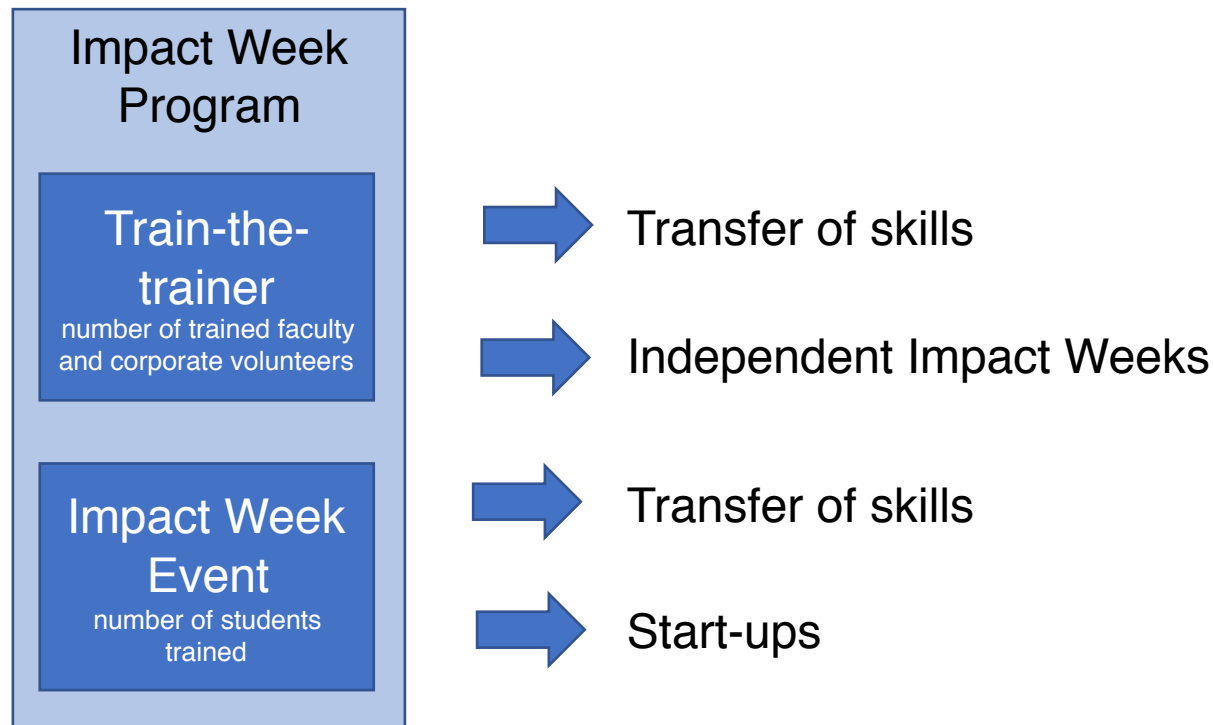
Theory: Research Contribution

- **Despite the significance of CSR in contemporary business practice (Crane et al. 2009), there is little comprehensive, analytic study of how companies actually engage and invest in social projects, which remains “highly ambiguous” (van Oosterhout and Heugens 2009, p. 6).**

Impact Week Targets: Social, Employee, & Business Impact



Anticipated Effects of Impact Week



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Case Study — Methodological Design Features

- **Expressed in simple language, “[t]he basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case.” (Bryman 2016, p. 60). A case study may be especially useful in situations requiring in-depth evaluation, assessment or analysis (Stake 1995).**
- According to Creswell (2014),

“Case studies are a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time.” (p. 14; attributed to Stake 1995, and Yin 2009, 2012)

Case Studies — Five Benefits

Even though case studies are open to the criticism that they are “only one case, so how can we generalise?” (Punch 2014, p. 122), their perceived benefits outweigh this potential weakness for at least five important reasons:

1. Generalisability may not always constitute the primary study intention but a “case may be so important, interesting or misunderstood that it deserves study in its own right” (Punch 2014, p. 122);
2. Even so, dissimilarities should also not be overstated: “Clearly, every case that can be studied is in some respects unique. But every case is also, in some respects, similar to other cases.” (Punch 2014, p. 123);
3. Case studies are consistently employed as effective teaching tools (Bryman 2016; R. B. Johnson and Christensen 2017) in situations where “historical cases are studied in great detail and are used to train managers, doctors, lawyers, and so on” (Punch 2014, p. 124) to prepare them to deal with future scenarios;

