



# 10 THINGS BUSINESSES CAN DO

## To help create an enabling environment for transition to democracy and market economy

Following the fall of communism in the late 1980s, business in Central and Eastern Europe had to be created anew. Privatisation programmes attracted inward investment and business management experience from outside the region. Old industrial areas were transformed and green-field investments have brought new jobs and new technology. Locally developed small and medium-sized enterprises together with a growing number of consumers – hungry for products and services that they had been denied – provided the dynamism for economic change. Leaders from the business sector went about lobbying government for new policies, legislation and public institutions that helped to minimise the social costs of economic transformation and maximise the positive contribution of business. They did this in a number of ways:

### At the company level:

1. Providing **CEO and board-level leadership** – integrating social and environmental issues into board structures, customer relations, production and management processes.
2. Developing **internal codes of conduct** and / or **business principles** and implementing them at all levels, supported by management and control systems that are reviewed regularly and with the results made public where possible.
3. Carrying out rigorous and regular **impact, risk and opportunity assessments** in relation to relevant social, economic and environmental issues related to company operations.
4. Identifying, implementing and benchmarking **key performance indicators** on economic, social and environmental performance.
5. Engaging the commitment of **key business partners**

(joint ventures, suppliers, distributors and service providers) and investors in the company's strategy for addressing these issues.

6. Aiming for **public transparency and accountability** with key stakeholder groups, especially the communities in which the company operates.
7. Integrating social, economic and environmental issues into **executive development and appraisal systems** to build the capacity and incentives of employees and future leaders.

### Beyond the company level:

8. Mobilising **core competencies** (i.e. skills, technology, as well as finance) in helping to address broader issues in local communities and in society more generally.
9. **Work collectively** with other partners to address issues of public policy concern, beyond the immediate commercial interests of the company.
10. Promoting good corporate practice within the **wider business community** – i.e. through trade and industry associations, public-purpose business leadership coalitions and / or voluntary accountability initiatives.