

**REPORT FROM THE FRONT-STAGE – AN ETHNOGRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> WORLD**

**PETROLEUM CONGRESS**

ROMY KRAEMER

&

GAIL WHITEMAN

Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

Department of Business-Society Management

P.O. Box 1738

3000 DR Rotterdam

The Netherlands

[rkraemer@rsm.nl](mailto:rkraemer@rsm.nl)

[gwhiteman@rsm.nl](mailto:gwhiteman@rsm.nl)

Abstract:

The world's most costly and elaborate CSR programmes are being implemented by multinationals from the oil and gas sector. The World Petroleum Congress (WPC) - according to its website - is the "Olympics of the oil and gas industry" where national governments, private as well as national oil firms, and stakeholders from around the globe come together to "set out the way forward for the petroleum sector". For businesses, the congress presents an excellent public relations exercise in terms of their corporate social responsibility display. Thus, the congress is a unique opportunity to assess the front-stage activities of the oil and gas

industry as a whole represented by a wide array of companies, governments, and associated firms.

The present paper presents an ethnographic account of the 19<sup>th</sup> WPC held in Madrid in July 2008. It critically assesses the industry image of sustainability conveyed at the congress, and takes a special look at the display of corporate social responsibility vis-à-vis communities that are affected by oil and gas operations. The findings reveal how the industry deals with societal expectations regarding sustainability and how those issues are distinctively framed within the industry and taken up as part of their CSR. We also show that there are a number of important inconsistencies that blur the 'perfect' image of a responsible and sustainable industry and uncover 'blind spots' in the vision of the industry's CSR machine.

## 1. Introduction

“To live. To transform the world. To conquer the present. Petroleum is the future. It is creation. It is growing. It is growing together. [...] Petroleum makes it possible for our world to be like our ideas. In Madrid energy is transformed into quality of life. Into sustained, respectful growth. The world in transition. Delivering energy for sustainable growth.”<sup>1</sup>

In the 1950s, the sociologist Erving Goffman illustrated how people actively engage in lengthy and dramatic performances to build and sustain their reputations in everyday life. Goffman compared such ‘front-stage’ behaviour with its darker, more realistic ‘back-stage’ twin to uncover how social meaning is attributed to everyday action. In this paper, we apply this conceptual approach to understand how the petroleum industry engages in dramatic performances in a collective attempt to attribute socially responsible meaning to the industry’s everyday actions. The opening quote above is taken from the official 19<sup>th</sup> World Petroleum Congress (WPC) video. We argue that it perfectly captures the aspiration of the international petroleum industry to present itself as a responsible industry that delivers a much needed good to society while ensuring sustainable growth for all. Similarly, the websites, advertising campaigns, codes of conduct, public statements, and various reports issued by oil and gas multinational corporations give the strong impression that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a core business value embraced by all actors in the industry – one of the ‘myths’ of CSR according to some authors (Lund-Thomsen, 2007b).

We suggest that this is merely the front-stage (Goffman, 1959) of an industry that traditionally suffers from a bad reputation deeply rooted in the public mind thanks to events such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill and PR disasters like Shell’s attempt to sink the Brent Spar

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.19wpc.com/video/congress-video.php>

into the North Sea. More profound, the adverse effects that the exploitation of national resources can have on local and national economies<sup>2</sup> and the gravity and strength of impacts on local communities and environments (e.g. Bass, Parikh, Czebiniak, & Filbey, 2004; Dias, 2005; Evans, Goodman, & Lansbury, 2002; O'Rourke & Connolly, 2003; Salim, 2003; Stavenhagen, 2003; Whiteman, 2009; Whiteman & Mamen, 2002; Yakovleva, 2005) are reasons for the negative industry image.

The reputational threat to the oil and gas industry is comparable to what happens in the mining industry which also suffers from a bad public image (MMSD, 2002). Reputation threats stem from growing stakeholder activism, particularly by NGOs and Indigenous Peoples, many of whom fervently resist oil extraction on their lands. Indigenous Peoples often have legitimacy in the eyes of the public eyes because of their historic marginalization, traditional land occupation, and the disproportionately negative effects of natural resource extraction – be it fossil fuels or minerals (Davis & Softestad, 1995; Finer, Jenkins, Pimm, Keane, & Ross, 2008; Kapelus, 2002; O'Rourke et al., 2003). Indigenous Peoples and other affected communities struggling with proposed oil development on their territory are supported by NGOs and transnational advocacy networks (Keck & Sikkink, 1999). Especially the large players within the petroleum industry and those with a brand name and image to 'lose', are regular targets of civil society groups be it on the topic of climate change, environmental devastation, human rights violations, rocketing oil prices, exorbitant earnings of individual firms or lack of compensation of local communities. The 'shocking' images associated with those campaigns stick in the public mind. Every reader will at least recognise one of the following pictures: poor African children playing in front of burning gas flares in Nigeria; a dead sea bird covered in crude oil being held up by a fiercely looking environmentalist standing on a shore soaked with spilt oil. It is those images together with the

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<sup>2</sup> As extensively discussed in the literature on the 'resource curse' (see e.g. Kolstad, I., Wiig, A., & Williams, A. forthcoming. Mission improbable: Does petroleum-related aid address the resource curse? *Energy Policy*, Sachs, J. D., & Warner, A. M. 1995. Natural resource abundance and economic growth, *NBER Working paper series*: W5398).

public criticism in the media (especially in times of high oil prices) of excessive earnings that lead to negative associations in the majority of people when asked about the petroleum industry. Further, within their host countries, multinational oil companies' reputation has been decreasing over the years following a growing awareness of governments as to the colonial tendency to exploit resources without any value added in the community or national economy. Nationalisations, or the threat of not being awarded licenses in the future come with bad reputation with the government.

Managing corporate and industry reputation therefore is a necessity for the international petroleum industry and has a variety of benefits. A good corporate reputation has been linked to competitive advantage e.g. in attracting investors or accessing capital markets (Fombrun, 1996, Pruzan, 2001 #982). Conversely, negative reputational effects can result in difficulties to recruit qualified labour (Cable & Turban, 2006; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993, Pruzan, 2001 #982). Although there is no direct evidence yet for the specific case of policies directed at governing the behaviour of corporations, the political science literature suggests a general relationship between public opinion and the implementation of policies, be it domestic or foreign policies (Page & Shapiro, 1983). A negative public opinion therefore most likely contributes to policy changes that restrict (at least on paper) oil companies' behaviour, e.g. in the form of 'extraction taxes' or the requirement to consult with affected indigenous communities as in the Philippines. Especially in Europe, NGOs and civil society are actively involved in the setting of standards and formulation of legislation regarding corporate social responsible behaviour (Fombrun, 2005).

