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UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund : New tools from UNICEF to work with business on children's rights

09/20/2013 | 12:46pm US/Eastern • Recommend:  0

Press release New tools from UNICEF to work with business on children's rights

NEW YORK, 19 September 2013 - UNICEF today released a tool kit aimed at integrating the rights of children into business operations.

The launch took place during a two-day workshop bringing together business leaders, child rights advocates and country experts who explored the impact that companies have on children's rights and the responsibility of the global business community to support and respect children's rights.

Speakers at the event included H.M. Queen Mathilde of Belgium; former President of Ireland and current UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Mary Robinson; UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Yoka Brandt; CEO of Safaricom Robert Collymore; President of Sansiri Srettha Thavisin; CEO of RepRisk Philipp Aeby; and Jo Confino, chairman and




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editorial director of Guardian Sustainable Business.

"Business can contribute positively to ensuring respect for the right of every child to good health, education and protection in society" said H.M. Queen Mathilde. "It is important for everyone to be able to develop his or her potential. At the same time, this will create a favourable environment for entrepreneurs. It is a win-win situation. Furthermore, it allows the corporate sector to do business in a sustainable way."

UNICEF's new tools recommend ways for businesses to incorporate children's rights into their policies and codes of conduct; provide criteria for companies to assess their performance in respecting children's rights; and review critical areas of impact on children's rights. The tools also offer guidance on the actions a company can take to integrate children's rights into their policies and management processes.

Special Envoy Mary Robinson commented: "Business and governments need to look to the long term and consider inter-generational equity. Business must be cognisant of the needs of future generations, the children of today and tomorrow, an essential tenant of sustainable development."

The release of the Children's Rights Business Principles in 2012 called on the business community to consider the full range of actions they can take to respect and support children in the workplace, marketplace, community and environment. The Principles have been increasingly accepted as an authoritative framework for understanding and addressing the impact of business on the rights of children around the world.

Since the release of the Principles, UNICEF has been working closely with CSR and sustainability organizations and businesses to develop guidance for implementing the Principles. At the event today, UNICEF presented a set of practical tools as well as an innovative new platform, the Corporate Lab, which aims to help companies worldwide to identify and address their impact on children's rights.

The Corporate Lab will serve as a guide for companies to work with UNICEF to implement the Children's Rights and Business Principles, to exchange ideas and find solutions to how business and development organizations can work together. The Lab will seek to advance sector-specific and country specific understandings of how business can respect and support children's rights.

"We applaud the companies and our partners worldwide for joining us on this journey to place children's rights at the centre of every corporate sustainability agenda," said Yoka Brandt, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director. "UNICEF is working to guide the global business community to take increased responsibility for advancing children's rights."

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About UNICEF

UNICEF works in more than 190 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments. For more information about UNICEF and its work visit www.unicef.org.

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About the tools:

Children are Everyone's Business. Workbook 2.0

Authors: UNICEF

Date: September 2013

The workbook outlines a framework for companies to operationalize their respect and support for children's rights in the workplace, marketplace and community. It summarizes the guidance provided in UNICEF's child rights implementation tools - including 'Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct', 'Children's Rights in Impact Assessments' and 'Children's Rights in Sustainability Reporting'.

Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct

Authors: UNICEF, Save the Children

Date: September, 2013

This tool recommends ways for all businesses to incorporate children's rights into their policies and codes of conduct, based on the Children's Rights and Business Principles. It reaches beyond the traditional focus areas of child labour and philanthropy and outlines the child rights elements that are relevant to all companies. At the same time, it is intended to be flexible and adaptable, and includes elements that companies can adopt and integrate as appropriate, based on their biggest areas of risk and opportunity

Children's Rights in Impact Assessments

Authors: UNICEF. Danish Institute for Human Rights

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This tool is intended for use by companies to assess their performance in meeting their responsibility to respect children's rights and identify opportunities to support children's rights as outlined in the Children's Rights and Business Principles. The tool offers a number of criteria that companies can use to review critical areas of potential or actual impact on children's rights, and identify actions for improvement. In addition, the tool offers guidance on specific actions a company can take to integrate respect and support for children's rights in their business operations and value chain.

Children's Rights in Sustainability Reporting
 Author: UNICEF
 Forthcoming

This tool is intended to help companies report and communicate on how they are respecting and supporting children's rights. The tool provides child rights extensions to existing GRI indicators in order to enable companies to report on children's rights using existing reporting frameworks.

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