

# Work Ethics: Values, Rights, Obligations

Interreglous Seminar on decent Work, Geneva 27-29 April 2011, ILO, ISESCO, WCC, Pontifical Council Justice and Peace, Globethics.net

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## 1.1 Meaning of Work and Goal of Life

- In Christian (religious) perspective, the ultimate goal of life is to correspond to God's will (to be unified/reconciled with God, with the Ultimate. Sanctification).
- All human activities (formation, work, leisure, community life, worship/prayer) have to be oriented towards this goal and are evaluated in this light.
- Work(job) can be worship or destruction, blessing or curse.

## 1.2 Salvation does not depend on work

- In Christian perspective (protestant, catholic, orthodox), work does not contribute to salvation/ sanctification. This is only the fruit of faith and truthfulness to God's will.
- Since we are liberated only by god's grace and do not have to care about our own salvation, we are free to serve the community/ needy, work for justice and care for God's creation (Calvin in Geneva)
- Max Weber's view, that prosperity through protestant work ethics is a sign of salvation, is an aberration and description of some examples of Scottish puritanism, but not of Calvin.
- Widespread Pentecostal Prosperity Gospel today is a real threat to Christian work ethics and is a heresy.

## 2.1 Core Virtues (for Work Ethics)

Core (individual) virtues in Christianity, similar in all religions:

- Prudent/moderate (sophrosyne)
- Wise
- Honest/transparent
- Courageous (for justice)
- Modest
- Etc.

Example: prayer of Swiss farmers before cutting a tree.

## 2.2 Core Values (for Work Ethics)

Core /individual and collective) values are e.g.

- Freedom
- Justice/equity
- Peace
- Sustainability
- Care
- Participation
- Responsibility
- The Golden Rule of mutuality and reciprocity

## 2.3 Spiritual meaning of Virtues/Values

Similarities in ethical consequences of the „Eastern“ and „Western“ spiritual approaches:

- from greed to modesty
- from selfishness to care and compassion
- from dependency to inner freedom
- from fear to security
- from violence to non-violence
- from oppression to liberation/empowerment
- from superficial reality to truth as deeper reality

Differences: „Overcome material world“ vs „transform material world“

## 2.4 Work Ethics Motivation

- Strategic
  - ≈ In best interest of business, ethics pays off
  - ≈ Extrinsic, instrumental
- Normative
  - ≈ Ethical obligation
  - ≈ intrinsic



## 3. Value Justice: 14 Aspects

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Capability-related Justice  | just recognition of capabilities, charisms         |
| 2. Performance-related Justice | just recognition of performance                    |
| 3. Needs-related Justice       | just recognition of needs                          |
| 4. Distributive Justice        | just balancing needs, capacities, performance      |
| 5. Justice as equal Treatment  | equal chances (of men and women)                   |
| 6. Intergenerational Justice   | just sharing of resources with future generations  |
| 7. Participatory Justice       | just participation in decision making              |
| 8. Procedural Justice          | just and transparent procedures                    |
| 9. Functional Justice          | just, efficient structures and resource allocation |
| 10. Punitive Justice           | just instruments to overcome injustice             |
| 11. Transitional Justice       | fair provisional justice in transformation periods |
| 12. Restorative Justice        | restore justice from occurred injustice            |
| 13. Transformative Justice     | healing and reconciling processes after injustice  |
| 14. On Time Justice            | act on time in order to avoid further injustice.   |

## 4.1 Value Responsibility: means response

The word responsibility is composed of two words:

- „Spondere“ (Latin) means to promise, to offer, to commit, to sign a contract (in the theological perspective: God offers his earth, he commits it to humankind), he empowers (gives power) human beings.
- „Re-spondere“ (Latin) means to respond, to answer to this offer by responsible behaviour / responsible use of this offer.
- Power and Responsibility are interconnected: the more power one has, the greater the responsibility is!

## 4.2 Responsibility: Five Key Questions

Five key questions for responsible decisions and behaviour

a) who is responsible b) what for c) to whom d) for how long e) with which means?