Advertising and sustainability reporting are common ways for firms to frame their public image. This occurs at both the individual firm and industry levels. Individual oil companies' advertising is complemented by industry-wide image campaigns. For instance, the American Petroleum Institute in 2007 launched an all-America image campaign with an open end budget carried out by the same company, Harris Interactive Inc., that also ran

multimillion image campaigns for the US plastics and milk industry when they saw their public image deteriorate. CSR projects, to promote oil and gas companies as ‘responsible local citizens’ or ‘good neighbours’ to their local communities, are another major strategic tool to tackle the traditionally bad reputation of the industry and achieve legitimation by key stakeholders. In fact, oil companies channel millions of dollars into their numerous CSR initiatives every year (Frynas, 2005) and corporate reporting on social and environmental issues and the associated mitigation of negative impacts is becoming ever more extensive and sophisticated in order to alter firms’ public image. The high spending (although still dwarfed by annual profits of several billion USD) and frantic activity in terms of PR and reporting might lead some to depict oil and gas companies as frontrunners of the CSR movement (Wheeler, Fabig, & Boele, 2002). In their ubiquity those activities by the few large players in the industry also feed one of the ‘myths’ of CSR: that it is common and widespread, while in reality it is only being embraced by comparatively few companies in some locations around the world (Lund-Thomsen, 2007a).

Public corporate events, such as fairs and trade shows are another means by which firms and industries try to communicate with relevant audiences and shape their image in society and with key stakeholders. To date, corporate events and trade fairs have been recognised for their central function of market communication for individual firms (Gopalakrishna, Lilien, Williams, & Sequeira, 1995). Their potential and function regarding the support of overarching industry strategies, however, has not previously been a subject of research.. We argue that those events, besides having a communication function to the outside world, also set an industry-wide direction; for instance, they launch and disseminate powerful slogans (“spin”) regarding issues of central importance for the industry that then will be taken up by individual firms when dealing with those issues. They set the tone for the industry as a whole regarding current challenges and provide directions on how to deal with them. Industry events are therefore a way to study the current discourse on central issues and they provide an

indication of future developments and trends in the industry. Studying a central event like the WPC, where all important players of an industry are represented, will deliver rich insights into individual firm representations and enable an assessment of the industry as a whole with respect to how it communicates with and wants to be perceived by its stakeholders.

This study has two main goals: First we conceptually enrich the CSR and corporate reputation literature by integrating the sociological theory of Goffman on the presentation of self in everyday life. Secondly, we present ethnographic findings on the 19<sup>th</sup> World Petroleum Congress in Madrid and discuss how Goffman's concepts provide insight into the impression management techniques of the oil and gas industry. The petroleum industry, having to grapple with a variety of negative images, is an ideal context for a study on impression management (Fombrun & Rindova, 2000, Hooghiemstra, 2000 #985). Finally, we also contribute to the corporate communication literature by analysing impression management at a central corporate event. This allows us to analyze both scripted and 'live' dramatic performances of the industry involving the direct participation of industry 'elites,' as opposed to restricting our analysis to more static texts like corporate reports as it is usually the case (White & Hanson, 2002, Hooghiemstra, 2000 #985). Our paper is organized as follows: First we will review the relevant theory on corporate reputation and image construction before introducing the event analysed for this study. Section four will then present our findings, first relating to the event per se and then according to Goffman's concepts of front stage and framing. Section five will present our conclusions and discussion of the findings and make recommendations for future studies.

## **2. Theory**

The link and reciprocal relation between corporate identity – as the action of presenting the corporation to the outside world – and the perceived corporate image is well understood (Hooghiemstra, 2000). Corporations today have to withstand not only the

challenges of the real marketplace but increasingly, company success and competitive advantage is decided on the “marketplace of ideas” (Mahon & Wartick, 2003: 29). As we have argued above, the multinational petroleum industry faces significant public reputation threats and therefore reacts (in part) with extensive corporate communication and image building. Communication about corporate behaviour is more flexible than the firm behaviour itself and will therefore be used strategically by corporations to achieve a positive external evaluation (Van Riel, 1995).

The public image of a firm is closely linked to the perspective of organisational members on their organisation which craft its organisational identity (Scott & Lane, 2000). Scott and Lane argue that besides the creation of a public image for achieving strategic resources, impression management has a second objective, that of helping managers to explore the “true” nature of the organisation and making sense of it, assuming a relation between organisational and managers’ own identity.

CSR, although in itself behavioural in nature, is closely linked to firms’ communication machines and heavily used for image building. Acknowledging the close link between PR and CSR, some authors even recommend to let marketers design CSR programmes (Asongu, 2007). This reads like a slap in the faces of all those who believe in the strategic promise of CSR as an opportunity for firms to ‘do good’ for societies because it degrades those projects to mere marketing efforts which are often superficial and short-lived. Marketable, highly visible CSR projects with a limited duration designed to appease home country and not benefit host country stakeholders (Kraemer & Van Tulder, 2007) would be the logical result – a criticism that has already been directed at firms’ CSR (Barkemeyer, 2007) and especially at the CSR and community development projects of the extractive industry (Frynas, 2005; Hilson, 2006; Ite, 2007; Pegg, 2006; Whitmore, 2006, Newell, 2005 #305). Therefore, in focusing on CSR gives us the opportunity to focus on the link between

the behavioural and the communicative acts of the corporation and at the same time the tensions arising from this link, leading to an imperative for the corporation to manage its identity while suffering the “certain uncertainty of any attempt to do so” (White et al., 2002: 289).

