ISAE/FGV
Forming local leaders-Expanding PRME performance in Brazil

Introduction
ISAE, the Higher Institute of Administration and Economics, is a business school located in the south of Brazil that enrolls more than five thousand students a year in post-graduate courses. Since 1996, the institute has operated in an innovative and cross-sectional way, seeking to mobilise and help the market, in respect to responsible practices that generate sustainable development.

This case story presents a strategy for expansion and consolidation of the PRME in Brazil, with the objective of strengthening the sustainability movement in the country by training local leaders and integrating the network as a whole. The intention of this work is to awaken academic institutions and corporate universities in Brazil to the new role played by education in tackling the challenges of sustainability.

ISAE assumed this mobilisation since joined PRME in 2008, having contributed to the institutionalisation of the PRME Chapter Brazil and to the improvement of the Brazilian network as a whole. This improvement in performance happens when signatory institutions have access to contacts, study groups, news, data, and materials such, as case studies and researches, and engages in rich benchmarking of practices and policies related to education for sustainability.

Challenges
When taking up the challenge of participating in the creation of PRME in 2006, ISAE strengthened its actions in the area of education for sustainability, having this new scope as the main guide to its management. Thus, the Institute has gone through all the steps in the process of changing its mental model – understanding the concepts, internalising the values of sustainability in the school’s strategy and management, involving and training the various publics, and including these contents in the whole student experience through its exclusive educational method called Perspectivaction. ISAE fulfilled the various stages of implementation of the PRME, experiencing difficulties and reaping rewards.

However, in 2011, the Institute faced one of the biggest challenges in the performance of a PRME signatory school – disseminating the Principles of PRME and the Global Compact in other regions of the country. It is important to stress that the decision to take this new step was only possible after the Institute had gone through the previous steps in implementing the principles, thus having the necessary maturity to engage other institutions and seeking to strengthen and extend the network in such a large country as Brazil.

Actions taken and Results
By promoting the International Seminar on Education for Sustainability, which was held in Curitiba ( Paraná state) in September 2011, ISAE took the initial step in its strategy to mobilise other institutions in the region. The event was a success, and the Brazilian network of PRME signatories more than doubled (from 9 to 19 institutions). To assure quality to the signatories, the ISAE began to gather this
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new group of institutions for frequent workshops. In these workshops, veteran signatories contribute to the understanding and implementation of the principles, giving valuable advice and tips with the experience of those who have already gone through several steps in the implementation process.

Thus, in these three years, ISAE took part in the mobilisation of events and actions in many Brazilian capitals, such as São Paulo, Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, and Curitiba (where the Institute is located). There were also numerous mobilisations in favour of the PRME and the Global Compact in Paraná, which were held in partnership with the Federation of Industries of the State of Paraná. The most recent action brought more than 20 participants to the Global Compact.

In addition to this regional action, ISAE has also started to act in the northern and north eastern regions of Brazil. With the aim of decentralising the sustainability movement in the country, ISAE went to the state of Ceará to visit nearly 12 academic institutions, introducing the Principles and the importance of taking part in an initiative that supports the formation of responsible leaders. Invited by the Federation of Industries of the State of Ceará (FIEC), the Institute has also promoted a lecture on responsible leaders for more than 200 entrepreneurs and educators from the capital city Fortaleza and the metropolitan region.

This relationship with FIEC is a highlight within the Brazilian strategy for consolidating the Principles. In the case of Ceará, the institution will be the major vector to help develop the work, without which the efforts might die due to lack of continuity. Developing local leaders in alignment with the Principles will have positive results, ensuring that the contacted institutions also establish a relationship for a rich exchange of information in the quest to improve the performance of the group as a whole. Moving forward, ISAE intends to visit other regions in Brazil and promote an annual event with the PRME Chapter Brazil, while seeking the consolidation and expansion of sustainability principles in Brazil by developing institutions and more prepared leaders to deal with the challenges of sustainability.