Going Local with Global Policies: Implementing International Framework Agreements in Brazil and the USA

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Context and Questions

- Global Restructuring and Global Production Networks
- The Limits of CSR
- The Promise of IFAs
- IFAs and Social Dialogue Beyond Continental Europe
- Exploration Using Brazil and the USA
Brazilian Industrial Relations

- Authoritarian Corporatist Origins still Present
- Major characteristic is spatial fragmentation – one union per sector per jurisdiction
- But Significant Improvement During Recent Decades
  - enhanced role of federations
  - “new unionism” working within labor structures at workplace
  - networks
Brazilian Cases (Sao Paolo)

- Rhodia – disjunction between global social dialogue and local CSR
- Leoni – union activism with external support has moved company towards social dialogue
- Mercedes – highly unionized, transnationally embedded, strong social dialogue
USA Industrial Relations

- Weak and Anti-union Laws
  - Multiple industrial systems
- Hostile Management
- Heavy – Handed HRM practices
- Recognition and Collective Bargaining Key Priorities of Unions
- Overall contentious IR inimical to social dialogue (although some noticeable exceptions)
IFA Implementation

- Local Implementation Without Global Collaboration
  - Eurocopter
  - Mercedes –ai3

- Globally Embedded Implementation
  - Lafarge
  - Skanska
  - Dannon
  - G4S
Conclusions

- Institutions matter but agency can play a role
  - Global Union Federations must recognize that national dynamics and institutions may require different strategies for implementation
- Exogenous actors can have an impact
  - If local and transnational strategies are well articulated
- Micro-politics can open new channels of labor-management communication
  - National and local unions must feel ownership of IFAs