

THE COPENHAGEN CENTRE FOR CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

GLOBALISATION,
GOVERNANCE
AND **SUSTAINABLE**
BUSINESS



The Copenhagen Centre

About us

The Copenhagen Centre is an independent think tank founded by the Danish Government in 1998 as a response to growing international interest in new social partnerships and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

The Centre has played a leading role in shaping and driving the European debate on these issues at a time when EU institutions began to adopt CSR as a political priority. The Centre combines an independent, non-partisan role with close ties to decision-makers in business and government in Denmark and Europe.

The overriding mission of the Centre has been to promote and foster awareness about social partnerships and CSR as a tool and vehicle for inclusive and

sustainable globalisation. Over the years the agenda has gained substantial ground and become more mainstream to business and public policy.

It is now time to take stock of the impact of CSR initiatives on business and society and to bring CSR from the annual boardroom toasts into core business practices and government policies.

This folder contains a brief account of our reflections on the road ahead.

PROMOTING IS OVER – IT'S TIME TO DELIVER



“The debate on CSR has been helpful in raising awareness of the non-financial responsibilities of companies. But I know of no phrase, which has done more damage to constructive thought or caused greater confusion. It has encouraged the belief that a company's responsibility to society lies in voluntary philanthropic add-ons, rather than the application of the principle to all its activities”

Geoffrey Chandler

FORMER SENIOR EXECUTIVE ROYAL DUTCH/SHELL



It's time to deliver

Critical assessment of CSR initiatives and their policy implications constitutes the new strategic focus of The Copenhagen Centre. In collaboration with our partners in business and government we are keen to address some of the major challenges:

- Closing the governance gap in the global economy
- Creating an enabling policy environment for sustainable business
- Engaging the financial sector in contributing to sustainable business practices
- Overcoming the dichotomy between regulatory and voluntary approaches to CSR
- Exploring and developing new modes of public-private partnerships
- Building capacity at appropriate levels of public administration in developing countries
- Exposing the limits and pitfalls of CSR in welfare creation
- Addressing the conceptual fuzziness of CSR and building the business case
- Exploring sustainable supply chain management by reaching beyond the first tier of suppliers and working with host governments
- Examining and evaluating potential global governance mechanisms on sustainability standards such as GRI, UN Global Compact and WTO



Mission

The Copenhagen Centre seeks to generate knowledge, stimulate public debate and raise awareness about the changing role of business in society.

The Centre aims to explore and understand the new roles, responsibilities and limits of business in the provision of public welfare.

Our work informs key decision-makers about the efficacy and relevance of CSR initiatives and their impact on both business and society.

Vision

The vision of The Copenhagen Centre is to contribute to sustainable development based on equity and social inclusion.

Strategy

The Copenhagen Centre achieves its mission through four interrelated activities:

Applied research: the Centre undertakes critical research and practical studies in collaboration with external researchers, practitioners, experts and international organisations

Conferences and dialogues: the Centre participates in various multi-stakeholder dialogues and regularly convenes decision-makers from business and government as well as academia and NGOs

Consultancy: the Centre seeks to share and develop its expertise through consultancy and teaching

Outreach activities: the Centre aims to define and provoke public debate through continuous interaction with key stakeholders and the media



“With their practical studies and critical voice, The Copenhagen Centre provides excellent guidance and food for thought on sustainable business and corporate governance”

Walther Thygesen

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HEWLETT-PACKARD



Focus areas

WELFARE AND LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

- Employment and social policies
- Global division of labour and outsourcing
- Public-private partnerships and firms as welfare providers

GOVERNANCE, PUBLIC POLICY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Ethical supplier standards and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
- Non-financial reporting: GRI, UN Global Compact, OECD guidelines etc.
- Regulatory vs. voluntary approaches to CSR
- The global trading system and economic development

BUSINESS STRATEGY, RISK MANAGEMENT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- Auditing, disclosure and supply chain management
- Competitiveness and 'a level playing field'
- The financial sector and responsible investment

Selected projects

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM

In collaboration with EABIS, Ashridge Business School and CSR Europe, The Copenhagen Centre is organising a multi-stakeholder forum funded by the EU Commission's FP6 Research Programme. The objective is to bring together business, government, social partners, consumer organisations and other actors to identify key research issues and policy recommendations at the forefront of CSR. The forum's focus is on reporting and accountability.

NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE

Non-financial reporting is on the rise. These reporting procedures go beyond financial accounting to include social and environmental performance indicators in an attempt to disclose the degree of CSR initiatives. Launched in 2002, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is one of the most influential non-financial reporting standards. The GRI is also important because the UN Global Compact encourages its participants to apply the guidelines.

The project on GRI examines whether GRI is an emerging global governance regime or simply corporate window-dressing.

SMEs AND GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

SMEs play a key role in any economy across the globe. With the globalisation of value chains, every nation is a potential sourcing base, production site and market.

The result is vast opportunities and fierce competition.

The project focuses on sustainability challenges faced by SMEs in global supply chains. What role can SMEs play in sustainable global governance and what are the implications for their competitiveness? What is the role of multinational corporations that set the standards in value chains?


RESPONSIBLE COMPETITIVENESS

In collaboration with AccountAbility, the Centre in 2002 initiated a study entitled "Corporate Responsibility and the Competitive Advantage of Nations". The study investigates potential benefits and pitfalls of corporate responsibility as an element of national and regional economic competitiveness strategies in order to address social inclusion and wider societal issues.

Work to date has suggested possible routes for placing corporate responsibility within national and regional competitiveness strategies thereby contributing to creating an economy that favours responsible competitiveness. The work has generated great interest from a variety of individuals and organisations, leading to the establishment of a Responsible Competitiveness Consortium.




ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORK OF THE COPENHAGEN CENTRE:

 “Indeed, profit is not incompatible with the promotion of social justice and with finding solutions to social and labour problems”

Romano Prodi

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

 “The European campaign on corporate social responsibility is a good example of how leading companies can serve as inspiration to the entire business community and promote effective action”

Anders Fogh Rasmussen

PRIME MINISTER OF DENMARK

Strategic partners

To ensure excellence in our research, the Centre has regular exchanges with academia, business and government. We believe in strategic partnerships as a lever to mutual inspiration and dissemination of our research results.

GOVERNMENT:

- Government agencies across Europe
- EU Commission: DG Enterprise, DG Employment and Social Affairs, DG Trade
- UN Global Compact

BUSINESS:

- Deloitte and PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Danish National Network of Business Leaders
- Board members from business, e.g. Hewlett-Packard and Novozymes

BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS:

- CSR Europe
- European Academy for Business in Society (EABIS)
- International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF)

ACADEMIA:

- Ashridge Business School, UK
- Columbia Law School, US
- Copenhagen Business School, DK

Academic advisory board

- Mette Morsing, Associate Professor, Copenhagen Business School
- Charles Sabel, Professor, Columbia Law School
- Gunnar Trumbull, Professor, Harvard Business School



The Copenhagen Centre

THE COPENHAGEN CENTRE | HOLMENS KANAL 20 | DK-1016 COPENHAGEN | PHONE: +45 3528 8580
FAX: +45 3536 0871 | TCC@COPENHAGENCENTRE.ORG | WWW.COPENHAGENCENTRE.ORG

