CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

Developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact and Save the Children – the Children’s Rights and Business Principles (the Principles) are the first comprehensive set of principles to guide companies on the full range of actions they can take in the workplace, marketplace and community to respect and support children’s rights.

The Principles are built on existing standards, initiatives and best practices related to business and children, and seek to fill gaps to present a coherent vision for business to maximize the positive impacts and minimize negative impacts on children. In doing so, the Principles help to elaborate both expectations of, and opportunities for business, in relation to children; who are frequently and often overlooked as stakeholders of business.

Recognizing the important contribution that business can make in shaping these Principles and ensuring their relevance to business operations, the partners launched an extensive multi-stakeholder consultation process involving business across sectors and geographies. From April through July 2011, more than 600 business leaders, civil society and government representatives, key experts and children participated in face-to-face meetings that took place in 10 cities (New York, London, Copenhagen, Dubai, Shanghai, Beijing, Nairobi, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Geneva), or through online consultations. An online feedback channel was launched by the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre.

The Principles were released on 12 March 2012 in London, bringing together leading companies and experts to discuss and showcase ways in which business can respect and support children’s rights in their core operations.

About the Principles

The Principles recognize the tremendous positive power of businesses large and small, and seek to support the best business practices. The Principles call on the entire business community to evaluate and take responsibility for their impact on the well-being of children.

Ten principles identify how businesses can respect and support children’s rights through core business activities, strategic social investments and philanthropy, advocacy and public policy engagement, and through partnerships.

Principle 1 outlines the core actions to be taken in policy commitments, due diligence and remediation, and encourages all businesses to go beyond respect to the next steps of supporting and promoting children’s rights.

The remaining nine Principles encourage business to implement these core actions by considering the impact on children of all their activities related to the workplace, marketplace, community and the environment.
**CRBPI in India – Update and Plans**

The three founding partners - Save the Children, UNICEF and the UN Global Compact have come together to create a consortium for the initiative in India. Now, through the Consortium, we are looking to launch the Principles in the country and creating a sustainable approach and plan for the roll out of the initiative, with the objective of reaching out the corporate community in the country and to support them and build their capacities in adopting and implementing the principles.

The principles are being launched in 4 Indian cities - one in each zone:  
South: Chennai – Launches on 11th July, in partnership with CSO Partners  
North: Delhi - Scheduled for 1st August  
West: Mumbai – Schedules for 7th August  
East: Kolkata – Scheduled for November, through the UNICEF CII CSR Hub in WB

The proposed half-day (3-4 hrs) event will bring together leading companies and experts to discuss and showcase ways in which business can respect and support children’s rights in their core operations. Participants will include selected business leaders and sustainability managers; as well as civil society organizations, academia and media.

**Expanding Reach by Developing Strong Implementation Partners:**

To have a wider reach and impact, UNICEF has been facilitating the expansion of group beyond the consortium partners, by exploring and facilitating partnerships with the following partners:

1. **Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs:**
   As a major achievement for UNICEF, we have successfully managed to bring on board the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) under the leadership of Dr. Bhaskar Chatterjee. IICA has been established by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for capacity building and training in various subjects and matters relevant to corporate regulation and governance. The Institute has been designed with an eye on the future to provide a platform for dialogue, interaction and partnership between governments, corporate, investors, civil society, professionals, academicians and other stakeholders in the emerging 21st century environment. Two major activities are proposed with the IICA:
   - Establishing a Centre for Children’s Rights and Business at IICA
   - Under the umbrella of this Centre, institute courses and modules on the subject, as part of the executive education and capacity building programmes being offered by IICA

2. **Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)**
   CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry led and industry managed organisation, playing a proactive role in India's development process. Led by UNICEF, the Consortium is working towards bringing CII on board as a partner, to support this initiative and create an important bridge with the enormous industry segment represented and supported by CII.