

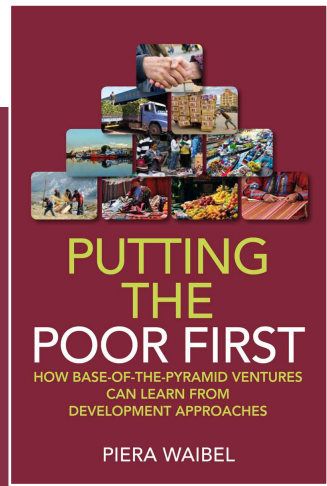
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PUTTING THE POOR FIRST

HOW BASE-OF-THE-PYRAMID VENTURES
CAN LEARN FROM
DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

PIERA WAIBEL



Published September 2012
ISBN 978-1-906093-74-7
240 pp Paperback 234 x 156 mm
List price: £35.00/€45.00/US\$65.00

“In this important new book, Piera Waibel has zeroed in on the key challenge when it comes to generating successful BoP businesses – how to effectively embed value propositions and business models. The first ten years of BoP business was all about cost reduction and business model innovation; the next ten years will be all about co-creation and bottom-up innovation.”

Stuart L. Hart, S.C. Johnson Chair in Sustainable Global Enterprise, Cornell University; author of *Capitalism at the Crossroads*

“The bottom-up approach, very well described in Dr Waibel’s work, calls for companies to shift the paradigm that says that people in conditions of poverty are victims, and instead to embrace the knowledge and wisdom they can offer. This shift has an effect both on people from marginal sectors and also on the company itself, it being a starting point for eradicating such marginality, on the one hand, and achieving valuable corporate learning, on the other. Thus, the collective imagination is energised, which is truly ‘generative’ and leads to value propositions and business models that exceed what either the company or the community could conceive of or entertain alone. It is of particular interest when Dr Waibel analyses the

drivers for applying this mechanism to BoP ventures and when to use them. I believe Dr Waibel’s research provides a valuable resource for the private sector in proactively promoting development among the poor by listening to their voices.”

Miguel Angel Gardetti, Center for Study of Corporate Sustainability, Argentina

“Inclusive business models engaging the base of the economic pyramid are an important example of the multiple ways in which the private sector can contribute holistic solutions to support the sustainable development of emerging economies in an increasingly urbanized and energy- and resource-constrained world. *Putting the Poor First* provides important insights for organisations looking to optimise their business model innovation processes in view of enabling “win-win” solutions at scale. We encourage further insights into this field in view of realising our vision of a sustainable world in which 9 billion people live well and within the limits of one planet at mid-century.”

Filippo Veglio, Deputy Director, Development Focus Area, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

Piera Waibel has been researching about and working with Sustainability Management for over ten years. She has worked on an ‘Affordable Housing’ project in Latin America; as Senior Consultant for an international group of consultancy firms specialising in Sustainability Management; and as Sustainability Analyst for a Zurich-based asset management company. In her current work, she focuses on inclusive solutions for agricultural and rural development.

Piera holds a PhD and Master’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Zurich, and is an Associated Expert of Endeava – Enterprise Solutions for Development. This book is based on her PhD thesis, which involved her spending one and a half years at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE) in Turrialba, Costa Rica.

Piera is Swiss, and based in Zurich, but – as she will tell you – half her heart belongs to Latin America. She is passionate about the natural environment, especially forest and marine environments.



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