

The evolving role of CSI

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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A seasoned corporate communications specialist and a skilled marketing and brand management expert, Kusile Mtunzi-Hairwadzi is general manager of the MTN SA Foundation. With a wealth of experience in leadership, we interviewed her to get her take on CSI in South Africa in 2017 and how the role of the CSI manager may evolve this year.



Kusile Mtunzi-Hairwadzi is general manager of the MTN SA Foundation

■ ***How do you see the role of the CSI manager developing in 2017?***

The role of CSI managers has shifted from just driving the socio-economic mission and output base to one of shared value creation that seeks to actively drive sustainability and long-term impact for social change.

■ **What should be the role of corporate social investment in South Africa in 2017?**

With the evolving role of CSI we must ensure that there is alignment of the corporate's needs, socio-economic needs, and we must actively seek active collaboration and participation to drive sustainability and impact on all the projects undertaken.

■ **How has corporate social investment evolved over the last 10 years in South Africa?**

CSI has evolved from philanthropic to basic investment for social change, to social enterprise and now the shift is to view CSI as driving shared value.

■ **SA has a unique social landscape but some of the country's challenges are similar to those faced in other developing nations. Are there any international/African trends that you believe could be applied here?**

It seems the current world trend is to seek social change that demonstrates socio-economic change with shared value and impact as a result. The truth is that for interventions to bear results there needs to be focus on the needs of the specific geo-political-economic landscape of the intervention areas.

■ In 2017, how should a corporate entity go about selecting its CSI causes/beneficiaries?

They need to align the business' and the partners' needs, beneficiary socio-economic environments will remain the key guiding principles. Yet in addressing the shared socio-economic value creation, as well as the national priority, social needs will remain the guiding principles of project selection. Then the legislative and mandates from controlling charters must also be considered.

■ Why is connecting communities for self-reliance a focus for the MTN SA Foundation?

MTN SA Foundation, a division of MTN a telecommunications company is in the business of mobile communication. The foundation seeks to further the expertise of the parent company to drive active participation, collaboration, communication, and knowledge sharing to further the advancement of all South African citizens using technology.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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