

The Context of Faith

The purpose of the Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Bench Marks for Measuring Business Performance is to promote positive corporate social responsibility consistent with the responsibility required to sustain the human community and all creation.

From a perspective of faith, the context for all human activity is the totality of creation. Therefore, we need to use our power to live in harmony with creation, affirm the interdependence of everything on earth and the dignity of all parts of creation.

However, we recognize the breakdown of the social fibre resulting from the:

- polarization of rich and poor;
- undermining of the integrity of human dignity;
- destruction of the integrity of creation;
- and, human greed as evidenced in over-consumption and disproportionate wealth accumulation for the few.

Therefore, we offer our context of faith as a basis for engaging the corporate community in the process of building sustainable communities founded on the values of justice. Faith communities evaluate companies, not only by what they produce and their impact on the environment, but also by how companies contribute to sustainable community and protect or undermine the dignity of the human person. We believe these companies carry responsibility for the human and moral consequences of their economic decisions.

We believe the challenge for both companies and individuals in the global economy is to ensure that the distribution of economic benefits is equitable, supports sustainable community and preserves the integrity of creation.

We believe the promotion and protection of human rights - civil, political, social, religious, cultural and economic - are minimum standards for all social institutions, including companies.

We believe all people and institutions have a responsibility to work for a just society marked by love, compassion and peace. Justice requires that we stand with those oppressed by poverty and exploitation and we work to change the structures and policies that support their oppression. Justice also requires that the allocation of income, wealth and power be evaluated in the light of their impact on the poorest and most vulnerable in the world.

We invite people of all faiths and beliefs to engage in and contribute to the promotion of the principles and values articulated in this document. We believe the broad involvement of a variety of individuals and institutions will deepen the values of corporate responsibility and accountability that will restore human dignity, the integrity of creation and the social order.