



PROGRESS REPORT 2023

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASIA

ENABLING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH THE RESPECT, PROTECT AND REMEDY FRAMEWORK



Funded by the European Union



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project name: Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework

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Duration: 54 months

UNDP Regional Programme Document: Outcome 2 – Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development

UNDP Strategic Plan Component: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development

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ACRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
B+HR Asia	Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework
BHEUU	The Legal Affairs Division, Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia
BHR	Business and Human Rights
BRSR	Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting
CRB	Centre for Responsible Business
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DOA	Description of Action
EOP	Executive Office of the President
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
EU	European Union
FIHRST	Foundation for International Human Rights Reporting Standard
GIACC	National Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption Centre, Prime Minister's Department
GCNSL	Global Compact Network Sri Lanka
GCNT	Global Compact Network Thailand
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KASA	Ministry of Environment and Water
LCM	Legal Clinic Myanmar
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCA	Ministry of Corporate Affairs (India)
mHRDD	Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mongolia)
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Indonesia)
MOHR	Ministry of Human Resources
MOJ	Ministry of Justice (Thailand)
MOLHR	Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Indonesia)
MOWECP	Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Indonesia)
MNEs	Multinational Enterprises
MSMEs	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
NAP	National Action Plan
NBA	National Baseline Assessment
NS-BHR	National Strategy on Business and Human Rights
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEBI	Securities Exchange Board of India
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SUHAKAM	Human Rights Commission of Malaysia
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGPs	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Respect, Protect and Remedy Framework (B+HR Asia) is a joint action of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The action promotes and facilitates the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and in the process, contributes to stronger human rights conditions, inclusive economic growth, and environmental sustainability. The project is implemented over the period of 54 months starting from January 2020. Project programming countries include **India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand**.

This progress report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023.

In 2023, the B+HR Asia project arguably had its most fruitful and productive year to date. In some programming countries, political and economic circumstances improved considerably since the start of the project in 2020, allowing for more consistent engagement with government stakeholders. **In this context, remarkable gains were made in the area of policy development.** Engagement with business professionals on human rights and environmental due diligence (HREDD) and with civil society actors on access to remedy also remained productive, though the consolidated impact of these two streams of work is not yet clear.

In terms of stakeholder engagement, **B+HR Asia maintained high levels of participation**, growing modestly from 7,754 stakeholders in 2022 to **8,849 stakeholders**¹ in 2023. This level of engagement was likely due to increased attention to regulatory developments in Europe, growing interest in ESG investing, and the considerable rise in public concern over the impacts of trade and industry on climate and the environment. In 2023, **B+HR Asia was well-placed to react to these trends and direct attention to constructive outcomes** through its policy engagement with government, its many workshops and training events with business, and its multistakeholder dialogues, including the much-applauded [Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia conference](#).

Still, **progress was not even across all countries, nor was it definitive.** Political events in Malaysia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka stymied the project's full potential in these settings. Further, the cumulative impact of work on HREDD and with civil society was admittedly difficult to assess at the end of the year. National Action Plans (NAPs) on Business and Human Rights (BHR) were also of different qualities, and implementation is not yet assured. Lastly, awareness raising efforts on the nexus of business and the environmental rights raised the quality and intensity of the discourse, but policy pathways remained unarticulated.

This mix of achievements and shortcomings in programming is to be expected for a project pushing a multifaceted agenda in a region as large, diverse, and dynamic as Asia. If this is fair, then assessing progress requires us to take a nuanced view, grounded in data and sober, measured language. This approach was seemingly welcomed by our stakeholders, who last year downloaded the [2022 B+HR Asia Progress Report](#) over 900 times, only slightly below the 980 downloads a [similar report](#) received in 2021. **As expressed in the pages that follow, B+HR Asia maintained its commitment to evidenced-backed, straightforward reporting in 2023 and has the following highlights to share under each project output.**

Under **Output 1** on policy development and coherence, B+HR Asia made some of its most important gains to date. In total, the project influenced 10 policy pieces including 5 national action plans (NAPs) on business and human rights (BHR). Of these, **3 NAPs were finalized and launched in 2023, including in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand.** In Malaysia, B+HR Asia helped to finalize a National Baseline Assessment in furtherance of the NAP the government aims to launch in 2024. Developments on the first draft of the NAP in India has stalled, but momentum was again picking up with personnel changes in key ministries at the end of the year. A law on microfinance was passed in Sri Lanka, adopting the inputs from our national BHR Specialist placed there.

B+HR Asia's work was especially significant under **Output 2**, in delivering on public diplomacy, communications, and knowledge products. The outputs under this heading **reached stakeholders in 174 countries**, an increase of 34 from 2022. In 2023, B+HR Asia websites registered 13,400 visits. The project YouTube account witnessed a 56% increase in subscribers. A jointly- shared EU-SIDA social media account enjoyed an 18% increase in account followers. And a joint-quarterly email newsletter enjoyed a 25% increase of new subscribers (currently at over 10,000). And most remarkably, news stories covering **B+HR Asia events recorded a readership of approximately 99,462,500**. In short, interest in the work of the B+HR Asia project grew substantially in 2023.

Under **Output 3**, prevention and remedy, B+HR Asia demonstrated its operational muscle. In 2023, B+HR Asia issued and co-managed **12 civil society grants** and trained 2,473 stakeholders in human rights due diligence (HRDD). B+HR Asia's online HRDD software tool reached over 10,000 new users, a 40% increase over the year before. Over the 4-year, 2020-2023 programming period, **B+HR Asia trained over 5,500 business professionals on HRDD**, ensuring the readiness of Asian businesses in the face of the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

Investments made in **Output 4** in raising awareness of the interconnections between business, human rights and the environment also led in strong results. In 2023, the "Asia in Focus" webcast programmes on climate justice enjoyed over 1,200 views with a watch time of 83 hours. Two reports on Corporate Accountability and Climate Change received significant views as measured by over 700 downloads and 2,000 views to our web platform. The Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia conference attracted nearly 300 people, of which 50% were from the private sector.