Erving Goffman’s work on the management of the self “holds much analytical promise for scholars undertaking empirical studies of human interaction” (Manning, 2008: 682). In a classic study, Goffman presents an analysis of the structures of social encounters from the perspective of the dramatic performance. He shows us exactly how people use such 'fixed props' as houses, clothes, and job situations; how they combine in teams resembling secret societies; and, how they adopt discrepant roles and communicate out of character. Goffman takes us 'backstage' too, into the regions where people both prepare their images and relax from them; and he demonstrates in painful detail what can happen when a performance falls flat. Some of his core concepts such as front stage/back stage, performance, frame analysis and stigma have been applied to a multitude of topics from the analysis of professional communication (Barton, 2004), over strategies of dealing with ones’ stigmatised occupation (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999), to the organisation as theatre and theatre in organisations (Schreyägg & Häpfl, 2004). Goffman’s theoretical framework is also frequently applied to the study of corporate reputation although criticised for lack of thoroughness (White et al., 2002). In line with most corporate reputation research that focuses on written materials published by the corporation, White and Hanson (2002) analyse an annual report to explore corporate impression management by a company in the paper industry. They use five of Goffman’s processual categories: defining the situation, holding secrets, invoking tact, passing the discreditable, and covering ‘dirty work’. However, there are few if any studies in the corporate reputation or CSR literature which apply Goffman’s conceptual approach to powerful industry events which clearly are performative in nature.

We will employ part of those concepts together with the front stage/back stage metaphor which seems ideally suited to the analysis of corporate events such as trade fairs, press conferences, and other public appearances of the corporation which are laden with front stage interactions between firms and their stakeholders. At the same time there is a back stage to those events – when lights turn off in the exhibition hall and reporters pack their microphones or when lapses occur in the performance of CEOs in the face of uneasy questions by the audience, the corporation lifts its veil of PR and allows us to catch a glimpse of what is behind. Using Goffman's (1959) words, it is the 'signs given' – in the deliberate attempt to manage the corporate image that can be juxtaposed to the 'signs given off' – unintentional lapses in the performance that are interesting to observe when studying corporate events. In certain situations, organisations become "visible or present" e.g. when performing celebrations such as holiday parties, faculty meetings, or retreats (Manning, 2008: 684). Public corporate events will not enable us to perceive this as clear as during the events Manning had in mind, but they nevertheless offer the possibility of a view on the underbelly of organisations and organising.

Framing, another of Goffman's central concepts, arguably is a powerful tool for influencing public opinion if done by influential elites (Druckman, 2001). It is long known in individual psychology that framing influences peoples' decisions and renders human rationality an elusive concept (Tversky & Kahnemann, 1987) and now employed for example in the political science (e.g Druckman, 2004; Jacoby, 1999) and social movement literature (for a review and critique see Benford, 2007). According to Druckman (2001), framing occurs when elites influence the aspects of an issue that are taken into account by the target audience when making up their opinion on the issue. Framing describes how an issue is being presented and discussed. For example the controversial issue of gun ownership is framed as 'gun control' (who should be allowed to own a gun) by opponents and discussed in terms of 'gun safety' (how guns kept in the home should be secured) by proponents (Mahon et al., 2003).

Corporate reputation is another field where a framing perspective has been used and linked to attempts of creating a positive corporate image (Mahon et al., 2003). We will add to this last stream of literature and explore how issue framing at the WPC was used, together with containment of issues, to alleviate criticisms and create a positive image of the oil industry. We feel that so far the corporate communication and reputation literature did not pay attention to the framing of issues by corporations while at the same time taking into account the link between CSR and reputation building. Our contribution therefore will be the analysis of the framing of the organizational self and the combination of Goffman's theoretical contribution with the corporate reputation and CSR literature.

### **3. Method**

In this paper, ethnographic methodology was used to analyse a single corporate event, the World Petroleum Congress 2008, and study the process of identity construction of the petroleum industry. Large corporate events in the sense of professional gatherings like the WPC are mainly being studied from a marketing perspective regarding their efficiency in terms of generating profit for the participating firms and with respect to the motives of their participants (e.g. Godar & O'Connor, 2000; Gopalakrishna et al., 1995). Economic geographers also study trade fairs, conventions, congresses, and exhibitions for the impact of temporary proximity on e.g. knowledge creation and dissemination (Maskell, Bathelt, & Malmberg, 2004). Other scholars (Whyte, 2007) use corporate events as convenient occasions to interview representatives of a specific industry or field of interest. According to Van Riel (1995: 27) corporate image refers to firms' external picture in society while its identity is made up of the "forms of expression that a company uses to offer insight into its nature". The WPC is one of those expressions offering insights into the 'self' of individual companies and the petroleum industry at large. More specifically, at the WPC the elite of the petroleum industry is present in person to convey their ideas of the corporate and industry self to the

outside world. Therefore we feel that the WPC offers a unique and much more direct way for studying the management of the self' in the petroleum industry than would be the study of corporate reports or other publications.

This study does neither attempt to recount the WPC in its entirety nor to cover all topics discussed during the congress. Rather the event was visited with a pre-defined focus on the issues of sustainability, CSR and corporate-community relations and how they are communicated to the audience during the event. Data from observation, formal and informal interviews, field notes and the collection of artefacts are included in our ethnographic approach (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Fieldwork was conducted at the 19<sup>th</sup> World Petroleum Congress in Madrid that was held from 29<sup>th</sup> of June to 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2008 and attended by the lead author as a delegate, funded by the WPC grants programme for (PhD) students<sup>3</sup>. According to its website, the triennial World Petroleum Congress (WPC) is the “Olympics of the oil and gas industry” where national governments, private as well as national oil firms, and stakeholders from around the globe come together to “set out the way forward for the petroleum sector”. It is the most important international technical conference and public exhibition of the petroleum industry organised by the World Petroleum Council, the elected representation of the petroleum industry. In 2008 over 4.300 delegates, 500 CEOs, 35 ministers, and 260 companies participated, and over 14.500 people visited the 35.000m<sup>2</sup> exhibition area in Madrid’s IFEMA trade fair centre<sup>4</sup>. The list of attendees already indicates the main stakeholders targeted at the WPC: competitors and associated firms (mainly consultancies and supplier companies), governments of petroleum rich countries, the media, and the general public.

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<sup>3</sup> Intended to support students of technical subjects such as Petroleum Science in order to attract potential future talents to the industry, the lead author was not eligible for application. However, putting an emphasis on the increasing relevance of ‘soft issues’ (e.g. social responsibility) for the petroleum industry and the need to support experts in this area of study, application for the grant was successful.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.19wpc.com/> (31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2009)

Data was collected throughout the congress by the lead author who attended keynote speeches, plenary sessions, and ministerial sessions (presenting country profiles to attract investors), visited the exhibition area, and engaged in conversations or conducted informal interviews with delegates, visitors, and organisers of the congress. Because of the focus of the research on sustainability and CSR, most of the conversations and informal interviews were conducted in the 'Social Responsibility Global Village' (referred to in the following as 'CSR village' or simply 'CSR stand'). And the speeches and keynotes visited were the ones that would be associated with either of the topics.

