

Key Factors affecting Sustainable Purchasing

Leadership in sustainable purchasing involves thinking expansively and holistically about the full range of factors and operating contexts that an organization may need to consider and address when implementing a purchasing program. The lists below include factors that tend to contribute to (+) or detract from (-) a positive future. The worksheet is intended to spark ideas for discussion internally and with stakeholders, but not all factors will be relevant to every organization or purchasing category, nor is the list exhaustive.* For more information about how to think about environmental, social, and economic impacts, please refer to the *Principles for Leadership in Sustainable Purchasing v1.0*, available on the SPLC website.

Environmental

Environmental factors affect the natural systems on which life depends, now and in the future.

- + biodiversity preservation
- + climate adaptation
- + resource optimization
- + soil health stewardship
- acidification
- desertification
- eutrophication
- freshwater pollution
- greenhouse gas emissions
- habitat depletion
- human health impacts
- land use change
- marine pollution
- ozone depletion
- radiation pollution
- resource depletion
- smog
- waste
- water consumption

Social

Social factors affect the social systems on which communities depend, now and in the future.

- + anti-discrimination
- + community engagement
- + diversity/equal opportunity
- + employee engagement
- + equal remuneration
- + fair trade
- + freedom of association
- + grievance & remedy processes
- + human rights
- + indigenous rights
- + occupational health & safety
- + right to collective bargaining
- + sustainable compensation
- + training and education
- + worker rights
- child labor
- forced/compulsory labor
- human trafficking
- sourcing from conflict zones

Economic

Economic factors affect the health of the markets on which commerce depends, now and in the future.

- + fair dealings
- + innovation research / investment
- + open competition
- + transparency of information
- + use of diverse suppliers
- + use of HUB zones
- + use of local suppliers
- conflicts of interest
- corruption (bribery, extortion...)
- dividing territories
- dumping
- exclusive dealing
- misleading market claims
- monopoly (seller collusion)
- monopsony (buyer collusion)
- patent misuse
- price fixing
- product tying
- refusal to deal

Sector

The sector in which an organization operates may affect purchasing decisions.

- corporate
- local gov't
- state/provincial gov't
- national gov't
- manufacturer
- service provider
- retailer
- higher education

Organization Type

An organization's type may affect purchasing decisions.

- small, medium, large
- centralized, decentralized
- private, public
- for-profit, nonprofit
- franchise model

Locale

The geographical locale in which an organization operates may affect purchasing decisions.

- regulations/jurisdiction
- geography
- climate
- natural resources

Additional Factors

What other factors can you think of that might affect an organization's sustainable purchasing program or need to be addressed by it?

* Among other resources, these lists draw on the UN Global Compact, UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights, International Bill of Human Rights, the Global Reporting Initiative, and lifecycle assessment standards.