In all, 2023 was a banner year for the B+HR Asia joint-action, bringing this last and final progress report to a happy close. Still, additional efforts are required to better understand the impact of the work described below to better ensure the sustainability of gains made with stakeholders from government, business, and civil society.

II. INTRODUCTION

Ministers, deputy ministers, directors and their staff sit attentively in an expansive hotel conference room in Jakarta. At the podium, an official looks over the rim of his eyeglasses at the audience and leans into the microphone. “We must ensure that our efforts to adapt to climate change do not come at the expense of the most vulnerable among us,” he insists. “A just-transition is required!” he bellows.

In Indonesia, as elsewhere, references to “transitions” have become more frequent and increasingly varied. Energy transitions, digital transitions, green-economy transitions and just transitions are just a few examples of the many ways the region is packaging a slate of disruptive policy shifts.

One might also argue that the shift towards more resilient and sustainable supply chains is a transition too, one that gathered speed following the COVID-19 crisis. Politicians, economists and business leaders spent much of the last few years describing the need to “de-risk” or diversify supply chains through new production plans involving “near-shoring,” “reshoring” or “friend-shoring.” Concern was raised too, about the correlation between increased trade and carbon emissions, leading some observers to question whether globalization itself was sustainable in the face of intensifying, extreme weather events.

Surprisingly, perhaps, it was in this wider context of “supply-chain transitions,” that the Business and Human Rights (BHR) agenda in 2023, found more space to express its potential.

Certainly, the year 2023 was a banner year for the EU-UNDP joint action on Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Economic Sustainability through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework. Through the leveraging of public awareness events, technical trainings, and sometimes through quiet advocacy, the EU-UNDP B+HR Asia project facilitated the adoption of 3 National Action Plans (NAPs) on BHR, including in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand. In Malaysia, a baseline assessment was finalized in preparation for NAP adoption in 2024. Separately, and with support from UNDP’s other partners, NAPs were also passed in Nepal and Viet Nam.

Of course, project interventions themselves were not alone responsible for progress on BHR in 2023. Policy developments and expressions of political will by governments and multilateral organizations in other regions helped to push the agenda in the right direction. For example, in January of 2023, the Japanese and the US governments developed to much fanfare a Task Force on the Promotion of Human Rights and International Labor Standards in Supply Chains. In May, the G7 made strong references to the group’s commitment to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) in the Hiroshima Summit Communiqué. In June, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) revised its Guidelines to Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct to include stronger and more detailed references to human rights and environmental concerns. Also, in June, the EU Regulation on deforestation-free products entered into force, requiring human rights and environmental due diligence be conducted on imported timber, coffee, soy, beef, palm oil, wood, cocoa, and coffee. At the very end of the year, the EU proposed directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CS3D) also reached important political milestones.

And still, these developments occurred against a backdrop of warnings about a looming global recession, making commitments to sustainable business practices less likely. It was assumed, perhaps fairly so, that human rights and environmental considerations would find little traction with government and business amidst the many forces pushing for rapid economic recovery. Yet, by the end of 2023, this assumption was tested and discredited. Though the evidence was certainly not definitive, there was growing reason to believe that Asia’s next round of growth would more likely be advanced where responsible business principles underpin national economic strategies.

But new questions arise.

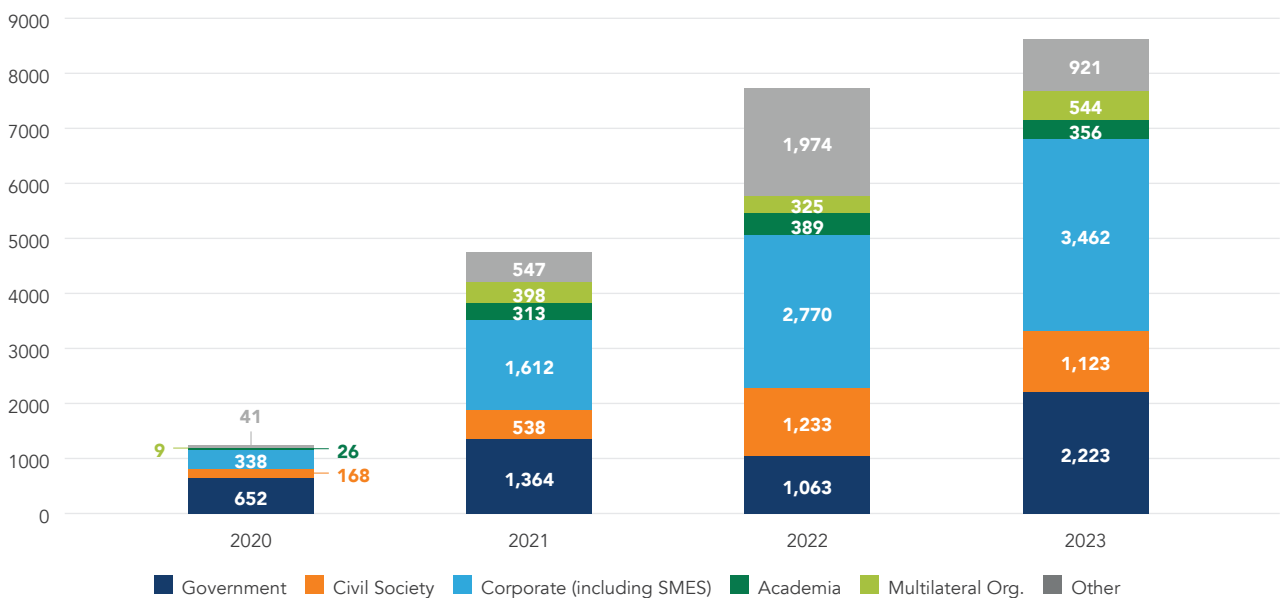
Will the BHR agenda usher in new expectations and requirements that overburden business, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs), in the region? Will a hardening of sustainability-linked due diligence regulations lead to a consolidation in industries populated mostly by small-holder farmers? Will increased scrutiny of industry encourage decoupling from the region, leading to slow growth and increased poverty? Will forced-labor import bans and other market-access instruments increase misunderstandings between the Global North and South, adding to emerging geopolitical tensions?