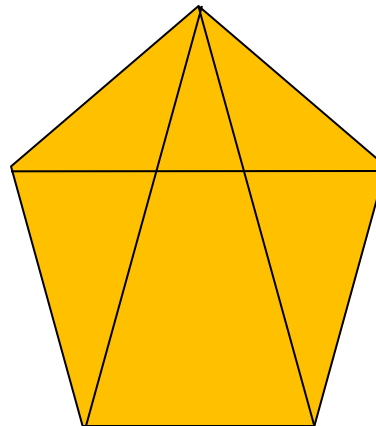
c) To whom? Instance

d) How long? Period

e) How? Means

a) Who? Subject

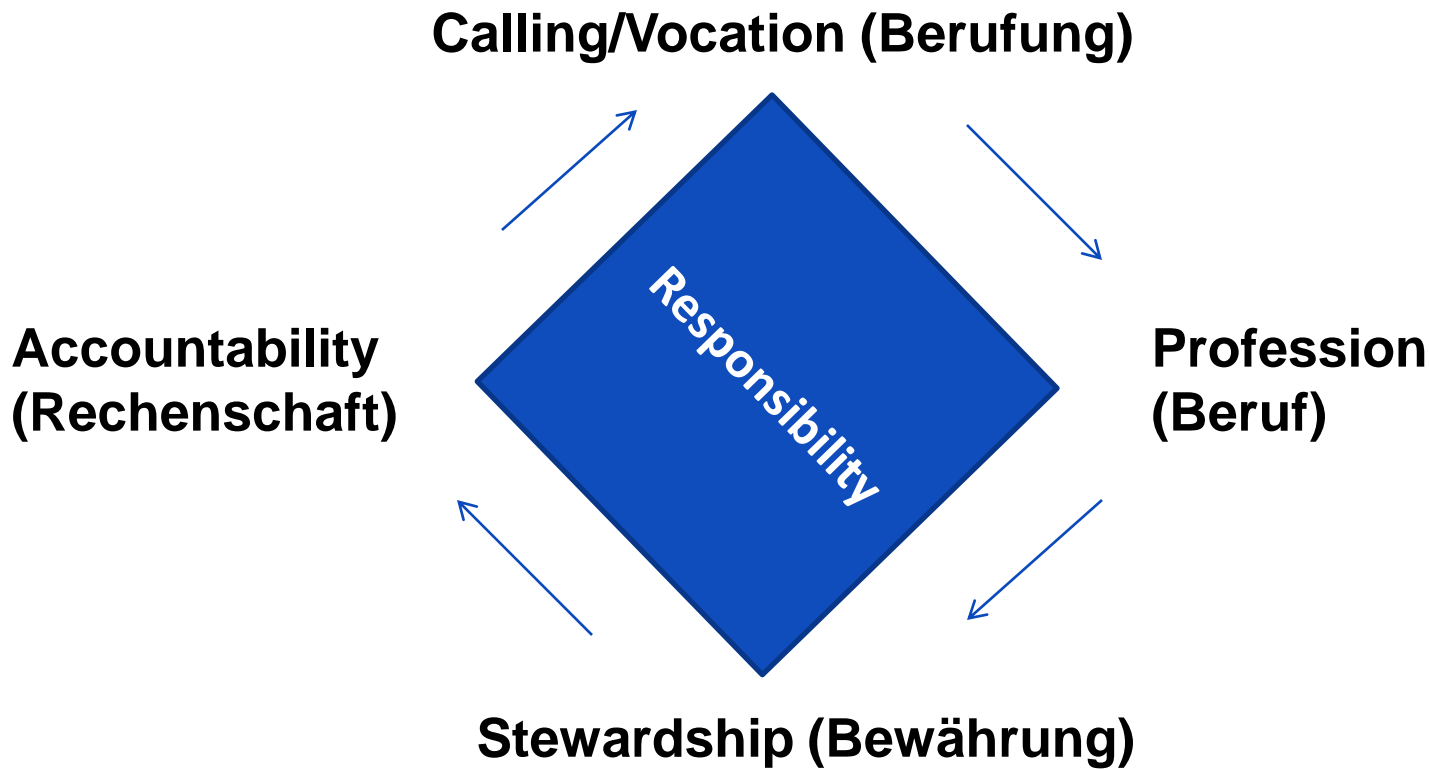
b) What for? Object



## 4.3 Power and Responsibility

- Each human power is tamed by responsibility toward an authority that is above the holder of the power: God, the Self, the own conscious/ratio, the wisdom of the forefathers, the electorate, the needs of suffering people, nature/mother earth.
- In the perspective of Jews/Christian/ Muslim anthropology and ethics, true power and responsibility are rooted in God and are derived from him.
- In the perspective of Hindu/Buddhist anthropology and ethics, true power/resp. comes from the inner Self.

