



# BSR Response to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

May 2014

## About BSR

BSR works with its global network of more than 250 member companies to build a just and sustainable world. From its offices in Asia, Europe, and North and South America, BSR develops sustainable business strategies and solutions through consulting, research, and cross-sector collaboration. Visit [www.bsr.org](http://www.bsr.org) for more information about BSR's more than 20 years of leadership in sustainability.

BSR appreciates the opportunity to provide input into the **Inquiry into the role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region**.

According to the Terms of Reference, the Committee will inquire into the role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region.

Based on our experience, BSR has the following high level recommendations for the Committee:

- » **Promote a holistic approach to private sector engagement and business leadership** in the region by recognizing that companies have both responsibilities and opportunities related to poverty reduction – e.g. base-of-the-pyramid innovation should exist alongside commitments to fair labor conditions and respect for human rights;
- » **Understand private sector assets** and where they can add value or support scale – including capital and human assets, technology and innovation capacities, community networks and investments, access to hard-to-reach populations as well as their networks and influence; and,
- » **Build a strategy for private sector engagement** which is built around shared objectives and unique assets, not just cost-sharing targets, and articulate the business incentives for collaboration.

BSR's response to the Committee is outlined in the following sections:

1. Problem statement
2. What this means for business
3. Business leadership inclusive economies: Vision and frameworks
4. Critical regional issues and representative projects
5. About BSR

## PROBLEM STATEMENT<sup>1</sup>

In the last half-century, the world has made incredible strides in economic and social progress. We are [living longer](#) and, on the whole, are richer than we were 50 years ago. [Nearly a billion people](#) have been lifted out of extreme poverty in the last 20 years. The world is on track to achieve at least [three of the eight Millennium Development Goals](#), and we have made substantial progress on the others. Nearly every country has [improved its human development status](#) since 1990, and in the next 40 years, [billions more](#) are expected to join the global middle class, with most of this growth in emerging economies.

However, focusing on national and global averages obscures the reality within individual countries, whether developing, emerging, or developed where many people have been overlooked. In many countries, the number of people living in poverty has stayed the same or even increased, and gaps in incomes, health, and wellbeing are growing between segments of the population. [Oxfam's recent briefing paper](#) on inequality found that the wealth of the one-percent richest in the world amounts to 65 times the total wealth of the bottom half of the population. Africa is now home to 55 billionaires (combined wealth US\$143bn) which is more than double the number a decade ago. In India, billionaire wealth is now equivalent to 10% of GDP compared to 1% in the mid-1990s. In fact, people in the lowest income segment across countries share similar struggles in accessing economic opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

Approximately two thirds of countries with available data experienced an increase in income inequality between 1990 and 2005, despite globally robust economic growth.<sup>3</sup> More than 80 percent of the world's population lives in countries where income differentials are widening. A 1% increase in incomes in the most unequal countries produces a mere 0.6% reduction in poverty; in the most equal countries, it yields a 4.3% cut.<sup>4</sup> Rising inequality dampens the poverty-reducing effects of growth. Over the past two decades, [Asia's Gini coefficient](#) – the most widely used measure of inequality – has increased from 39 to 46.<sup>5</sup>

Vulnerable communities, face some of the [greatest barriers to inclusion](#). These groups include the disabled, migrants, and women. Significant structural, legal, capability barriers exist that make it difficult for such people to access opportunities and improve their well-being. These are often perpetuated by inequality. For example, of the 143 countries surveyed by the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law project, 79 have legal restrictions on working hours, sectors and occupations, limiting the type of work women can pursue.

The effects of [climate change](#) exacerbate the challenges of creating an inclusive economy. Although all are affected by climate impacts, the poor and other vulnerable communities are [hit the hardest](#) because of their dependence on natural resources for their livelihoods, poor access to products and services, and limited influence over decision-making. All actors must do much more to ensure that the economy offers widespread benefits and opportunities if we are going to meet the needs of a population estimated to reach 9 billion by mid-century on our already resource-constrained planet.

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<sup>1</sup> Note, this section borrows heavily from Davis Pluess, Jessica, "Making the Economy Work for Everyone: Business Leadership for an Inclusive Economy", *BSR Insight*, January 28, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8638.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/10\\_inequalities.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/10_inequalities.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21578665-nearly-1-billion-people-have-been-taken-out-extreme-poverty-20-years-world-should-aim>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/jan/28/mumbai-monolith-post-2015-inequality>

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR BUSINESS: RISK, RESILIENCE, AND OPPORTUNITY<sup>6</sup>

Today, we are at a critical juncture on the path to economic and social progress, one that presents significant risks and opportunities for business.