In 2023, the B+HR Asia project deepened its engagement in these and other questions during its inaugural Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia (CSERA) conference, and the Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum. Views were exchanged and positions expressed in safe, neutral settings, involving hundreds of participants. At the country-level, the B+HR Asia project motivated constructive conversations too, through its 45 HRDD trainings. Policy discussions, regional dialogues, and trainings for business, were also complemented by 12 civil society grants supporting access to remedy for specific constituencies in India, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Efforts to dive deeper into issues meant too that stakeholder engagement numbers leveled off after skyrocketing rates between 2021 and 2022. Still, in 2023, B+HR Asia reached 8,849 stakeholders in total, including 3,462 business professionals, 2,223 policy makers, and 1,123 civil society actors.

With this data in mind, there are questions to ask too, of the project, including whether it reached its full potential under its current design and with available assets at its disposal. The leveling off of stakeholder engagement, may also indicate that the time is ripe to move to different modalities to broaden the scope more deliberately to include the voices and engagement of youth, media, Indigenous Peoples, women, migrants, and other constituents. While the focus of B+HR Asia has been on developing policy and introducing business and civil society to international standards – top-down approaches – what might be accomplished when top-down and bottom-up approaches are taken together?

The following pages will provide an indication of how far the BHR agenda has come, but also of how far it needs to go. The data is not always conclusive, but it is increasingly clear that B+HR Asia’s investments in meaningful exchange, upskilling, and awareness raising among all stakeholder groups, is bringing us to a newer, stronger enabling environment for the BHR agenda to be fully realized.

B+HR Asia Project
Growth in stakeholder participation over time



III. PROJECT PROGRESS UPDATE

This joint EU-UNDP action promotes the implementation of the UNGPs in Asia, through the development of policy instruments (Output 1) and communications and visibility efforts (Output 2). It enhances the rights of stakeholders and prevents human rights abuses through support to access to remedy and human rights and environmental due diligence practice (Output 3). Lastly, it raises awareness of the links between business, the environment, and human rights through public dialogue and outreach through research products (Output 4).

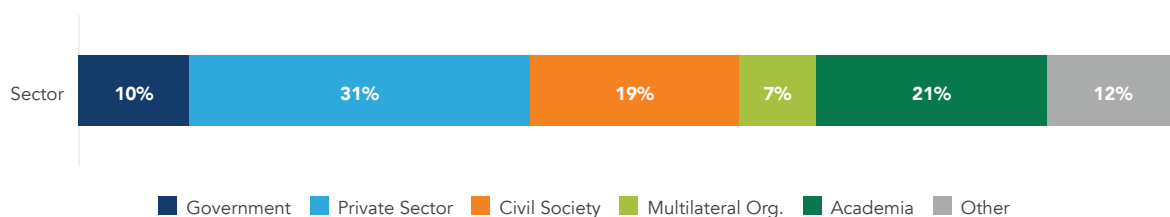
During the reporting period, the EU-UNDP partnership on this action realized programming gains (and setbacks) under each output as demonstrated in the country profiles that follow.

COUNTRY PROFILES



KEY RESULTS

B+HR Asia stakeholder engagement in India in 2023



- Engaged 710 stakeholders in India through events, trainings, and civil society initiatives, representing a 131% increase from 2022.
- Raised the profile of the BHR agenda among private sector actors at high-visibility events, including with partners at the Confederation of Indian Industry
- Launch a professional certification course on BHR, ensuring sustainability of trainings on the UNGPs after the B+HR Asia project lifetime
- Civil society grants on access to remedy strengthens legal action on behalf of communities impacted by iron-ore mining.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2023, work with the Government of India (GOI) on the draft National Action Plan (NAP) on BHR made little progress, though at year's end conversations picked up again. Elsewhere, policy action on responsible business in India was dynamic, with implications for related topics on environmental sustainability, labor rights and digital rights. In a high-water mark for sustainability in India, the GOI hosted the 2023 G20 and B20 meetings and placed responsible business topics high on their respective agendas. Still, it was not clear to observers whether this was simply a government's nod to prevailing trends, or a credible signal of commitment.

Despite the lack of movement on the India NAP on BHR, engagement with private sector actors grew substantially in 2023. Consequently, the B+HR Asia team seized opportunities to work closely with Indian business through closed door roundtables, certification training courses, and high-visibility public events. But even with increased engagements and rhetorical commitments, reports published in 2023 indicated that the space for civil society action and media freedom in India may have shrunk considerably.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Common understanding enhanced, and policy convergence encouraged through knowledge sharing, in conjunction with the implementation of the UNGPs.

