Investor Statement on Ethical AI

The World Benchmarking Alliance's (WBA) Digital Inclusion Benchmark (DIB) tracks the performance of the world's most influential digital technology companies on four areas of digital inclusion: enhancing universal access to digital technologies; improving all levels of digital skills; fostering trustworthy use; and innovating openly and ethically. One key finding that stands out from the latest benchmark is that *only 20 out of 150 digital technology companies disclose their commitments to principles of ethical artificial intelligence.*[1]

As responsible investor participants in the WBA's Digital Inclusion Collective Impact Coalition (CIC), with over USD 6.3 trillion AUM/AUA, we believe that inclusion and trust are important to harnessing the full positive potential of digital technologies to enable the achievement of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. This is particularly evident in the proliferation of AI applications in many domains, such as finance, health, media and entertainment, advertising, law enforcement, and human capital management. For example, we have seen that AI can help to improve accurate medical diagnosis or broaden financial inclusion. At the same time, AI may increase the risks of potential harms such as bias and discrimination; invasions of privacy; denial of individual rights; and non-transparent, unexplainable, unsafe outcomes. If principles of ethical AI are not well-considered, individual companies face reputational as well as revenue losses, and society as a whole faces tremendous risk.

Ethical AI is a critical area of digital inclusion that requires systems change as identified by the WBA's DIB. A commitment to and focus on ethical AI principles will facilitate opportunities for AI applications to help innovate solutions to the problems of sustainable development, build trust with users, and reduce the risks and harms to individuals, companies, and society.

We encourage the companies we invest in to implement policies and mechanisms to ensure the ethical development and application of AI, guided by respect for human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind. **As a first step, we specifically ask that companies disclose a commitment to abide by principles for ethical AI development and application.** Such disclosure will signal that a company gives serious attention to this issue from the highest levels of management.

Throughout the year, we will be undertaking collective engagements with companies on this issue. We encourage other investors and their representatives to join us in signing this statement.

---

[1] https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/publication/digital-inclusion/

Signatories:

A collaborative initiative organized by the World Benchmarking Alliance

World Benchmarking Alliance

Lead investors

Fidelity International   Boston Common Asset Management

Fidelity INTERNATIONAL   BOSTON COMMON ASSET MANAGEMENT

Investor participants as of July 2022

AVIVA INVESTORS   MACQUARIE   ethos   sycomore am

RAIFFEISEN   ethos Ethos Engagement Pool International   Öhman Fonder   SARASIN & PARTNERS

MERCY INVESTMENT SERVICES, INC   SDG Invest   [Church Commissioners for England]   edentree investment management

CBIS Catholic Responsible Investments   NEI   actiam   HSBC Asset Management