In its [2014 Global Risks report](#), the World Economic Forum identified severe income disparity and high structural unemployment and underemployment as two of the top five greatest global risks. [A growing number of economists](#) predict that continuing to exclude large segments of the population from the economy will not only lead to fewer and fewer opportunities for the people falling behind, but could actually stall progress for everyone, including business.

In particular, companies suffer when exclusion affects the availability of skilled workers, productivity of the labor force, and social stability. In recent years, widespread labor unrest in China has disrupted manufacturing operations in the country. Community disapproval everywhere from South America to West Africa has resulted in increasing numbers of delays at large-scale oil and gas projects. And the tragic loss of lives at [Rana Plaza](#) last year demonstrated both the serious human toll and the impacts on business of excluding large segments of the population from empowering and fulfilling economic opportunities.

There are also incredible gains available for those companies that widen the net of economic, social, and other benefits to more people. This is especially true as global demographics and economic powers shift: In the next 40 years, [70 percent of global population growth](#) is expected to be in 24 of today's poorest countries, and by 2050, Brazil, China, and India are projected to account for [40 percent of global output](#). The market for healthcare products and services for people at the base of the economic pyramid is currently estimated to be [US\\$158 billion](#) alone, and banking revenues from small-to-medium enterprises in emerging markets are expected to grow to [US\\$367 billion](#) by 2015 (from US\$150 billion in 2010).

In countries with declining populations, building the workforces of the future is a business imperative, and there is mounting evidence that investments to create healthier and well-paid workforces [pays off](#) in increased productivity, efficiency, and consumer spending. Additionally, the evidence already shows that investing in generating economic opportunities for women [leads to positive outcomes](#) in households, builds resilience to economic shocks, and promotes sustained economic growth.

Increasing trade and investment, technology advancements, and private sector employment have all helped make progress in the last half-century possible. At the same time, the architecture of global supply chains and business operations has contributed to some of the conditions that make it difficult for people to escape poverty and exclusion. There is little dispute that business activity will continue to be a critical driver of economic and social progress. However, going forward, companies will need to make a stronger commitment to embrace both their responsibility as actors in the economy and their role as enablers of economic opportunities to ensure that the future of our economy brings about widespread benefits for society and in turn, more opportunities for business.

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<sup>6</sup> Note, this section borrows heavily from Davis Pluess, Jessica, "Making the Economy Work for Everyone: Business Leadership for an Inclusive Economy", *BSR Insight*, January 28, 2014.

## **BUSINESS LEADERSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES: VISION AND FRAMEWORKS<sup>7</sup>**

We believe that the challenges before us can be translated into opportunities for business and society through leadership and commitment by the private sector. We also know that business cannot tackle these challenges without partnerships with civil society, government, and the individuals and communities who remain excluded from the economy.

Late last year, [MasterCard CEO Ajay Banga declared](#) that we are on the threshold of a seismic shift. He predicted that commerce would soon be driven by a “more empowered, inclusive planet...where those who aren’t included have an opportunity to join the financial mainstream.”

For MasterCard, including more people in the economy is a business imperative: [2.5 billion adults](#) do not have a bank account, and [85 percent of all retail transactions](#) are still made in cash and checks. Financial inclusion is also a global development imperative, allowing people to save for their families’ future and invest in their enterprises in safe and affordable ways. In the last few years, [MasterCard has combined its technology, expertise, resources, and networks](#) to expand opportunities for underserved groups, including young people and women.

MasterCard is one of the many companies looking at new ways to reach and empower people that have previously been excluded from the formal economy. Indeed, efforts like these have helped lift more than a half billion people out of poverty in the past 30 years. But despite this progress, questions remain. How do we translate these aspirations into lasting economic opportunity for people and value for the businesses that seek to serve their needs? How can we foster greater—and different—business investments in excluded and underserved populations?

At BSR, we believe that there are three opportunities for business leadership: Generating decent and empowering jobs, maximizing local benefits and opportunities in communities, and enabling access to essential goods and services.