Activity 1.1.1: Facilitating tripartite discussions among involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups, including indigenous peoples' organisations, trade unions, and European and Asia business associations on the UNGPs, with a view to expanding the number of actors playing an active role in policy-making.

Project Partner Meeting

In March 2023, B+HR Asia in partnership with the Delegation of European Union to India and Bhutan, co-hosted a Project Partner meeting. The aim of the meeting was to present stakeholders with an overview of the progress made by the B+HR Asia project in 2022, and share the priority action areas for 2023, including an emphasis on strengthening corporate non-financial disclosure frameworks for India. The meeting also featured the screening of the B+HR Asia sponsored documentary '[Business with Purpose: India and Sustainable Economic Development](#)'.²



The multistakeholder meeting included a dialogue with civil society, BHR experts, diplomats, industry associations representatives and business professionals. Participants noted that there was a need for UN coordination on BHR. Furthermore, commitments are required at the state level to propel responsible business practices. Some suggested that there should be more focus on strengthening of access to remedy by both state and businesses.

Beyond an engaging dialogue across stakeholder groups, tangible outcomes included:

- Strengthening of relationships with bilateral stakeholders including Germany, Switzerland and Sweden, with several supporting UNDP India's B20 dialogue hosted in August 2023 (see below).
- Invitation by Partners in Change to join the organization's Advisory Group and take up a human rights-centric analysis of India's non-financial disclosure framework, the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Framework (BRSR).

Engagement with Youth: Reporting on Business and Human Rights

On 30 June 2023, B+HR Asia held a learning session with youth at the Indian Institute of Mass Communications (IIMC) to engage young journalism students on reporting on corporate accountability and transparency issues with a human rights framing and to galvanize support for the BHR agenda among students. The session featured the screening of the BHR Journey in India documentary, and a dialogue on [UNDP's Reporting Business and Human Rights: A Handbook for Journalists, Communicators and Campaigners](#). The session engaged students in a dialogue on corporate reporting on human rights, and on the need to safeguard human rights issues with India's economic growth trajectory.



Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced.

Activity 1.2.1: Raise Awareness of the UNGPs with governments, making the normative and business-case for adoption and implementation; host and facilitate bi-lateral peer learning events to showcase best practices on UNGP implementation

B+HR Asia B20 Engagement

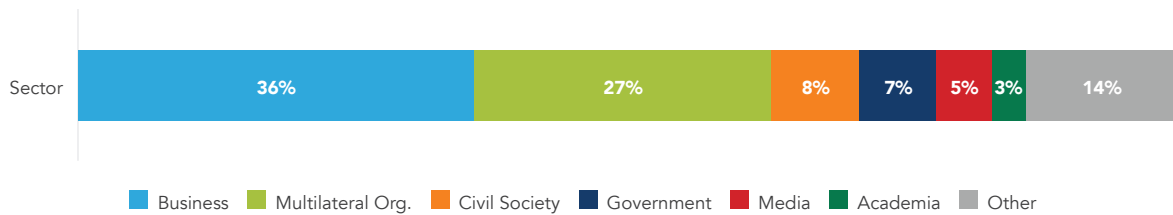
In 2023, B+HR Asia was appointed to participate in two B20 engagement groups: the [Action Council on ESG in Business](#) and the [Task Force on Inclusive GVCs for Resilient Global Trade and Investment](#). Over several months of discussions, B+HR Asia advised both groups to include references to human rights and environmental due diligence obligations in the outcome documents produced. B+HR Asia also promoted meaningful ESG integration in business practices and the creation of inclusive global value chains. The aim of this activity was to ensure closer policy alignment on the UNGPs, and influence policy at the highest levels. At the B20 event, the Task Force adopted these and other recommendations under Policy 1.3 and 1.4, though no mention of the UNGPs or human rights and environmental due diligence was made.

On 24 August, B+HR Asia in collaboration with UN Resident Coordinator's office in India hosted a B20 India side event titled '[Driving the 2030 Agenda through Responsible Business Actions](#)'. This dialogue was supported by the European Union and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), which served as the B20 India Secretariat.³

The key objective of the event was to strengthen dialogue with the private sector on responsible business actions through the twin lens of non-financial disclosure reporting obligations and HRDD requirements across value chains. The event was instrumental in forging stronger relations with private sector partners, strengthening BHR policies in collaboration with the Government of India.⁴ The discourse highlighted four priorities: 1) the need for stronger policies on responsible business from government; 2) deeper supplier engagement including capacity building support; 3) need for industry wide collaboration on BHR and ecosystem building, and; 4) strengthening due diligence models to monitor social and environmental impacts of business effectively.⁵

The event was attended by 199 participants (94 women, 105 men) with more than 75 participants from the private sector.

Sector-breakdown B20 Side-Event



Activity 1.2.2: Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans

B+HR Asia continued its strategic engagement with GOI on the release of the draft NAP on BHR. In April 2023, the B+HR Asia team met with senior officials at the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to discuss the necessity and urgency of finalizing India's NAP on BHR. The Ministry expressed the desire to re-engage the project's technical support in finalizing the draft and noted that it would soon contact the country office. In the meantime, B+HR Asia continued to engage with civil society efforts and other UN mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to push for the release of the NAP on BHR.

Approximately 56 working days of technical support was provided to the MCA and a NAP Advisory Committee, as well as support towards the B20 Side Event.

At year's end, meetings were held between the Special Rapporteur on the right to development and Secretary-West at the MEA to restart discussions on the NAP. Discussions led to an inter-ministerial group meeting in January 2024, where high-level attendees spoke encouragingly on a range of topics and interventions, including the NAP.