The data set consists of over 20 hours of voice recorded information from various sessions and conversations along with photos of the site and numerous collected written items from individual firms' publications to official conference publications in addition to the information provided on the WPC website. Field notes were made where voice recording was not possible. A separate field diary was kept for noting personal impressions and reflections during the event (Hammersley et al., 2007). Our approach of studying a single corporate event confined the length of time spent 'in the field' to the duration of the congress.

#### **4. Findings**

In this section we present our ethnographic findings in two ways: i) on the Performance of the WPC as an impression management event, and ii) on their strategic use of containment and framing to narrowly define sustainability and corporate social responsibility in a favourable manner, thus avoiding difficult reputational issues within this broader topic.

## WPC: The Performance

Our findings show that the WPC as an event consists of three different types of performance: a virtual performance, a main stage, and the side-performance of the CSR Village. These are described below.

### The Virtual Performance: Good Words and Policies

The website of the WPC is the virtual presentation of the petroleum industry's desired image for the corporate event. Our analysis indicates that the website has the primary intention of attracting participants and guests to the congress and to establish a spotless and high-profile image of the event. There is no back-stage behaviour on display virtually. Instead, the visual and textual narratives seem focused on generating excitement and high expectations about the value of attending this high profile event which is central to the industry. The website emphasizes its legitimacy by showcasing its partnership with the major companies and by demonstrating that elite industry executives will be present alongside a continuously growing number of guests every year.

In terms of CSR the reader can expect to find the 'Global CSR village' located in the centre of the exhibition hall where projects will be highlighted that "advance sustainability, human rights and cooperation to the benefit of society". The website further reads:

"Sustainable development, stakeholder engagement, community involvement, and societal expectations are a few examples of other topic areas envisioned for the Global Village. At the centre of the Global Village will be a well spring of knowledge and a fair trade refreshment centre. Daily offerings will include: distinguished guests, music, art, literature, hands-on activities and opportunities to learn first hand from NGO and industry partner initiatives worldwide."

Those statements raise large expectations as to the importance of CSR at the event and the efforts that are implemented by companies in this direction. Also regarding the event itself as a ‘happening’ in its own right, high expectations were created for example by announcing the opening dinner with the highlight of a performance by famous opera singer Julio Iglesias together with one of Spain’s most famous dance performers.

### The Performance Setting: The WPC as a Stage

“First, there is a ‘setting’, involving furniture, décor, physical layout, and other background items that supply the scenery and stage props, for the spate of human action played out before, within, or upon it.” (Goffman, 1959: 22).

*The main stage:* The main stage of the WPC created the image of elitism and grandeur and was truly impressive. Registration for the conference was in the exclusive Intercontinental Hotel in Madrid. While the website itself offers no backstage information about attendance, qualitative informal interviews suggest that the WPC is only important for a certain audience members and they know who they are even (or aren’t) even if the website does not provide such clarity. A backstage discussion (over email) with an industry insider indicated that the reputation and image building nature of the event was well known but that insiders also perceived to be detached from the ‘real work’ done by the engineering part of the industry. For example, when asked about his potential attendance of the event, a senior manager within British Petroleum replied: “The World Petroleum Congress seems to attract executives and commercial folk, rather than die-hard engineers like myself.”

The exclusive setting of the Intercontinental Hotel, where registration took place, created significant pressure for attendees to conform to certain unspoken rules and display. For instance, when the lead author entered the Intercontinental wearing flip flops, she faced a room filled with staring faces. She was mistaken as a member of the press instead of a

delegate because her appearance did not conform with the formal and business suit attire of the other delegates. In general, the discrepant role of the lead author's participation was recognised throughout the congress by other participants and repeatedly framed as 'press member' as other participants tried to make sense of her performance which included critical questions. For instance,

"I asked some critical questions during the presentation and the Exxon guy in his black suit asked me if I was from the press and I said, no don't worry! And he said no no I'm not worried." (field notes)

The WPC officially opened with a gala dinner for the over 4000 delegates and special guests which featured the famous Spanish opera singer José Carreras and others and was extremely pompous. Visitors in their evening gowns were directed over a thick, red carpet into one of the exhibition halls which for the evening had been transformed into a huge dining hall. A separate area in front of the stage was reserved for heads of state and other VIPs while other delegates were free to assemble and mingle at the surrounding tables. Thick, lush flower bouquets adorned each of the round tables seating eight people and taken care of by two waiters each. The multi-course menu offered all the delicacies that Spain has to offer and was accompanied by a never-ending supply of fine Spanish wines. In between courses and after dinner, performances and speeches were given to entertain the audience.

The WPC exhibition consisted of two very large exhibition halls in a trade fair centre at the outskirts of Madrid. In each of the halls a wide variety of companies, from all the major international and national oil and gas companies, to their contractor firms, business consultancies, and risk insurers. The large plenary hall was located adjacent to one of the exhibition halls while on the first floor, a number of smaller (still about 200 seats) auditoriums were set up for the technical sessions of the congress. Air conditioned luxury buses took delegates from their luxury hotels (even the student delegates were set up in a

three star centrally located hotel in Madrid) to the exhibition ground and back. Since there were many CEOs of leading companies, as well as heads of state and other important people at the congress, security was very high and participants and visitors had to get their belongings x-rayed before entering the Congress, similar to the security check at airports. Besides the over 5000 delegates, CEOs, and industry representatives, the exhibition part of the WPC was visited by over 15 000 mainly Spanish visitors of all classes and ages collecting posters, pens, and other gimmicks from the exhibition stands and making use of the 'entertainment' offered at a number of stands (e.g. testing your driving skills in an original Formula1 racing car and playing a virtual 'supply energy game' figuring out the right energy mix without annoying your stakeholders, both offered at ExxonMobile's stand).

#### The Side-Performance: "The Global CSR Village"

The website generated a strong virtual impression about the importance of CSR to the Congress. However, the impression conveyed by the 'real CSR stage' was significantly different. The main location of the CSR activities within the Congress – the Global CSR village - was significantly less grand in terms of size, and décor, than that of the main stage or to the other technical and non-CSR side-events of the WPC. This conveyed a divergent image than the one presented virtually:

"It is a joke. That's it? Seems rather small and assembled at the last minute. At least the plants are real. But no comparison to the other stands around. Just pinned some posters at the walls [...]."