We acknowledge that to achieve our vision of an inclusive economy, companies must embrace both their responsibility to dismantle barriers and their opportunities to drive greater inclusion.

### **Generating Decent and Empowering Jobs**

Jobs are essential to ensuring that people can participate fully in and benefit from the economy. Jobs also allow companies to develop the human capital and supply chain capabilities that form the foundation of any business. However, a job in and of itself does not always offer a route out of poverty or vulnerability.

There remain significant gaps in the availability and quality of jobs in both developing and developed countries. Youth unemployment has reached record levels, and around the world, women are disproportionately engaged in vulnerable employment and earn substantially less than men for comparable work. Additionally, very large numbers of people live just above the poverty line, facing significant challenges in meeting their daily needs and vulnerability to financial and environmental shocks.

Through our work on building sustainable supply chains and healthy workforces, we know some of the levers companies can use to build decent and empowering

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<sup>7</sup> Note, this section borrows heavily from Davis Pluess, Jessica, “How Business Can Build an Inclusive Economy”, *BSR Insight*, April 8, 2014.

jobs, which, in turn, help companies tap the best talent, sources of innovation, and production capacity. BSR's HERproject, a workplace-based health education and financial literacy program, demonstrated early on that jobs that empower workers with knowledge, skills, and access to health services, alongside respect for fundamental labor rights, offer women meaningful economic opportunities, with benefits that extend to households and communities. This pays dividends to business in the form of reduced absenteeism, higher productivity, and better relations between workers and management.

In addition to meeting core labor standards, we believe a good job must ensure wages and benefits that enable an adequate standard of living for employees and their families, provide safe and healthy workplace conditions, and empower people to achieve their potential and build a livelihood. This builds on the work set out in the International Labor Organization's Decent Work agenda.

### **Maximizing Local Benefits and Opportunities in Communities**

Business activity can have ripple effects that generate local economic development and opportunities for individuals and communities. This is particularly true for companies with a large physical footprint, such as those in the extractives or retail industries, but also for other industries that operate and invest in communities across their value chain.

Aligning investments with the needs of communities, particularly those of marginalized and vulnerable groups, can help communities transcend the significant barriers many face in benefitting from inward investment, resource development, and infrastructure projects. It can also help avoid any negative impacts, such as rapid distortion of the prices of goods and services, environmental and health hazards, and land ownership disputes. This approach is particularly crucial in the many places where governance is weak or disputed and/or where access to local social services and protections is limited. While this plays out differently in urban and rural contexts, there are numerous ways businesses can shape their investments, operations, and engagement strategies to unlock more opportunities for more people.

We've learned through our work in rapidly growing cities in China and Brazil, remote mining villages in Chile and Papua New Guinea, and in the apparel sector in emerging markets like Myanmar how companies can maximize local benefits and opportunities from their investments. For example, companies can enhance local hiring and sourcing strategies; support sustainable resource management; invest in local skills, technology, and infrastructure; and use their influence with government to drive investments in community needs.

We believe that widespread local benefits from investments have a higher likelihood of success when people are able to participate in shaping the future of their communities. We've seen this firsthand through our work with Freeport-McMoRan in Chile, which is engaging rural and urban communities near its mining operations to design and implement the company's social investments, building trust and local capacity.

In taking such steps, companies can create strong community relationships, the conditions for sustained local economic growth, more empowered and loyal consumers, and a healthy and well-skilled employee and supplier base.

### **Enabling Access to Essential Goods and Services**

By 2030, nearly 5 billion people are expected to reach a middle-class standard of living. Despite these projections, essential goods and services such as healthcare, energy, water, food, and housing currently remain beyond the grasp of millions of people, including both the poor and the emerging middle class. For business, this represents a significant opportunity to address unmet needs—and reach large numbers of untapped consumers.

Many companies, often in partnership with other actors, are exploring innovative business models to solve this challenge. Companies are investing in research to help them understand the needs and aspirations of underserved groups, working with innovative impact investors and social entrepreneurs, transforming design processes, redefining distribution networks, and investing in other infrastructure needed to reach populations previously excluded from formal markets.