Case Studies — Five Benefits

4. Case studies enable both in-depth analyses of complex circumstances and contexts and are therefore well-suited to facilitate comparative analyses across “two or more cases” (Bryman 2016, p. 67) through “cross-case analysis” (R. B. Johnson and Christensen 2017, p. 437);
5. Finally, the capacity of the case study design to engage and manage complex research contexts surpasses the capacity of other research designs (Punch 2014), wherefore case studies are also an effective means for uncovering and conceptually describing opportunities for future research (Punch 2014, p. 124).

In short, “[s]ome of the best-known studies in sociology are based on this kind of design” (Bryman 2016, p. 60).

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Stakeholders, Facts and Figures

	First IW	Lufthansa Sponsored IWs				Independent IWs		
	Nairobi 2015	Nairobi 2016*	Bogota 2017	Kigali 2017	Lagos 2017	Nairobi 2017	Kibera 2018	Σ
Organisers	4	2	3	3	2	3	2	19
Lead Trainer(s)	n.a.	1	1	2	1	1	1	7
Professional volunteers or multipliers**	20	7	5	6	10	11**	2**	61
Coaches trained:								
Local faculty/multipliers		20	24	22	26		15	107
Corporate volunteers (incl. LHG)	n.a.	11 (5)	11 (6)	12 (9)	16	n.a.	1	51
Students / youth trained	100	122	75	100	144	56	22	619

* beginning of Lufthansa Group (LHG) sponsoring and engagement in the IW.

** from previous IWs.



Nairobi 2015



Kibera 2018



Independent

Nairobi 2016



Lagos 2017



Nairobi 2017



Independent

Kigali 2017



Bogota 2017



First Independent Impact Week Nairobi



‘We instituted tutorials that have shown a quicker uptake for programming and a heightened interest in learning.’

(faculty member, IW Nairobi 2016)

Independent Impact Week Kibera



- 29 year old Stichez, born and raised in Kibera
- Participant of Impact Week Nairobi 2016
- Junior Coach in Rwanda 2017
- Organizer Impact Week Kibera 2018

Independent Impact Week Kibera



Independent Impact Week Kibera



“Everyone showed who they really are and everyone was open and free and we really collaborated.”

“I was very skeptical in the beginning but this really came out to be a new level of fulfillment concerning the learning experience and team work.”

“We really created a family. Now we are together.”