"I think there was no stand designer like the other stands – even India just across is so much nicer, and the European and American firms' stands are even more designed. Here it's just some cubicles to sit in front of this small flat screen TV serving as a screen for the 'presentations'. I mean, there is a

maximum 25 people that can attend those presentations here, there's not more space." [...]

And the bar in the CSR village serves drinks in plastic cups – how sustainable is that??" (field notes)

The global social responsibility “village” was an area strategically located just outside the main plenary hall for increased visibility. Nevertheless it was usually quite empty compared to the other stands around and mainly populated by the support staff working on the stand and the exhibitors themselves. The village consisted of a small bar in the centre, a presentation area with a flat screen and a few seating cubicles, and ten small corners exhibiting the showcased CSR projects. The whole layout of the area from the beginning seemed to be based on low expectations regarding the number of people that would be interested in the topics presented. It did not allow for large groups of people and was more targeted at conversations in small groups. For example the presentation area only could host about 16 people seated and a few more standing behind the (quite uncomfortable) sitting cubes. With over 15 000 people visiting the event, this seemed quite a small number.

Participant observation showed that the technical and organisational attention paid to the CSR village was far behind that of other stands and sessions at the WPC. For instance, it took the conference organisers one day of ‘starting up’ until the audio equipment at the CSR Village was working without interruptions. In contrast, José Carreras’ opening performance had perfect audio as did the main stage events and sessions.

“They don’t even have a working microphone here... and just across is the stand of India with their loud music playing. The first two speakers you could not even hear and of course then people start leaving the place.” (field notes)

Live performances at the CSR “village” were given by representatives of the 12 organisations whose ‘CSR showcase projects’ and initiatives were displayed in the CSR village (see Appendix 1 for the organisations and projects covered). Representatives of those organisations every day took turns throughout the day presenting their projects in 30 minute sessions (sometimes more than once a day). Participant observation showed that for each of the presentations, the main audience was never larger than 25 people (usually more like 10 people) and about three quarters of this crowd usually consisted of the people working on the other stands in the ‘village’. Informal conversations and observations of these groups suggested that the audience came to the CSR sessions for a variety of reasons: genuine but casual interest in the other projects; to prevent the boredom arising from standing in their project corner; and also out of a feeling of courtesy towards their fellow stand workers and to create a reciprocal situation where others would also come to their talk later to give support. Visitors that appeared to have come specifically for the CSR presentations were rare and indeed, they stood out because they were not the ‘usual’ crowd of fellow CSR stand-workers. Non-industry members, i.e. the ‘ordinary’ visitor that was frequently seen (collecting gimmicks) at the corporate stands, were a rare sight at the CSR village having nothing much to offer to this audience. After the end of the session, ‘outsiders’ quickly left because there was little time for more meaningful interaction or dialogue, and space constraints encouraged people to go unless they had to stay. The space limitations and short time intervals in between talks made interactions between presenters and audience difficult if not impossible. Observations indicated that there was occasionally an interested person in the audience who was left to study the posters that had been put up on the walls about the various CSR projects implemented.

The manner in which the talks and presentations in the CSR village were announced and carried out was less professional than at other stands – e.g. one major consultancy firm had a series of very well organised talks on relevant topics at their stand which drew a large

crowd of interested attendees for their small stand. Overall, this reinforced the perception that CSR was a minor side performance in contrast to other major events at the WPC. Our data also indicate that even when there was a larger plenary session related to sustainability and CSR topics in the main congress, there were less people in the audience than e.g. for the crowded session of the ‘BP Statistical Review of World Energy’.

Participant observation show that only the small ‘CSR in-crowd’ met in the CSR village – people working in the CSR departments of firms, for NGOs or consultants offering stakeholder management tools and the like. Neither the general visitor nor the general delegate – the ‘prototype’ being a male engineer in his 40s or 50s – seemed to attend any of the presentations. The clear distinction between CSR people and other technical staff in terms of gender and dress was very apparent, also to industry members who explained that:

“she also found it startling that there’s so many women in the CSR while all the rest is male dominated.” (field notes of conversation with a female CSR worker at the CSR village)

In summary, the CSR village can therefore be seen as a half-hearted performance by the CSR crowd for the CSR crowd. However, the very existence of this performance was used prior and after the event to create the public image of responsibility while in fact it was of minor importance during the actual event. The level of attention that was being paid by upper management levels that in their speeches at the major sessions spoke so passionately about their firms’ involvement in CSR was not reflected in their interest in the CSR village after their speeches were over.

## WPC as a Strategic Vehicle for Containment and Framing

In this section, we present findings that show how the WPC was a strategic vehicle for the construction of the industry's corporate image. Our data show that WPC and its participants actively used two tactics – containment and framing – to accomplish this task in an iterative manner. Containment is an approach that can be likened to Goffman's concept of strategic secrets and means the not-mentioning of certain issues that would be – if discussed – not beneficial to the achievement of the goal of creating a positive reputation. Framing is a tactic most powerfully used by elites to describe how an issue can be most favourably presented and discussed. A frame presents a 'plausible' story to the audience that has advantages for impression management. Image construction at the WPC therefore happens in two steps: first, issues were narrowed down and contained to a select number that then in the second step were framed in a beneficial way to manage the corporate and industry self.

### Containment – Choosing your battles well

There was an extreme focus at the WPC on a select number of issues that were discussed in terms of sustainability and CSR. Sustainability was contained in a very narrow way at the WPC by discussing it in either one of the three contexts: a) sustainable growth or economic sustainability, b) global climate change, and c) sustainability of the petroleum industry. Through this strategy, the industry entirely avoided discussions of its own environmental sustainability for which it is often highly criticised by civil society actors. In terms of CSR and community development, containment of a different kind was found. Here, the industry clearly set a boundary as to how to define their community stakeholders. In a staggering move, Indigenous communities were entirely left out of the discussion which was contained by the use of the less controversial term of 'local communities'. We will elaborate on those issues below.

