Respecting Human Rights
What are Human Rights?

- Any basic right or freedom to which all human beings are entitled

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination."

- Eleanor Roosevelt
GE’s Human Rights Journey

2006-07
GE Joins Business Leader Initiative on Human Rights to Understand Human Rights in Business Context

2007
Statement of Principles on Human Rights Support UDHR and Reflects Sphere of Influence

2008
GE Joins UN Global Compact Focused on Human Rights Environment

2009
Human Rights Implementing Procedures Issued

2010 Developments:
- Member of Global Business Initiative on HR
- Close working relationship with John Ruggie, Special Rep of UN Secy General on Human Rights in Business - “Protect”/“Respect”/“Remedy”
- MyLearning Human Rights Training rolled out to 6,000 Managers
- Current Issue: Conflict Minerals – Preparing to respond to regulations due next year
- Session D: For first time include an inquiry into Human Rights and activities of Human Rights Champions at each business
GE Statement of Principles on Human Rights

Our Commitment

GE, as a business enterprise, promotes respect for fundamental human rights. We support the principles contained in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, remaining mindful that the Declaration is primarily addressed to nations. GE has joined with other companies to find practical ways of applying within the business community the broad principles established in the Declaration.

Our Actions

GE endeavors to advance respect for fundamental human rights within the communities in which our businesses operate. We do this in important part by leading by example - influencing our employees and business partners through actions consistent with policies contained in the Spirit & Letter. Wherever we do business, GE aspires to:

✅ In Our Management Capacity
✅ RESPECTING the human rights of our employees as established in the ILO’s (International Labour Organization) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, including non-discrimination, prohibitions against child and forced labor, freedom of association and the right to engage in collective bargaining.
✅ PROVIDING security consistent with the intent of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, as well as the laws of the countries in which we operate, retaining security services for preventative or defensive purposes with instructions to use force only when necessary and to an extent proportional to the threat.

✅ In Our Business Capacity
✅ DEVELOPING and offering products, including those that meet human needs for power, water and medical care, with due regard for fundamental human rights and a sustainable environment.

✅ With Our Direct Business Partners
✅ INCORPORATING appropriate principles of The Spirit & The Letter into contracts with suppliers, business partners and distributors.
✅ MONITORING adherence by key suppliers in emerging markets to environmental, health and safety standards, prohibitions against forced and child labor, and local wage and hour laws.
✅ EVALUATING human rights issues involving our direct business partners – particularly in emerging markets – and considering practical responses within the relevant context.
✅ ADVANCING application of the ILO Declaration through engagement and collaboration.

✅ In the Community
✅ SERVING as a positive influence in communities in which we operate, demonstrating by our actions our belief that human rights violations are unacceptable.
✅ ASSESSING, as appropriate, the impact on affected local communities of major infrastructure project financing.
IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES: HUMAN RIGHTS

Responsibilities – utilizing existing GE operating cycles…

Vice President of Corporate Citizenship

- Corporate programs
- Directing business-based Compliance Review Boards

Business-based Compliance Review Boards

- Evaluate transactions for risk
- Respond to HR violations
- Monitor business relationship with partners
- Serve as positive influence in support of HR
- Create awareness with employees
- Evaluate human rights in Sessions D and E
- Upstream due diligence re large infrastructure projects
- Apply Equator Principles prior to infrastructure financing
- Apply Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights
- Highlighting due diligence re minority joint ventures

National Executives

- Work through country or Regional Boards to flag human rights issues

Compliance Leaders – In the context of Session D…

- Risk assessment & abatement
- Training and communication
- Issue reporting and resolution

Employees

- “Eyes always open” reporting
- “Know Your Customer”
UN / Ruggie Framework

UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights

Three Pillars

- State duty to protect Human Rights
  (Laws, Regulation & Enforcement)

- Business Entities’ responsibility to respect Human Rights
  (Due Diligence & Reporting)

- Access to remedies for Human Rights violations

UN / OECD / EU policy frameworks / US Federal & State laws

“Soft Law” of Human Rights becoming viscous
Benefits to GE of Corporate Social Responsibility

- Reduced financial and reputational risk
- Reduced risk from human rights litigation
- Improved stakeholder relations – NGOs/SRI
- More secure license to operate: Promote Rule to Law
- Consistent with commercial messaging: Ecomagination, Healthymagination
- Solving the world’s biggest problems: Water, Energy, Healthcare
Guangdong EHS Academy

- Multi-company initiative, launched by the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC)
- Recently expanded to Jiangsu
- Leverages expertise of companies, government, and ISC
- Workshops include EHS, management systems, climate change, the business case for EHS
- In 2010, about 100 Chinese suppliers trained on energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reductions
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“Dilemma: Gender Equality

What should a company do when its internal policies prohibit gender discrimination and promote gender equality, yet local cultural, legal or business norms permit and promote discrimination against women within some of the countries where it operates?”
“The destiny of human rights is in the hands of all of our citizens in all of our communities.”

-Eleanor Roosevelt.