



---

## Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporations exert powerful influence in our global economy and often in the political affairs of countries where they operate. This influence is frequently positive. Corporate investment and expanding trade creates employment and lifts living standards. However, during the past decade the human rights movement has given more attention to the potential for “corporate-related harm” particularly in states with weak governance and regulatory frameworks. In response, the international community has articulated a set of principles for corporate social responsibility, embodied in the United Nations Global Compact, the “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework created by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, and the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Together these frameworks seek to promote socially responsible corporate policies and practices in the areas of human rights, labor rights, the environment and anti-corruption. These frameworks are premised on the notion that corporate compliance with domestic law is not enough to prevent corporate-related human rights harm. Beyond mere compliance, corporations must include human rights due diligence measures into their operating principles. For example, corporations can responsibly manage their supply chains to ensure that raw materials and products produced by forced labor are prevented from reaching market. Because of their immense influence, corporations should seek to be proactive in promoting human rights through their policies and practices.

The Human Rights Center’s research in the area of corporate social responsibility focuses both on corporate accountability for corporate-related human rights harm and best and promising socially responsible corporate practices. Our project on forced labor in Brazil exemplifies the Human Rights Center’s commitment to engaging the corporate community in a productive dialogue about corporate social responsibility.

HUMANRIGHTSCENTER



UNIVERSITY of  
DAYTON