
Foreword

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has the potential to change not just our neighbourhoods, our villages, our cities, our countries but also our world. Everyone, at all levels, within an organisation can be a champion for CSR (or Social Responsibility (SR) as it is becoming known). SR emphasises that it not just about large corporations; everyone can participate. The impact can ripple out beyond the organisation and the sector. When organisations implement SR there can be immediate positive benefits for human rights and the environment.



Canada has been championing SR at home and abroad. The Government of Canada works with other governments to enhance their capacity to manage their own natural resources for economic, social and environmental sustainability and to respect human and labour rights. This includes the transparent development of legislation which strikes a balance between host government responsibilities and corporate activity.

The increasing importance of SR is reflected in the growing number of Canadian private-sector and civil society led initiatives emerging across Canada and around the world. Many Canadian companies are working individually, with members of civil society or through their associations to develop codes of conduct and in the development of best practices including risk assessment, stakeholder relations and reporting, to guide their operations both domestically and overseas.

The Government of Canada encourages and expects all Canadian companies working around the world to respect all applicable laws and international standards, to operate transparently and in consultation with host governments and local communities, and to conduct their activities in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. A key aspect of Canada's commitment to corporate social responsibility is the promotion of internationally agreed upon voluntary standards and engagement in multilateral fora.

I hope this guidebook on social responsibility will inspire companies operating in Bangladesh to develop and implement socially responsible businesses. It is good for business as well as for the country. Bangladesh has the potential to become a leader and innovator with SR and I hope this guidebook is just a first step.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Heather Cruden".

HE Heather Cruden
High Commissioner of Canada in Bangladesh