“

Counterfighters - Ensures you get authentic drugs

Counterfeit drugs are a huge problem in
kenya

Counterfighter solve it through SMS
validation

Currently beta test at one hospital

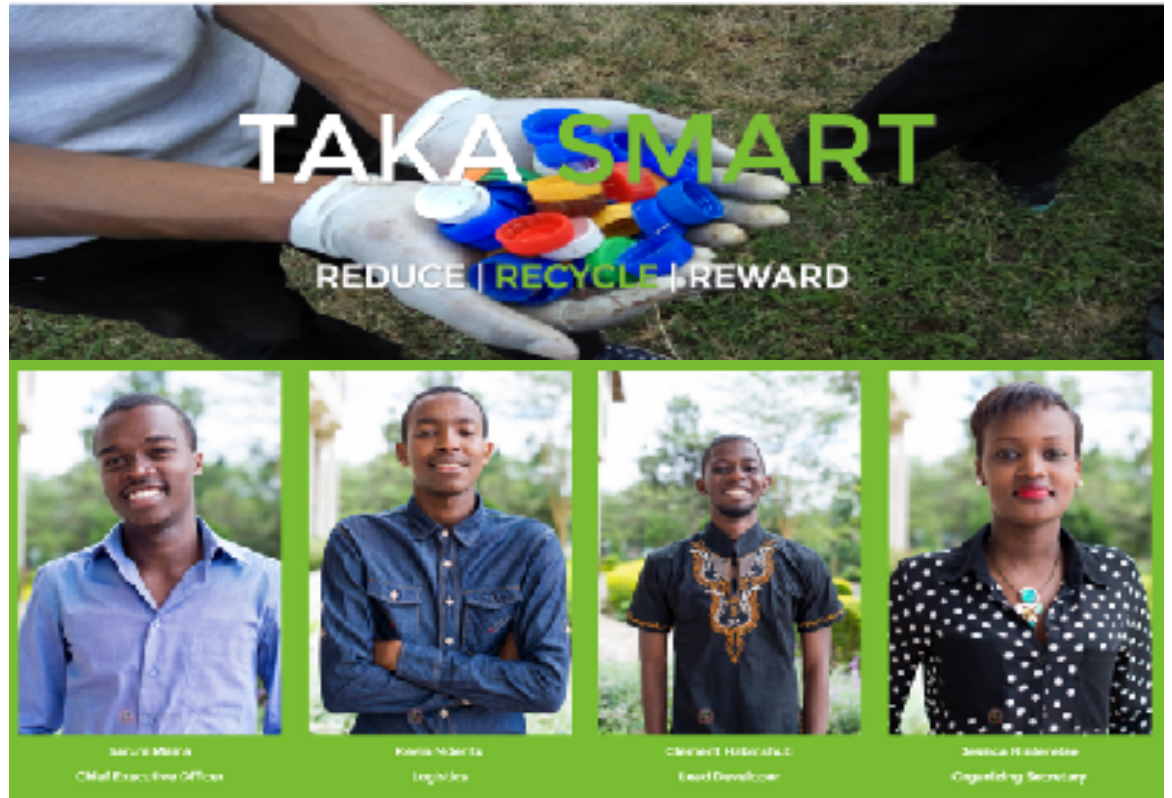
→ <http://counterfighters.org/>



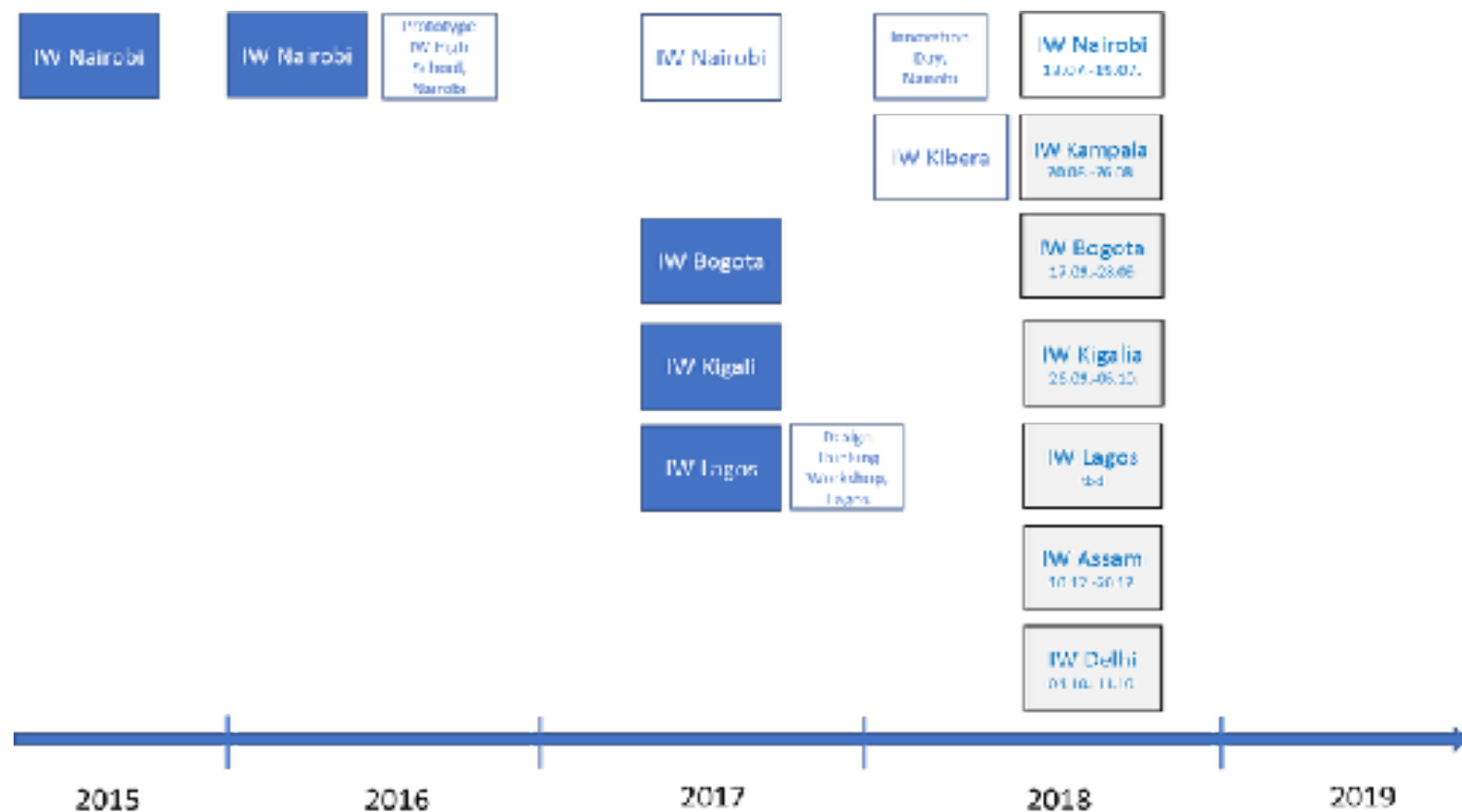