## 4.4 Work: from Calling to Accountability



## 4.4 From Calling to Accountability, contd

- Calling: vocation (inner call), appointment (external), from the authority which empowered/entrusted power
- Profession: responsible response to the calling in the professional life. More than just a job.
- Stewardship: continuous, sustainable implementation of the professional responsibility; remaining faithful to the commitments, keeping promises.
- Accountability: transparent, accountable, audited way of reporting (on the use of resources and entrusted power) to the instance from where the power/calling comes.

## 5.1 Caring: Triple Love of God, the other, oneself

For Monotheist Religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), care and compassion are rooted in the love of God:

- „Not mine, but your (God’s) will shall be done“ (Jesus)
- „Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: love your neighbor as yourself.“ (Matthew 22:37-39).  
The Golden Rule of mutual respect exists in all World religions and philosophies. But in Judaism and Christianity, the first of the double commandment is the basis to be able to live the Golden Rule.

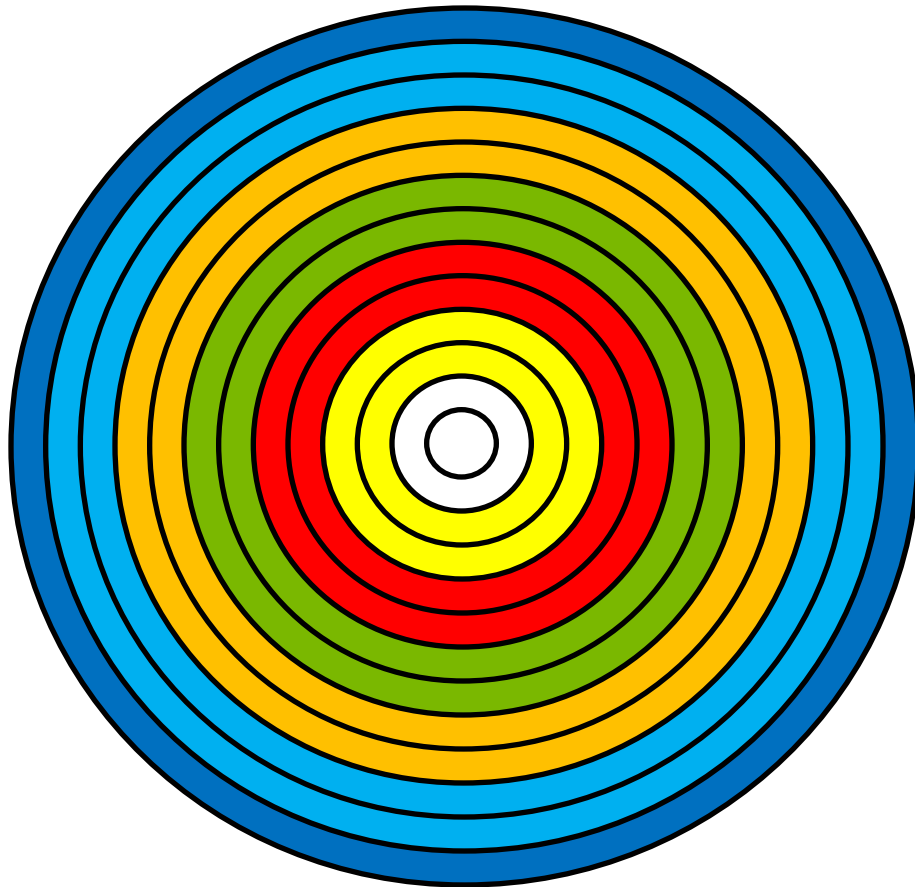
## 5.2 Caring: From the Ego to the SELF

For Eastern Religions (e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism) caring and compassion are rooted in the inner way from the Ego to the SELF as practised e.g. in Yoga (e.g. Patanjali: Yoga Sutras):

- The yoga way of transformation means liberation from the Ego in order to find/be united with the SELF.
- This liberation through life-long exercises means overcoming material and bodily desirousness and dependency.