The first instance of containment is the use of the term ‘sustainable growth’ instead of discussing sustainability per se. The tendency of businesses to emphasise more manageable concepts such as sustainable *development*, or in this case growth, rather than the more radical one of sustainability per se (preferred by NGOs and academics) (Robinson, 2004) is reflected in the title of the 19<sup>th</sup> WPC: “A world in transition – Delivering energy for sustainable growth”. Growth at the WPC has been associated with improved living conditions, especially for the poor in emerging economies, without acknowledging the fact that so far economic growth has mainly benefited those who are already rich and rather increased than decreased the poverty gap. Framing the issue as a sustainable growth issue therefore entirely neglects the fact that since the Club of Rome’s “Limits to growth” in 1972 until today, there has been no consensus as to the relation between economic growth and welfare, happiness, or sustainability (be it in a social or ecological sense). Containing the issue in such a way gives firms the opportunity to frame their contribution to growth – and therefore to sustainability – in a favourable way (see below). The basic aspiration of economic growth, criticised for a long time now for its inherent link to unsustainable consumption patterns, is not challenged because this would question the general driver of the industry of delivering ever more value per share to shareholders. Attention is shifted instead to the issue of maintaining this growth while ameliorating its negative effects through mostly technical fixes, another typical behaviour of the government and private sector in this respect (Robinson, 2004).

Sustainability was also discussed in another very confined way. Environmental sustainability was considered in the context only of climate change which is surprising considering the fact that the oil industry is continuously criticised all over the world for environmental devastation be it through oil spills, deforestation during drilling, or air pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> production due to gas flaring. However, neglecting those criticisms, the main point of discussion was global climate change as the single biggest threat to

environmental sustainability – and at the same time as a grand opportunity for the petroleum industry in terms of framing (see below).

The third way of looking at sustainability prevalent at the WPC was that of industry sustainability which was discussed in terms of the recruitment of sufficient qualified workers for the industry and the threat of ‘peak oil’. If the industry is presented as a valuable actor in society that has the potential to make a positive contribution to it, then ensuring the welfare of the whole industry actually would be a central topic of sustainability. The industry recognises the need to attract talented young people to ensure its future. Since the last WPC in Beijing in 2004 youth are specifically addressed at the congress. In Madrid, the first youth committee had been given an own exhibition space - the ‘Youth Centre’ (which was nearly as big as the CSR Global Village – with a working audio equipment). The student grants programme that enabled the lead author to attend the WPC was also part of the effort to be attractive for young people. The question “Does the petroleum industry need an image makeover?” was discussed in a special plenary session.

“[...] we strongly believe that youth are the future of the oil & gas industry. At Nexen we see value in participating in initiatives like this [sponsoring the youth programme] [...] We have the people, the assets, and the capacity to build Nexen into a long term sustainable energy company.” Randy Gossen, President World Petroleum Council, VP Health, Safety, Environment and Social Responsibility, Nexen (On the promotion video given to participants of the Youth grants programme)

In terms of CSR, there was one main instance of containment that will be discussed here. When thinking about ‘village’ (as in ‘CSR village’), associations that usually come to mind are smallness, cohesion, social contact between inhabitants, closeness and personal relationships. The add-on ‘global’ to the CSR village creates an impression of inclusion and

openness evoking the image of a happy global villager in his or her corporate-sponsored surroundings. It might also account for the international nature of operations in the oil and gas industry and the resulting internationalisation of CSR initiatives as well as their standardisation all over the world.

In striking contrast to this tale of inclusion and international air was the finding that **not one** of the exhibited projects in the ‘global village’ dealt with Indigenous communities. All community projects and CSR initiatives displayed and discussed in the course of the congress had been realised in predominantly impoverished neighbourhoods in developing countries<sup>5</sup>. In fact, the absolute absence of the ‘Indigenous topic’ made it hard for the visiting researcher to express any interest in it. A quote from the field diary highlights this experience:

“Sitting in the first few presentations in the CSR village, I felt quite alienated [...]. No one is actually talking about Indigenous communities which totally surprises me. There is just no mention of them – not on the posters nor in the presentations. I really felt too afraid to ask why they don’t have anything out there. It just seems so esoteric and off-topic to talk about [...].”

“No-one was talking about it. It was really a ‘not-talked-about’ subject. I never heard the word once that was self-produced unless I asked about it. When I talked about my subject it was always kind of, oh you do something on Indigenous Peoples, like you know... It was a little bit weird. As soon as I framed it as I do community involvement, it was easier to talk about. Because it was not this specific Indigenous issue. I really think they avoid the issue, focusing on how we deal with Indigenous communities as opposed to how we deal with other communities and there are different issues like macroeconomic

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<sup>5</sup> With one exception, a stakeholder relationship management approach presented on the example of communities around a refinery in Spain, all other projects were located in rural areas in developing countries from Angola to Brazil.

and political issues and tackling land rights because they think it's political.”

(field notes)

Asked about their involvement with Indigenous communities, presenters at the CSR village would continue talking about their community involvement, ignoring the Indigenous aspect of the question. In other cases they would argue that it is not their task to get into such a political topic and that community involvement is practiced in similar ways with all kinds of communities. In fact, it would be hard to randomly pick any five companies taking part in the WPC without including at least one that operates in locations with an Indigenous population and one is not hard pressed to find evidence for the fact that there are some substantial differences between Indigenous communities and the communities featured in the CSR village. Be it in terms of the extent to which Indigenous communities often still depend on their natural environment or the specific rights to their ancestral lands granted to them by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This neglect is quite surprising in light of the challenges the industry faces from Indigenous communities all over the world as discussed in the introduction. It can be interpreted as a ‘sign given off’ in Goffman’s sense – as an involuntary statement that Indigenous Peoples are not considered a separate stakeholder group and that they are submerged into the ‘local community’ category. At the same time it is a ‘strategic’ secret – a move to avoid the politicised and complicated topic of Indigenous rights and acknowledgement. Especially in light of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which gives them the right to decide about what happens to their ancestral lands and would lead to firms having to deal with the complicated matter of obtaining Indigenous Peoples’ free prior and informed consent to oil exploration and production. It thus makes good business sense to only celebrate the anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights but not the passing of the UNDRIP in September 2007.

### Framing – Seeing out of the ordinary?

In addition to the presentation of a positive image, an image of the *indispensability* of the petroleum industry was projected at the WPC. In the industry's eyes, the growth and stability of the world's economy is entirely fossil fuel based. Moreover, oil companies are seen as essential in fighting climate change and bringing development to local communities in regions where governments are too weak to deliver civil services. By presenting this picture to the public at large, the industry counters criticisms that question its legitimacy and attempts to make the impossible possible by reversing a traditionally bad reputation into one of appreciation of the industry's services to society.