Along with many of our peers working on base-of-the-pyramid and inclusive business models, we have documented some of these innovative practices. For example, our work on the Guiding Principles on Access to Healthcare has brought together major healthcare companies to frame the industry's approach to reducing the global burden of disease, and we have worked with companies like Western Union, where we helped the company explore approaches to support women's economic empowerment. We are particularly encouraged by efforts that use technology to engage groups with a limited voice and extend the reach of goods and services, such as tailored mobile applications for health and finance.

It is essential that while we expand access, we do so within planetary boundaries. Emerging business models based on the foundations of a collaborative economy are surfacing new opportunities to tackle barriers to access and minimize impacts on natural resources. This represents another design challenge for innovation of products and services to advance sustainability.

We believe that business is one of the many actors that can increase access to goods and services by addressing critical barriers such as availability, awareness, affordability, and quality.

We know that the next half-century is likely to be very different from the last. Galloping innovations, climate change and natural resource constraints, generational shifts in the workforce, rapid urbanization, and hyper-transparency and connectivity are all remaking our economy. The strategies that fueled remarkable human progress over the last century are not the strategies that will accelerate progress in the 21st century. Only by redefining and creating new priorities, actions, and partnerships, will we realize our vision of an inclusive economy.

## **CRITICAL REGIONAL ISSUES AND REPRESENTATIVE PROJECTS**

Business can lead in numerous ways, and we've seen many BSR member companies set an example through supplier engagement programs, product innovations, and community investments.

With specific reference to the Asia-Pacific region, we highlight four cross-cutting issues as carrying particular significance in poverty alleviation efforts, and in businesses role in supporting them: Gender, South-South migration, community investment in oil, gas, and mining sites, and building resilience to climate related risks.

### **Gender**

Supporting women's empowerment is a critical approach to realizing inclusive and profitable communities. Within the Asia region, the status of women varies but is generally low. Gender discrimination, gender-based violence, and gender disparities related to health, financial knowledge and services, and education, are all widespread and common. Such issues can impact business profitability and growth potential, and can increase risks in supply chains, operations, and consumer segments.

#### HERproject – Multi-company, BSR-led initiative

HERproject is a BSR-led initiative to empower low-income women working in global supply chains through workplace programs promoting health, economic empowerment, and women's rights.

Launched in 2007, HERhealth brings global companies, supplier factories, and local NGOs together to improve women's health knowledge, behavior, and access to services. Programs in more than 250 factories and farms in 10 countries including 8 in Asia (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Vietnam) have impacted more than 250,000 women to date.

HERfinance, launched in 2012, connects workers to financial services and uses peer education and training programs to increase financial planning capability and financial behavior. Since its launch, HERfinance has reached nearly 10,000 workers—most of whom are women between the ages of 18 and 35—in India's readymade garment sector.

#### Women in Factories - Walmart

The Women in Factories program, in partnership with Walmart, also works with women factory workers. The program seeks to empower those women through work and life-skills training programs. High-potential female workers are selected to participate and develop opportunities for career advancement and in-factory leadership, leading to tangible impacts and advancement in their professional status and income.

The Walmart Women in Factories program is being implemented in India, Bangladesh, and China, as well as in countries in Central America. BSR is the implementing partner in China.

#### Women's Empowerment in Trade Zones – IFC research partnership

Working with the IFC, BSR conducted research on women's economic empowerment opportunities in Bangladesh, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, El Salvador, Jordan, Kenya, and Philippines, and made recommendations for solutions to barriers currently limiting that empowerment. BSR also completed a separate in-depth cases study on Bangladesh, from which the IFC is implementing three of our recommendations through a pilot program that benefits more than 200,000 women working in Bangladesh's export zones. In recognition

of this project's contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment in Bangladesh, BEPZA won the annual IFC CEO Gender Award in 2012.

### **South-South Migration**

Significant numbers of people are moving between countries within the Asia-Pacific region in search of better economic opportunities. Transnational labor migration carries significant risks, and BSR has found maltreatment amounting to human trafficking – including passport withholding, restricted movement, and nonpayment of wages. International migrants are working extensively within light manufacturing, tourism, industrial agriculture (including palm oil), and construction sectors within the region. Many migrants from the Asia region are also traveling to other regions for work, including the Middle East and Europe.

BSR has done extensive work related to safe migration, and the responsibility of global business to promote safe and ethical practices. Most recently, BSR's Migration Linkages project focused on the development of ethical recruitment of international workers in Malaysia.