Output 2:

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy


B20 Summit Side Event Media Outreach

To further enhance the discussions on the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy, B+HR Asia conducted a sweeping communications campaign featuring social media engagement and media mobilization. This effort led to a flurry of stories in media outlets about the B+HR Asia sponsored, B20 Side Event.

Overview of B20 Communications Campaign

Social Media Campaign	Media Engagement
 <p>YouTube livestream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 332 views — Average watch time 9.2 hours, indicating that audience re-watched content⁶ 	 <p>Media mobilization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 11 articles in popular newspapers, and online platforms — Overall reach of over 20 million readers
 <p>Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 40 social media posts — Engaging over 1,941 users on Facebook, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter) — Average 79 clicks per post 	 <p>Press releases</p> <p>An official, joint press release by UNDP India and UN Resident Coordinator's Office can be found here: UN and UNDP in India host Business 20 side event to showcase responsible business actions for sustainable development.</p>

Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

Social Media Reach & Localization of UNGPs	
 <p>Over 1,391 recipients of quarterly newsletter on BHR in India⁷</p>	<p>B+HR Asia in India published a quarterly newsletter, sustained engagement with stakeholders including local media actors. Project milestones were published in over 11 local news outlets.</p> <p>Further to this, the project produced and launched the following documentary, 'Business with Purpose – India and Sustainable Economic Development' detailing India's Business and Human Rights journey. The documentary features reflections from the European Union to India, private sector companies, policy makers, civil society and academia.</p>
 <p>Over 93,300 impressions recorded for the year-long social media campaign on Twitter and LinkedIn channels</p>	
 <p>Media outreach to outlets with a collective readership of 20 million</p>	

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.1: Provide grants to civil society actors working with human rights defenders and women's rights activists, seeking innovative approaches

Civil Society Grants – Environics Trust (2022-2023)

B+HR Asia continued its work with CSO partner, Environics, to foster greater awareness and capacity building for communities impacted by iron ore mining business operations in West Singhbhum district of state of Jharkhand.⁸ As a result, community actors took legal action against a local mining operation for alleged violations.

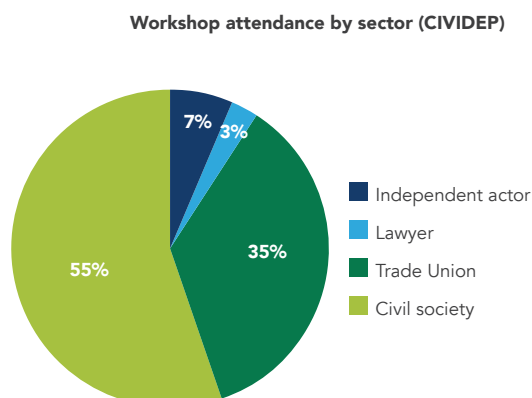
Social Media Reach & Localization of UNGPs	
<p>Workshops: 136 community members provided with legal awareness training in the context of business, human rights and the mining industry.</p> <p>Community Plays: 1,200 community members gained legal awareness on mining laws, informed consent and forest rights, including the right to public hearings for land acquisition. This was primarily done through street plays and puppetry across Noamundi and Manhorpur.</p>	
<p>Media features published in Hindi showcasing the project in Times of India, Live Hindustan and Prabhat Khabar.</p>	
<p>101 students engaged through youth awareness sessions at local universities.</p> <p>To ensure sustainability of interventions, training was provided to academic staff in respective Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs).</p>	
<p>A network of 60 paralegal volunteers and environmental and human rights defenders formed in Ranchi and Chaibasa.</p> <p>Ranchi Resource Centre was launched to facilitate access to information and remedies for those adversely impacted by mining operations.</p>	
<p>Commitment by the District Legal Service Authority to support the Ranchi Resource Centre, including to push for outcomes on 10 outstanding legal cases.</p>	

Street puppetry show in Birhor Tola Village, Hazaribagh District, Jharkhand

CIVIDEP (2023)

B+HR Asia worked with civil society partner CIVIDEP to build capacity of grassroots civil society actors and environment and human rights defenders (EHRDs) to understand and leverage the corporate reports filed under the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) Framework. With a geographical focus on the Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, the initiative worked with garment and footwear companies, and trade unions. In October 2023, the CIVIDEP initiative held two workshops in Bengaluru and Coimbatore to introduce BHR concepts to a wider range of stakeholders. Attended by 76 participants from private sector and civil society, the workshops unpacked the potential of BRSR to ensure corporate accountability and further detailed topics such as HRDD and non-financial and sustainability disclosures. Key outcomes include:

- Better understanding of the obstacles to greater awareness of BHR, including suggestions to host future trainings in local languages
- Social media campaign promoting the event recorded a reach of 7,185 users across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. A Newsletter campaign reached an audience of 525 recorded across 7 countries.



Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Business and BHR Roundtable

On the 21 February, B+HR Asia in collaboration with the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and Amfori, held a business roundtable. The roundtable involved select private sector actors on the opportunities and challenges on implementation of the UNGPs. Insights derived from the closed-door session include:

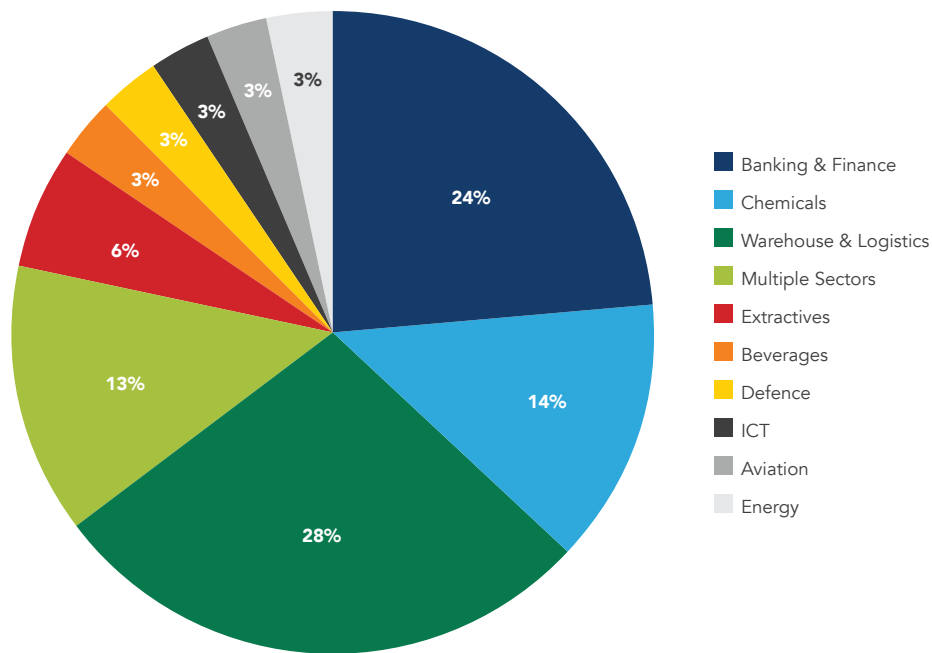
- Recognition of the need to raise awareness across different industries on sustainability and responsible business actions. According to participants, this includes capacity building for senior and middle management, with a focus on sharing updates on new legal and regulatory trends on BHR globally.
- There is agreement on the need to create sound governance mechanisms for BHR within company structures.
- Facilitation of a sector-wise roundtable for smaller suppliers and industry associations may be helpful for more buy-in and understanding of the BHR agenda.

More roundtables building on these insights will be held throughout 2023 to get a stronger understanding of business needs, challenges, and measures of success in the implementation of the UNGPs.

BHR Certification Course (in partnership with the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs)

B+HR Asia in collaboration with the Indian Institute for Corporate Affairs (IICA) delivered a Certification Course on Business and Human Rights. Aimed at increasing corporate aptitude for the UNGPs, the 30-hour course consisted of 4 modules designed for private and public sector representatives including heads of key functional teams (for example Human Resources, Sustainability, Procurement, Ethics) and BHR champions inside companies. The course was delivered by industry experts with a focus on translating policy to practice. The first batch involved 31 participants from India's public and private sector.

Industry breakdown of first cohort of Certification Course on BHR



Human Rights Due Diligence training for SMEs

B+HR Asia has engaged partner Centre for Responsible Business to support the development of HRDD trainings targeted at small to medium-sized enterprises. The initiative will see the in-depth training of 15 SMEs working in agri-food and pharmaceutical sectors on BHR with a focus on HRDD practice. The workshops will be launched in early 2024, after a comprehensive stakeholder mapping and assessment.

Output 3.3: Capacities of justice institutions enhanced to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations

Capacity building and orientation of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) India on BHR, with focus on role of National Human Rights Institutions under Pillar 3 – ‘Access to Remedy’

The 3.5-hour orientation session organized by B+HR Asia familiarized NHRC officials with key foundational concepts of the UNGPs and the role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) in promoting BHR.

The event was attended by 43 officials of whom 60% were from the Research Division. Previous trainings were mostly attended by Commissioners and the Legal Division (which made up the other 40% in this training). The strong showing from the Research Division illustrates growing interest in BHR from other teams at NHRC India. As a follow up to the training, the NHRC invited B+HR Asia in India to provide technical support for a seminar exploring emerging trends related to access to remedy for business-related human rights abuses in September 2023. The seminar explored frontier topics such as business, human rights, and climate change. It also addressed the evolving role of NHRIs within the context of the UNGPs, and global regulatory frameworks.

KEY RESULTS

Sector-disaggregated chart illustrating B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Indonesia 2023



- Adoption and launch of the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights (NSBHR) by Presidential Decree
- Engage 1,017 stakeholders from government, private sector, and civil society – the largest number of any given year in Indonesia and a 304% increase over 2022
- Drive awareness of the BHR agenda outside of the capital in 34 provinces through sub-national public consultations on the NSBHR, engaging local government and communities
- Develop of a Clean Water self-assessment and delivery of business-targeted trainings on Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD) in partnership with the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In Indonesia, UNDP B+HR Asia made some of its most important policy gains to date. In October, President Jokowi Widodo signed the NSBHR after considerable deliberation between the President and his advisors. The Presidential Decree should ensure that the NSBHR will be properly financed. Still, observers note that the pace of implementation in the months leading up to and immediately after presidential elections will likely be indicative of the depth and sustainability of the government’s commitment. Civil society actors in 2023 noted that arrests of community leaders were used routinely to suppress protests of rural communities against companies taking their land.