As argued above, the public discussion on sustainability and the demands towards firms of operating in a sustainable manner are contained and narrowed down to a discussion of sustainable growth and the sustainability of the world's economy and a few select other issues. In this process, economic growth as a desirable goal in its own right is never questioned and framed in a way that presents the petroleum industry as indispensable for achieving this, seemingly widely accepted, goal of ever more growth for all. An excerpt from the speech of Helge Lund, President and CEO, StatoilHydro at the WPC plenary with the title 'Advancing sustainability in the Oil & Gas industry' can be taken as exemplary for this first instance of 'indispensability framing':

“Fossil fuel is driving economic development [...]. In developing countries energy can determine if people are above or below the poverty line. And the continued growth in China, India and other parts of Asia will require additional huge amounts of energy in the future. [...] Fossil fuels will be essential to meet energy demands in the next 30-40 years.”

Thus, in the near future, fossil fuels were framed as imperative for the world's economy and especially for emerging economies. To make this point, the concept of 'energy poverty'

was frequently used during the congress and the Human Right of access to energy was emphasised. Energy poverty basically follows the logic that it is lack of access to energy – from fossil fuels only – which prevents economic growth and thus poverty alleviation. Thus, after narrowing down the sustainability discussion to a focus on sustainable growth in the first step, the achievement of growth itself is then tied to the operations and the success of the international petroleum industry that satisfies the world’s “energy needs for a better life” (World Petroleum Council, 2008).

The second instance of indispensability framing follows the containment of the issue of environmental sustainability to a sole focus on climate change. In line with the prediction of Hart (1997) that “Increasingly, companies will be selling solutions to the world’s environmental problems.” the global oil and gas industry was presenting itself at the WPC as one of the central actors in solving global climate change. For example,

“I think perhaps the right title for this session should have been 'Advancing sustainability through the oil and gas industry' rather than trying to preserve necessarily that industry.” Prof. William Hogan: Professor of Global Energy Policy, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (Plenary 5)

This frame suggested that the petroleum companies at the WPC already possess the necessary technical expertise and willingness to find technical solutions to that problem. By framing the issue as a purely technical problem, instead looking at the behavioural aspects and its own contribution to climate change (e.g. reducing gas flaring and investing more in alternative energies), the industry emerges as one of the key actors in solving climate change through their potential to carry out carbon capture and storage (CCS). CCS was discussed at length in the technical and sustainability sessions of the WPC and the industry seems confident that it will play a central role by using empty reserves and their expertise and infrastructure for transporting natural gas. The call for large scale test fields for CCS was

continuously heard during those sessions and firms like StatoilHydro who are already applying the technique were presented as frontrunners in the field.

## **5. Discussion and conclusion**

Our study demonstrates that annual industry events are important venues for impression management. The WPC is positioned as the ‘Olympics of the petroleum Industry’ and consists of a dramatic series of performance including a virtual stage, a powerful main stage that effectively contained and framed Sustainability and CSR in beneficial ways, and a lowly almost forgotten side-stage for CSR activities despite its importance on the virtual stage.

Our data demonstrate how the petroleum industry manipulates its image. For instance, the virtual stage of the WPC website is the most open vehicle for mass communication by the petroleum industry. It can be easily accessed by numerous groups, including externally critical stakeholders and activists. For this audience, Sustainability and CSR issues are prominently displayed. However, at the actual Congress, critical groups are not significantly represented partly due to the prohibitive cost of attendance well over 1000 Euro. At this less public audience, the industry displays a different CSR performance – projecting a marginalized and ‘not important’ image of this issue to industry insiders. At the same time, the main stage performance strategically contains and reframes the topics of sustainability and CSR into heady rationale for the indispensability of the industry itself.

As Manning (2008: 684) argues, the goal of studying organisations is “to study not only what people do, but how they rationalize or explain the whys and wherefores of that work.”. The WPC, and especially the global CSR village, gave us the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the explanations and intentions behind oil and gas companies’ engagement in the area of sustainable development. In that sense, this paper also contributes to the corporate reputation literature more broadly by illustrating how the study of corporate events is an

interesting, and so far neglected way of seeing ‘organisations at work’. In our case, the nature of the event allowed us to analyze how the industry (as well as individual companies) construct and enact dramatic performance concerning their images. Our findings highlight the narrow and self-serving focus of the oil and gas industry and the ways in which firms present themselves as solution to the problems which they helped to create in the first place. Pointing out those blind spots, we went on to analyse the performance of community involvement and found a total neglect of Indigenous communities that are often involuntary stakeholders in oil and gas projects. Finally, the rationalisations given or ‘given off’ during the event was highlighted.

In addition, our results highlight the importance that an industry facing reputation threats gives to the communication of future visions, as opposed to communication regarding present practices. In fact, at the WPC much of the communication was about the anticipated actions of the industry in terms of contributing to solving climate change, especially in terms of solving climate change. Shifting attention away from present to future actions has two benefits for the industry: First, petroleum corporations can capitalise on a big technical invention like CCS of which they are the leading actors and drivers of the technology and which is quite impressive in its potential contribution to saving the world’s climate. This makes CCS an ideal subject of corporate communication for achieving a positive corporate image. Second, criticisms regarding the *current* actions of the industry are silenced with this focus on future potentials. The option of reducing gas flaring and implementing technical solutions to make current production practices more climate friendly were hardly discussed at the WPC despite the fact that they would be more feasible in the present and – if implemented by the whole industry – a main factor in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, focusing on the future is a convenient tactic to shift attention away from current practices and demands on the industry that could be implemented in the ‘here and now’ – which in fact might be costly and therefore undesirable. The focus on a future technology, with all its

insecurities (see e.g. Anderson & Newell, 2004), provides the opportunity to find ample excuses in case the industry fails to become a main player in CCS.