The project connected multinational companies and their manufacturing suppliers with civil society, international organizations, labor unions, and governments to build transparency around the global migration system and advance responsible business practices and public policy.

As a result of the project, the largest employer in the ICT sector in Malaysia, together with the strongest activist NGO in Malaysia, partnered on a training program impacting 10,000+ workers.

### **Community investment in and around oil, gas, and mining extraction sites**

Companies working in the oil, gas, and mining sectors make long-term investments in the communities where they build extraction sites. Government regulations and stakeholder pressure have led to many innovations within this sector, including within the Asia region. Many BSR members have implemented effective projects to build resilient communities, and establish and maintain social license to operate.

#### Local Content & Community Investment Planning - Fortune 500 Oil & Gas Client – Indonesia

BSR developed an integrated local content and community investment plan for one of its extractives members with existing operations and exploration opportunities in Indonesia. This extensive plan addressed workforce, supplier, community investment, and regulatory issues as well as provided a road map for design, execution, and resource requirements.

#### Local Supplier and Civil Society Assessment - ExxonMobil – Papua New Guinea

BSR conducted a third-party survey of supplier and NGO capabilities that would be available to support the company's local content programs and social investment initiatives. This assessment was used to establish a baseline of business capabilities among local suppliers. BSR also conducted due diligence and furnished the project with recommendations regarding local organizations that could assist with training and capacity building.

#### Social Impact & Development Management Plans - Mining Client – Southeast Asia

BSR was contracted by one of its mining members to develop a comprehensive social impact management plan for a multi-billion dollar greenfield project. This work included an overarching framework for social impact management over the life of the project and twenty supporting impact management plans. Required inputs included a rapid Human Rights and Security Impact Assessment, Project-induced in-migration assessment, internal workshops, and extensive stakeholder consultations.



#### Human Rights Impact Assessment & VPSHR Training - Mining Client - Laos

BSR conducted a human rights impact assessment for a foreign owned mining company. BSR identified and mapped stakeholders to be involved and conducted on-the-ground interviews to collect data for the assessment which was presented to company management. BSR also facilitated a one-day workshop and training on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.

#### Operations, Security Forces, and NGO Training on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights - Mining Client – Philippines

BSR developed and delivered a comprehensive two-day human rights training program that included operational management, supervisors, and security personnel. A later phase also included training for security contractors and a two-day “train-the-trainers” workshop for company personnel and a preferred local partner organization. BSR also facilitated two eight-hour human rights workshops for members of the Chamber of Mines and key stakeholders such as local NGOs and government representatives.

#### Stakeholder Engagement & Social Impact Management Strategy - Mining Client – Indonesia

For its feasibility stage project, the mining client partnered with BSR to achieve internal alignment on and create a shared platform for the prioritization of major project-related social issues. BSR delivered an executive-level workshop focused on the integration of corporate responsibility and social risk mitigation into the operation.

#### **Building resilience to climate-related risks**

As an anchor to its Business in a Climate-Constrained World initiative, BSR has produced a report – “Business in a Climate-Constrained World: Catalyzing a Climate-Resilient Future through the Power of the Private Sector”. This report outlines BSR’s new strategy to mobilize ambitious business action on climate change. It is the result of an extensive literature review, elite interviews conducted with leading practitioners across a variety of important sectors and issue areas, and discussions held within focus groups convened throughout BSR’s network.

The report finds that business is increasingly exposed to risks from climate change, with some estimates putting the cumulative global cost as high as US\$4 trillion by 2030. While 84 percent of Global 500 companies report that they have emissions-reductions targets, and 75 percent report that they have already reduced emissions, the report highlights the need for a greater commitment to ambition to match the volume of activity.

To increase ambition and impact, the report sets forth BSR’s theory of change for business, which includes stabilizing the climate system through unique “resilience wedges” that combine ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reductions with enhanced adaptive capacity.

#### Enhancing Resilience through Ambition – Walmart

To reduce environmental impacts, increase women’s empowerment, improve food safety, and support rural development, Walmart has committed to training more than 1 million farmers in its supply chain, half of whom are women. Walmart China partnered with BSR to implement the Green Farmer program to provide trainings in sustainable agricultural practices for farmers throughout China.

To date, the program has trained more than 2,800 farmers—1,000 of whom are women—on sustainable practices, such as soil testing, integrated pest management, composting, vegetable and pest disease diagnosis and pesticide selection and safe use. Many participants have experienced an approximately 30

percent increase in crop yields and reduced operating costs due to better disease prevention and decreased pesticide use.