Taka Smart - Reduce, recycle, reward

Redeem plastic for SMS
credits

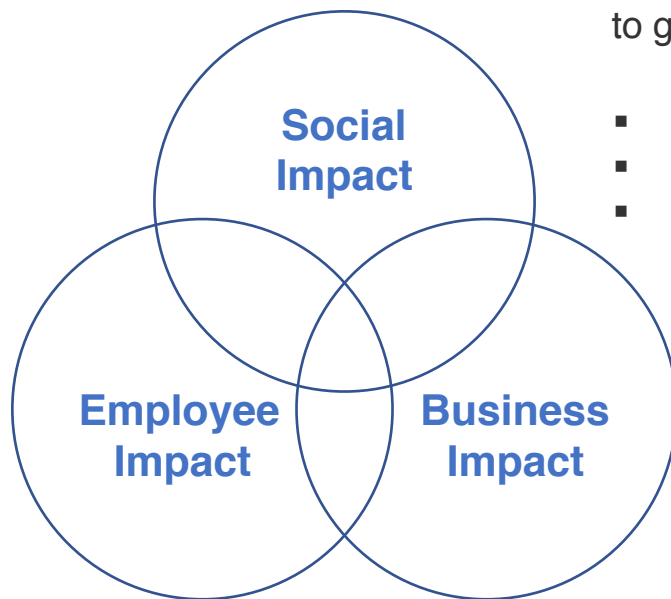
→ <http://takasmart.co/>



Outcomes Impact Weeks and Outlook



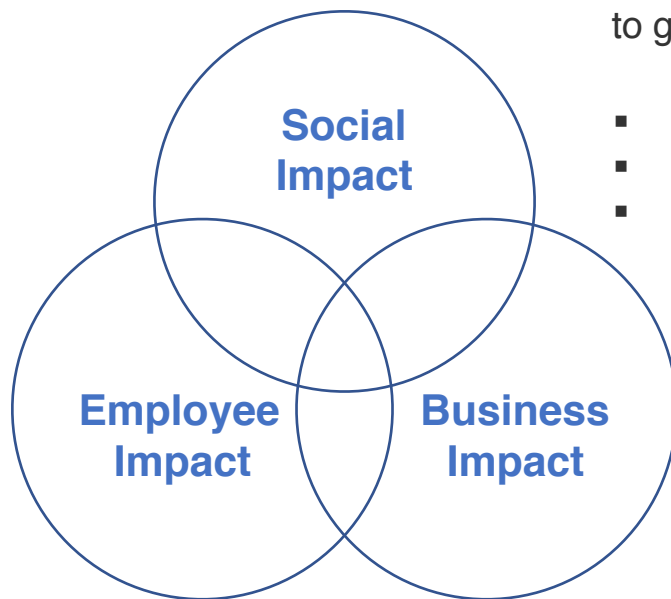
Impact Week Effects: Social, Employee, & Business Impact



