

New Guide Helps Investors Address Human Rights Risks

The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) in collaboration with Calvert Investments and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility is releasing a guide that shows investors how to effectively integrate human rights into investment decision-making and corporate engagement.

Investing the Rights Way: A Guide for Investors on Business and Human Rights provides practical insights into how the globally accepted framework of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights can help investors assess and address human rights risks in their portfolios and more effectively benchmark and engage the companies they hold.

The new Guide addresses mainstream investors across all asset classes and provides an overview of key developments, standards and resources.

As Professor John Ruggie, former UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights and Chair of the Institute for Human Rights and Business said, “The UN Guiding Principles affirm that all companies have a responsibility to respect human rights in their operations and their business relationships. ‘Investing the Rights Way’ highlights strategies investors can use to help them prevent and remediate negative impacts.”

Investors, managers and service providers can use the Guide in a number of ways to:

- Engage with companies on human rights.
- Benchmark or rank companies on their human rights performance against their peers.
- Screen companies in or out of a fund.
- Explore what lies behind a company’s public reporting statements.
- Establish whether a fund, investor or company should invest in a particular region, country or sector.

“Virtually every company in every industry faces some degree of human rights-related risk, and investors have a responsibility to evaluate that risk across portfolios and asset classes,” said Bennett Freeman of Calvert Investments and a Trustee of the Institute for Human Rights and Business.

Ed Potter, Director, Global Workplace Rights with The Coca-Cola Company added, “Although this Guide is written for investors, it also provides a succinct and clear roadmap for all companies on implementing respect for human rights and engaging with the investor community on human rights policies, human rights due diligence, and mitigation of human rights impacts.”

“As with all risk assessments, investors require credible information to evaluate a company’s performance against its peers,” said ICCR’s David Schilling. “The Guide helps investors determine whether and how companies are diminishing human rights-related risks to the company, and, more importantly, to people and communities.”

As Margaret Wachenfeld, Director of Legal Affairs at IHRB and lead author of the Guide observed, “Human rights risks now go well beyond the important but iconic concern of child labour in supply chains. For example, human rights risks around land acquisitions have the potential to affect whole asset classes. The Guide can help investors work with companies to ensure they have the systems and know-how to deal with human rights risks.”

Investing the Rights Way: A Guide for Investors on Business and Human Rights is available as a free download on the websites of IHRB, Calvert and ICCR and will be launched at investor events in New York on March 8th and in London on March 15th 2013.

Institute for Human Rights and Business: www.ihrb.org

The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) works to raise corporate standards and strengthen public policy to ensure that the activities of companies do not contribute to human rights abuses, and in fact lead to positive outcomes.

Calvert Investment Services: www.calvert.com

A leader in sustainable and responsible investments (SRI), Calvert Investments offers investors among the widest choice of SRI strategies of any investment management company in the United States.

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility: www.iccr.org

Currently celebrating its 42nd year, ICCR is the pioneer coalition of faith-based shareholders who view the management of their investments as a catalyst for change.

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