Similar to other countries, interest from the private sector in the BHR agenda grew substantially in Indonesia in 2023. In fact, B+HR Asia recorded a significant increase in business participation in training and other events.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Common understanding enhanced, and policy convergence encouraged through dialogue, training and knowledge sharing, in conjunction with the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Activity 1.1.1: Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups including indigenous peoples’ organizations, trade unions, and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs with a view to expanding the number of actors playing an active role in policymaking

Project Partners’ Meeting

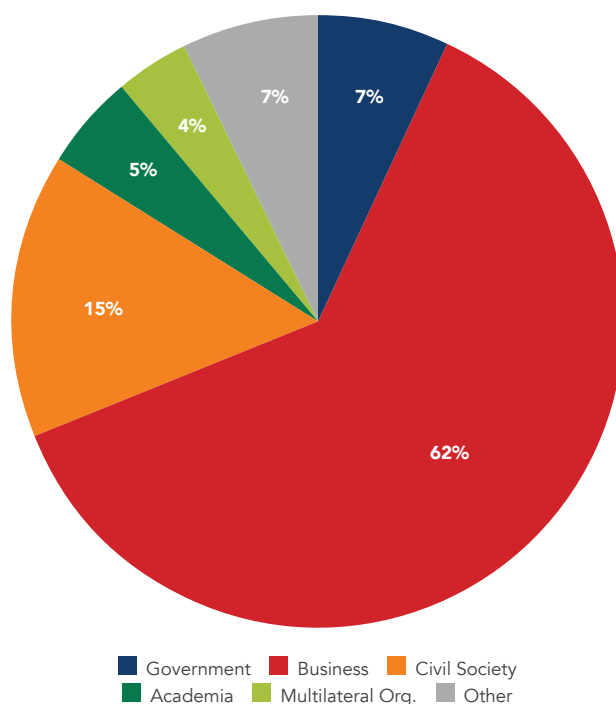
On the 11 January 2023, B+HR Asia hosted a Project Partner Meeting in collaboration with the EU Delegation to Indonesia.⁹ The hybrid meeting considered the progress of the project, and sought to increase collaboration between government, multilaterals, private sector, and civil society on implementation of the UNGPs in 2023. The event was

attended by UN staff, civil society actors, business leaders and representatives of government ministries including the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection. The meeting provided a platform for the 61 participants to discuss their views on emerging BHR challenges and to co-create solutions. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss work on HREDD approaches to addressing water pollution in the Citarum River in West Java province. B+HR Asia engaged in close discussions with the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment (MARVES), the Citarum Task Force, and the Indonesian Employers’ Association (APINDO). As a result, B+HR Asia and MARVES introduced an approach to water pollution that will be scaled up at the national and regional levels. B+HR Asia has been invited to participate in the World Water Forum 2024 in recognition of this work (for more information see Output 3 for initial results).



Joint High-Level Event with the German Embassy, GIZ and UNDP

B+HR Asia, together with the German Embassy and GIZ, convened a joint event titled “Responsible Business Conduct along Global Supply Chains – The German Supply Chain Act and its Implication for Indonesia” on 31 May 2023 in Jakarta.¹⁰ The joint event aimed to enhance networking among all stakeholders, facilitate a better understanding of the German law and its implications, and provide an opportunity to discuss challenges and co- create solutions to safeguard human rights along the entire business supply chain of German and Indonesian companies.



The joint event was attended by 107 participants from government, chambers of commerce, private sector, academia, UNDP and EUD, and provided opportunities to further collaboration.

Business participants expressed strong interest in emerging due diligence and sustainability trends in European markets. Following this engagement, the Delegation of Germany from Berlin, met with UNDP’s BHR Specialist during the 12th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in November 2023 in Geneva to exchange views on the BHR agenda and seek opportunities for more collaboration in the future.

Mainstreaming Human Rights into Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Management

B+HR Asia, together with UNICEF and University of Bina Nusantara, supported the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (MoLHR) in conducting a workshop on Mainstreaming Human Rights into Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Management. The workshop was conducted on 20th June 2023 in Jakarta, with participation from government entities, business associations, academia, UN agencies, state-owned and private businesses.¹¹ The Regional Business and Human Rights Specialist from UNDP Asia Pacific, Sean Lees, attended the workshop as a key speaker to share views on the nexus of human rights and climate change adaptation. UNDP’s regional mission to Indonesia further sought to strengthen government, EU, UNDP and other stakeholder partnerships on human rights and environmental protection in the context of business operations.

Key Stakeholder Engagements 2023

Bilateral meetings	Outcomes
Ministry of Law and Human Rights (MoLHR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director General (DG) of Human Rights of MoLHR expressed his commitment to the launch and implementation of the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights At the DG's request, B+HR Asia produced a position paper articulating the importance of the NS-BHR to international trade and investment and to help further inter-ministerial lobbying efforts towards the signing of the Presidential Decree on NS-BHR
Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment (MARVES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed to organize a session at the 2024 World Water Forum to demonstrate results on human rights and environmental due diligence (HREDD) Tentatively agreed to scale up work with textile companies on the clean water and human rights on the Citarum and replicate this work in other river basins
Indonesia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed to formulate a joint activity in promoting responsible business practices with a focus on environmental impact on human rights

Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced.

Activity 1.2.1: Raise awareness of the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) with governments, making the normative and business-case for adoption and implementation; host and facilitate bilateral peer learning events to showcase best practices on UNGP implementation

Public consultation on the National Strategy in Business and Human Rights (Surabaya)

B+HR Asia supported the MOLHR in disseminating the draft Presidential Decree on the NS-BHR through a public consultation for the Subnational Task Force on BHR in 34 provinces.

The public consultation was held on 13 July 2023 in Surabaya, East Java province. It was conducted as a part of wider public policy-making exercise, and to further raise awareness on the BHR agenda. The event was attended by 133 participants (63 offline, 70 online) and provided an opportunity for the NSBHR Task Force, local government, and businesses to exchange their views and best practices in furthering responsible business practices, including from a state-owned enterprise in undertaking a human rights risk self-assessment.