Make a sustainable contribution to global and local communities

- Transfer of skills
- Independent Impact Weeks
- Some start-up activity

Impact Week Effects: Social, Employee, & Business Impact



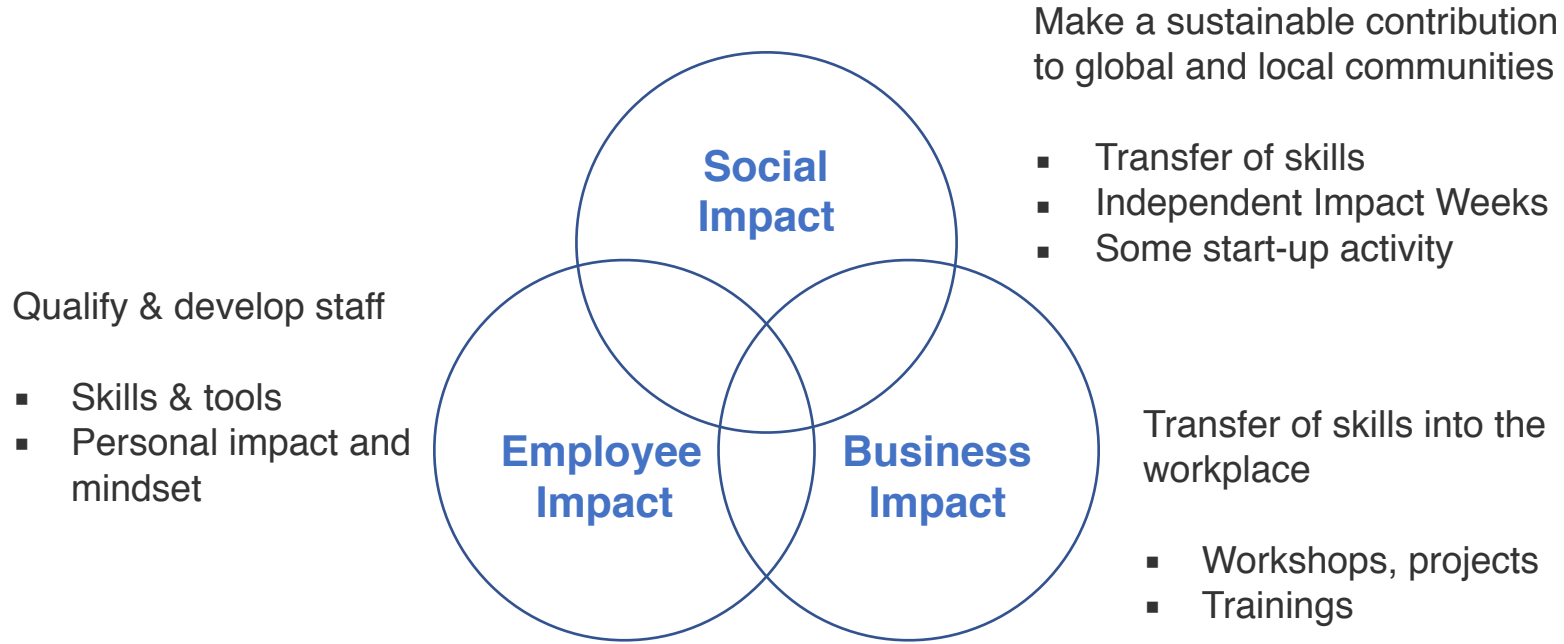
Make a sustainable contribution to global and local communities

- Transfer of skills
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Transfer of skills into the workplace

- Workshops, projects
- Trainings

Impact Week Effects: Social, Employee, & Business Impact



Impact on Volunteers

„Impact Week was a unique experience that will have a lasting effect on my further life“

(professional volunteer, IW Kigali 2017)

„I am sure this is going to be something to remember lifelong. Not only because of the people, the coaches, the country, the climate, the conditions, the food... but of what has made me grow as a person and as a professional.“