## 5.3 Caring for the Common Good



**White:**

**1 Myself**

**2 Inner Family: partner, children**

**Yellow**

**3 Broader Family: Clan**

**4 Professional Community: team**

**Red**

**5 Neighbourhood: village, quarter**

**6 Religious Community: parish/temple**

**Green**

**7 Peers: sport, ethnic, interest groups**

**8 Professional Community: company**

**Brown**

**9 Nation: state, peoples,**

**10 Regions: EU, Asean**

**Blue**

**11 All Religions: world spirituality**

**12 Humankind: all human beings**

**Dark Blue**

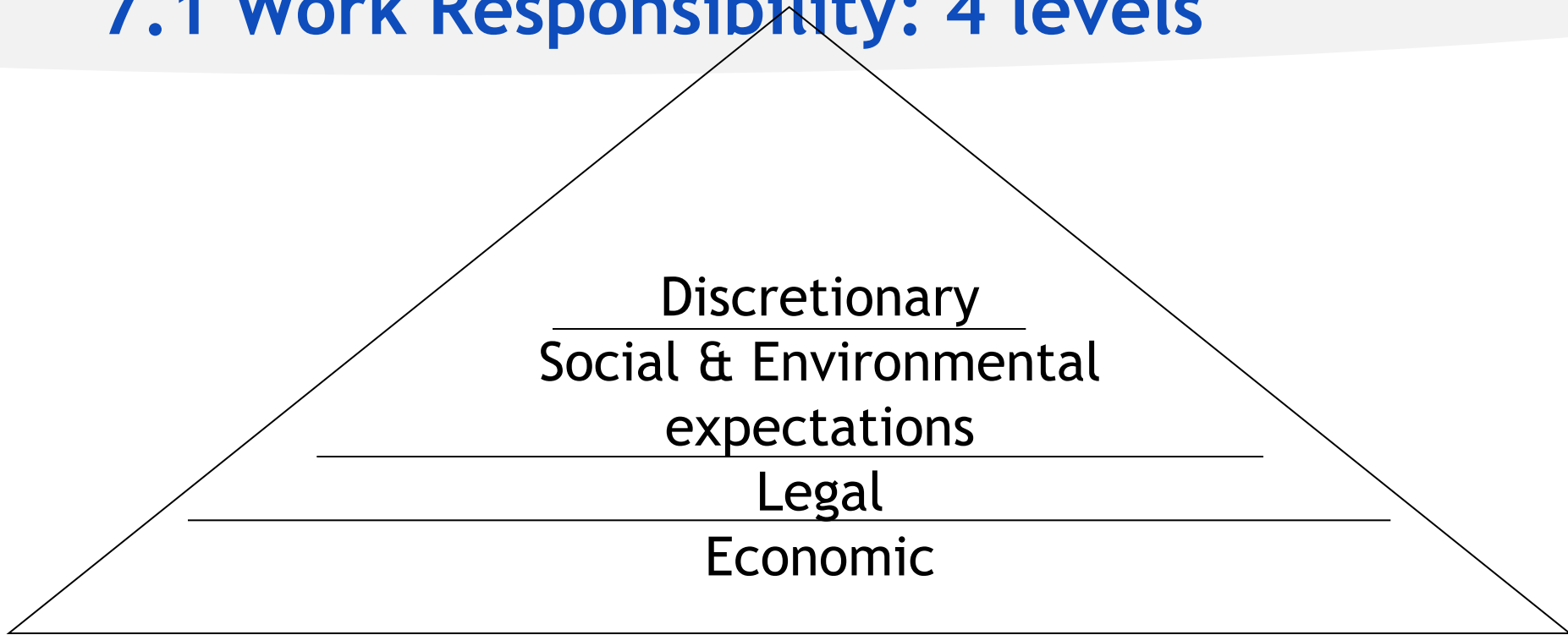
**13 Biosphere: all living beings**

## 6. 1. Ethics and Right/Law

### Relationship between Ethics and Right/Law:

- „The [eschatological] promise of justice builds the horizon of the Law.“ (Wolfgang Huber).
- The law makes ethics binding and is therefore the most important part of structural ethics.
- Ethics is the benchmark and goes beyond positive law. It motivates to further develop law in an innovative way..
- Ethics, in Christian perspective, includes the right (and in extreme cases the obligation) to resist in cases of human rights violations.
- The less in life, the more in rights (Helmut Simon)  
The more in life, the more obligations.

## 7.1 Work Responsibility: 4 levels



Most cited definition of CSR (Carroll, 1979): The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.” (Following slides in cooperation with Prof Deon Rossouw)

## 7.2 Rights and Obligations: Voluntary or Mandatory?

- Human rights are not only „nice to have“, but mandatory. But the ethical question is, which are the most efficient instruments to implement them.
- The Combination of voluntary and legally binding, of private and governmental instruments is normally the most effective.
- Ethics must become legally binding in order to be able to limit criminal energy which is dormant or active in all human beings.
- The international justiciability of ethical norms has to be further developed and strengthened re working norms

धन्यवाद (Danyavad)

thank you

asante sana

merci

gracias

danke

grazie