Studies on corporate reputation and corporate image mainly focus on the *way* those images are constructed rather than on the validity of the claims that firms make in the process of constructing an image. As White and Hanson argue “[t]he fact of contradiction or inconsistency is of less interest than the means” by which companies develop their “reputational ‘self’” (White et al., 2002: 292). We are critical of those positions because it presents only one side of the coin. We therefore encourage future research on corporate reputation to investigate the process (and validity) of legitimation processes such as industry events. Indeed, communication can “alter the definition of social legitimacy so that it conforms to the organisation’s present practices, output and values” (Dowling & Pfeffer 1975, p. 127 in Hooghiemstra, 2000). Our results suggest that the WPC actively engages in powerful legitimation processes through a combination of dramatic and more marginalized performances. The WPC has been presented here as a performance enacted by key industry insiders. This performance contributes to the establishment of a ‘working consensus’ (Manning, 2008, p. 680) between the industry and its stakeholders as present at the event – the media, the larger public, some NGOs, and government representatives. This consensus however, is created without considering Indigenous Peoples – neither had they been invited nor were they featured in the ‘play’ staged by the industry. The performance thus has to be seen just as that, a play that is geared at a certain audience leading to a process of containment, framing and legitimation where no space is given to issues that are inconvenient for the main actors or the main audience. .

### Limitations

The major limitation of this paper is that the findings presented here are entirely based on the data gathered by the leading author during the congress. Other visitors to the congress

might have met other people and talked to them and might have made different observations overall. Nevertheless, we believe that one evening and three full days at the congress were sufficient to provide a feeling for what is going on in the industry, what are the main topics that are being discussed, and what is on the minds of people working in and with the industry. We do not raise the claim that it was possible to collect, scan, and analyse all CSR related publications and materials that were handed out at the WPC and deliver a full account of the 'state of CSR' in the whole industry. Our foreshadowed research problems certainly determined what was perceived to be salient events to go to, people to talk to, topics to discuss, and materials to gather. Therefore, the interest in how CSR was embedded in the practices of the industry, and how various people perceived the importance of CSR and especially community involvement at the congress and guided our data collection and the subsequent scanning and more detailed analysis of some of the materials and information gathered there. Also the taking of fieldnotes sometimes proved to be harder than expected due to the short overall time available in the field and the constant sequence of interesting events and the length and frequency of interactions. Future research might focus on exploring also the back stage of the petroleum industry.

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## **Appendix 1: List of organisations and their projects exhibited at the Global CSR village**

(<http://www.19wpc.com/socialresponsibility.php>, 24th July 2008)

### **1. BP: "The Solar Power Technology Support Project to Agrarian Reform Communities (SPOTS Project)"**

Energy from the sun is providing electricity to over a million people in Southern Philippines thanks to the Solar Power Technology Support (SPOTS) Project, the largest in the world in terms of funding and geographical coverage, implemented by the Philippine Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and BP Solar.

### **2. CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, Inc.: "Corporate Engagement Project (CEP)"**

The Corporate Engagement Project is a Collaborative Learning project working with companies to identify and develop practical management options for working in contexts of social and political instability, to "Get It Right" with local communities.

### **3. Engineer Against Poverty (EAP) and AMEC: Working together to maximising the social benefits of the engineering supply chain for oil and gas projects**

Engineers Against Poverty and AMEC have worked together to understand the full range of opportunities for lead contractors to contribute to positive social and local economic outcomes from oil and gas projects. With up to ninety percent of project expenditure going through the contractor 'supply chain', this collaboration will be of significant interest to all stakeholders interested in the positive social benefits of oil and gas developments including operating companies, governments and regulators.

### **4. Every Human Has Rights:**

2008 is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 60th anniversary. It's time for a global conversation about human rights and to consider the values that unite us as one human family, and one global village.

### **5. Exxon Mobil (& Esso Angola): "Investing in Education and Health in Angola"**

As part of its Educating Women and Girls Initiative, Exxon Mobil and Esso Angola are partnering with Save the Children, the Angolan Ministries of Education and Health, and Africare to address the education and health needs of women and girls in the Kwanza Sul Province of Angola. By establishing ten new schools and three community health centers,

the partnership is improving education, health and economic opportunities for women and girls while supporting Angolan progress toward achieving the U.N. Millennium Development Goals.

**6. Gaia-Shell: “PROMOVER (PROMOTE) – Program of socio-environmental capacity building and mobilization”**

"This program, which coaches community leaders, is very important, because they know what their communities need more than anybody else". Augusto da Costa Pereira, Foundation Institute of Fisheries of the State of Rio de Janeiro – FIPERJ, Brazil.

“With SHELL and GAIA's initiative, everybody's outlook has changed. Now everyone thinks on partnerships". Fernando Bifó - Member of Artisanal Fishing and Aquiculture Association - UEPA, Rio de Janeiro - Brazil.

**7. International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA): “Human Rights Training for the Oil & Gas Industry”**

Building an effective human rights training and awareness program for employees is complicated, or is it! IPIECA has created an easy-to-use training module to help “train the trainer” on human rights issues, and is currently exploring regional human rights issues in a series of global workshops. The downloadable Toolkit and workshop series offers something for all companies – to supplement existing curriculum, help build new training programs, and share experiences.

**8. Marathon Oil: “Bioko Island Malaria Control Project – Equatorial Guinea”**

A unique public private partnership on Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea, which aims to eliminate Malaria, save lives, build institutional capacity and help to alleviate poverty.

**9. Nexen: “Water and Sanitation project in Yemen”**

In partnership with the UN Global Compact, the UNDP and CIDA, Nexen facilitated the development of a water and sanitation program in the Hadramout region of Yemen. The project brings safe and clean drinking water to homes in a sustainable manner and reduces water borne health impacts while protecting the environment and keeping the management of the project in Yemeni hands.

**10. Petrobras: “Carnauba Viva”**

The Carnauba Viva initiative is focused on developing sustainable communities and in defending the environment. This successful project has been replacing aluminum with carnauba palm to protect steam pipelines in Rio Grande do Norte and Ceará states - North East of Brasil.

**11. Repsol YPF: “Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross HIV/Aids Programme”**

Fight against HIV/AIDS is one of the Millennium Development Goals and also the main purpose of Red Cross in Trinidad and Tobago together with Repsol YPF.

With the objective of fighting HIV/AIDS in Trinidad and Tobago, Repsol YPF collaborates since 2003 with Red Cross in the development of several programmes.

**12. Total: “SRM+” and “Total Supports Program to Prevent HIV/AIDS in Truck Drivers in Morocco”**

Developing a societal methodology in line with business policy to enhance dialog with local stakeholders and to harmonise the management of local societal action plans.