

To what extent should large international companies make acting in a socially responsible manner more of a priority than increasing their profits?

Today, most of the large international companies not only want to increase their profits, but also need to behave in a socially responsible manner. For example, these corporations have to respect the basic human rights of all people. Of course, most employees in developed countries are provided with good working and living conditions. Lots of foreign workers however, live in conditions of severe poverty.

Additionally, multinational enterprises may use child labour, ignore safety guidelines, and require long working hours. For instance, the world's biggest food company, Nestle, has been accused of failing to carry out checks on these abuses in West Africa, BBC reported in June, 2012.

Furthermore, multinational corporations are criticized for entering countries that have low environmental standards, the unsustainable exploitation of national resources, and erosion of traditional cultures.

On the other hand, it is only logical that companies prioritize to increase their profits. Indeed, multinationals pay workers in developing countries far below levels in developed regions. Nevertheless, employees earn more than the unemployed, and corporations invest in establishing plants, training workers, etc.

In this essay, several opinions are given to discuss the conflicts of interest between social responsibility and the increase of profits.

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