Through this program, Walmart China has demonstrated its leadership in building resilience within its own operations and within its suppliers. Additionally, the program has enabled farmers to protect against climate-related impacts, such as diminished crop production and crop damage from pests, through the use of sustainable agricultural practices.

## ABOUT BSR

BSR is a global nonprofit business network dedicated to sustainability. Our mission is to work with business to create a just and sustainable world. We envision a world in which everyone can lead a prosperous and dignified life within the boundaries of the Earth's natural resources.

BSR believes that a just and sustainable world will result when the unique skills and resources of all sectors—business, civil society, and government—are aligned toward that goal. **The role of business** is to create and deliver products and services in a way that treats people fairly, meets individual's needs and aspirations within the boundaries of our planet, and encourages market and policy frameworks that enable a sustainable future. **BSR's role** is to catalyze change within business by integrating sustainability into strategy and operations, and to promote collaboration among companies and their stakeholders for systemic progress toward a just and sustainable world.

Ensuring more people are able to participate and benefit from the economy is essential to achieving BSR's mission. It is also critical to ensuring that businesses are able to thrive. Within this context, BSR is committed to catalyze and scale business-driven actions to build an inclusive economy.

### **Business Leadership for an Inclusive Economy: BSR's Commitment**

BSR will build on more than 20 years in the sustainability field, our intimate knowledge of business drivers and operations, and our understanding of the policy and stakeholder landscape to catalyze business action for more inclusive economic systems.

Over the coming years, our focus will be on promoting systems-wide solutions that dismantle barriers to inclusion and expand the factors that enable and empower everyone to contribute to and benefit from the economy. Respect for fundamental human rights, including principles of dignity, participation, non-discrimination, transparency, and accountability, are fundamental to achieving our vision.

This initiative is firmly grounded in BSR's own theory of change which is that a just and sustainable world will result when the unique skills and resources of all sectors—business, civil society, and government—are aligned toward that goal. The role of business is to create and deliver products and services in a way that treats people fairly, meets individual's needs and aspirations within the boundaries of our planet, and encourages market and policy frameworks that enable a sustainable future.

In this initiative, we have also draws on the theoretical foundations of many of our peers and companies working on inclusive growth, shared value, inclusive business, base of the pyramid business models, and market-led solutions to poverty. These have all advanced the debate and driven tremendous change in our collective understanding of the role of business in bringing more people into the formal economy and alleviating poverty.

The model we will apply in this initiative is based on four fundamental beliefs about how business can drive change:

- Business exists within **a system of actors**, processes, and relationships. To drive long-lasting change, companies must look at how their actions fit within this broader system and the potential externalities that result from any one action. Our approach also takes into account the structural factors shaping the economy and business opportunities.

- Business has **multiple levers** that can be used to drive change and are most effective when combined and synergistic. These levers include companies' capital and human assets, technology and innovation capacities, community networks and investments, as well as their voice and policy influence. While individual programs and solutions are important, greater integration and collaboration across functions, with value chain partners, and regions are necessary.
- Business has both **responsibilities and opportunities**. This includes a recognition that business activity can present both risks and opportunities for the individuals and communities they touch and that companies have a responsibility to mitigate risks and negative impacts while also seeking opportunities to drive business growth and maximize profits.
- Business cannot act alone. The complexity and scale of the challenges requires **partnerships** both within and across industries and sectors. Different actors enable a sharing of risks and greater opportunities for sustainable and scalable change by combining their investment capital, resources, knowledge, and influence.

### **Our Organization**

With more than 100 employees in eight offices across Asia, Europe, and North and South America, we drive social and environmental impact through:

- » **Membership:** We work with our network of more than 250 of the world's most influential companies to inform and strengthen their sustainability efforts.
- » **Advisory Services:** We undertake one-on-one engagements with companies on a diverse range of sustainability issues to catalyze progress.
- » **Collaborative Initiatives:** We lead business collaboration as well as multi-sector efforts to achieve systemic progress.
- » **Partnerships:** We identify and facilitate partnerships among business and grant-funders to create greater sustainability impact than could be achieved on their own.
- » **Research:** We undertake grant-supported research that spurs progress on global challenges in sustainable business.