(professional volunteer, IW Lagos 2017)

„Impact Week was one of the most intense and rewarding events, I have ever experienced and broadened my horizon in so many ways I could have never imagined.“

(corporate volunteer, IW Lagos 2017)

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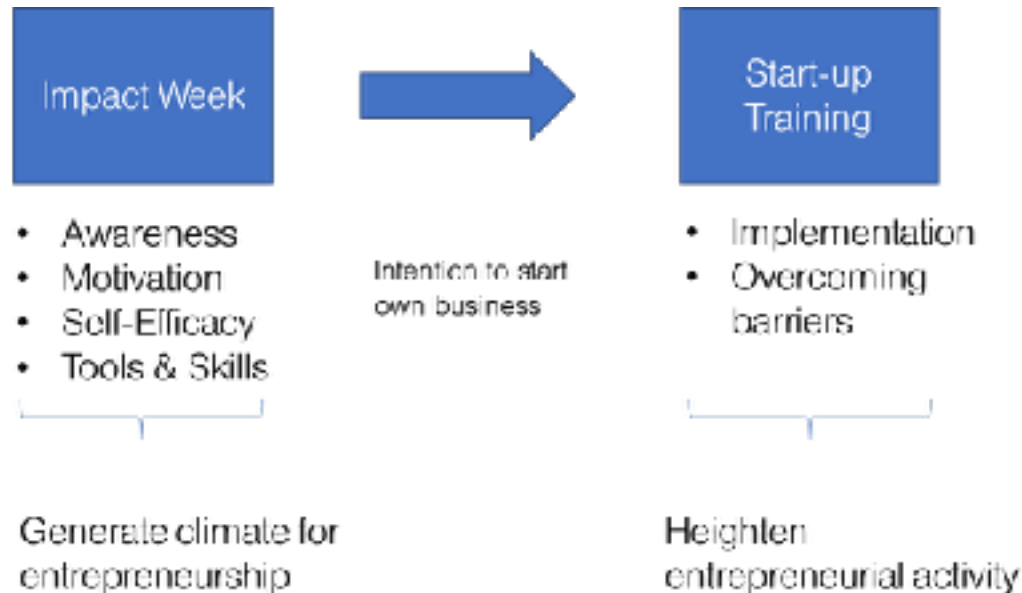
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Limitations and Future Research

- Not designed as training evaluation (see Gielnik et al. 2015)
- Limited evidence of actual start-ups following the Impact Weeks



Future Research

- Employee Impact / Individual Level:
 - Engagement at work?
 - Relationships with Global Citizenship?
 - What changed? (e.g. 'life changing event'; human centrality)
- Business Impact / Org. Level:
 - Effect on employer brand / war for talent
 - Meaningfulness & purpose in organizations
 - Human centric organizations in theory and practise

Future Research: Making organizations more meaningful?

‘We often take as given that an organization’s purpose to produce economic value; and, although **economic value** can often add to **social value**, sometimes it does not. This **disjuncture** raises the question of meaningfulness. The **meaningfulness** of an organization is its expression of purpose, values or worth.

It involves a sense of **significance that goes beyond material success** or profitability; rather, it highlights how organizations can play a larger and more positive role in the world. It is an approach embraced by the next generation of workers, the millennials (in their mid-to-late 30s), who often **focus on making a positive difference** in the world and a contribution to society - with organizations, not in spite of them.’

Mary Ann Glynn, 2016

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Summary and Conclusions

- 7 projects in 4 countries with over 800 people
- ‘Snowball effect’ continues
- Long term social impact in local communities
- Long term employee impact; application in business
- Advantage of combining CSR projects with qualification (business relevance, immediate impact)
- Success factors: Organic, common vision and voluntary nature of stakeholder engagement
- Human centricity vs utilitarian view



James, Julia, Stichez, Kendy



Connecting Worlds – strengthening Cohesion

100 Excellent Places in the Land of Ideas

Impact Week – a CSR
Program to foster
entrepreneurship, innovation
and intercultural exchange
through design thinking

Germany
Land of Ideas
●●●●●●●●●●
Landmark 2018





"Are there any questions?"