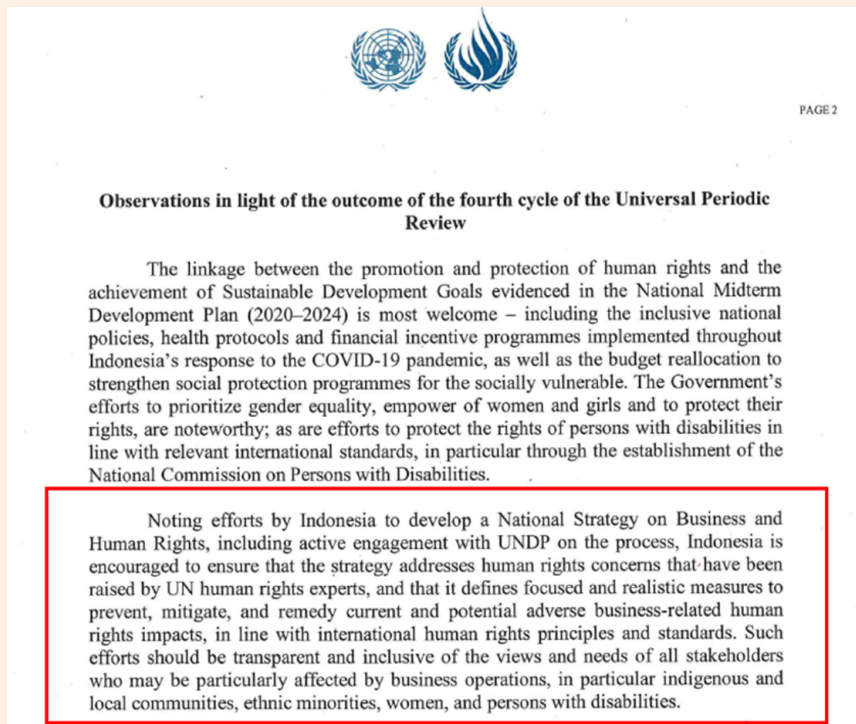
Technical support towards the NS-BHR

Overall, B+HR Asia dedicated 115 working days towards technical support to the NS-BHR Task Force and the MoLHR in advocating for a NAP. This included the formulation of a joint-workplan with the ministry on the adoption and implementation of the NS-BHR.¹² B+HR Asia advocacy efforts were recognized at the international levels.

UN High Commissioner's Letter to the Government of Indonesia

17 July 2023

The official letter shared with the Government of Indonesia from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (July 2023), noted "active engagement" in developing the NS-BHR. In particular, the letter applauds the project's efforts to encourage multistakeholder engagements.



Launch of the Presidential Decree on the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights

Themes Indonesia National Strategy on Business and Human Rights (2023-2025)

<p>Reporting Mechanism</p> <p>The Minister of Law and Human Rights reports the implementation of the National Strategy to the President in December, based on inputs from the National and Subnational Taskforce, and publishes the report to the public</p>	<p></p> <p>Strategy 1: Capacity building for all key stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop modules on Business and Human Rights (BHR) and the human rights self-assessment tool PRISMA, along with guidelines for gender, workplace violence, child labor, and village-level remediation Training for government, businesses (private sectors, SOEs, ROEs, MSMEs, and supply chains, including those with disabilities), and communities. Leveraging mass media to boost BHR awareness and strengthening state-based non-judicial mechanisms for effective remedy access. 	<p></p> <p>Strategy 2: Policy Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader policy mapping, including a policy analysis on human rights certification in the fisheries sector and healthy and productive female workers. Policy development on empowerment of persons with disabilities in business activities and promotion of communities’ customary law. 	<p></p> <p>Strategy 3: Effective Grievance Mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage companies to integrate grievance mechanisms in their internal policies and throughout their supply chain. Strengthen access to remedy, including through the establishment of a coordination forum for child abuse prevention
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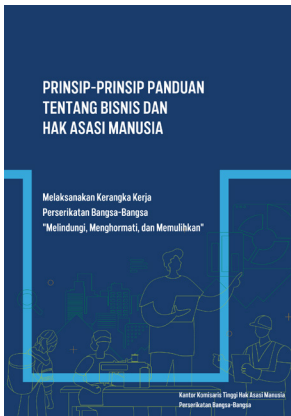
On the 6th of November 2023, Indonesia launched the Presidential Decree (60/2023) on the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights.¹³ The launch event was co-organized by the MOLHR in partnership with B+HR Asia.



Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus



UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Bahasa)

In April 2023, B+HR Asia launched an unofficial translation of the UNGPs to increase understanding of the key facets of BHR. In 2023, the Bahasa translation of the UNGPs received 303 downloads.¹⁴ The translation aided in efforts to raise awareness and localize the UNGPs.



Blog – ‘A River Runs through it: How Responsible Business Practices Can Clean Up Indonesia’s Waterways’

In March 2023, B+HR Asia developed a short blog detailing the impact that water pollution has on communities living along the Citarum River¹⁵ and the steps that B+HR Asia would take in collaboration with the MARVES to address water pollution issues in line with the UNGPs.

To date, the blog was viewed 1,390 times.



Blog – ‘Promoting Responsible Business Conduct for Sustainable Development and Human Rights’

In June 2023, B+HR Asia shared a press release on the high-level event on BHR hosted in collaboration with the German Embassy in Jakarta and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). The press release outlines the implications of the German Supply Chain Act on the Indonesian market.¹⁶

The blog was viewed 220 times.



Media Engagement

In addition to the communications pieces developed by the project, B+HR Asia worked with media and other partners to share key events and achievements on the implementation of the UNGPs in Indonesia, with the aim of increasing public discourse on BHR. In 2023 alone, the project was showcased on 9 external platforms, with a reach of over 73 million. Platforms include [AntaraNews](#), [Tribune News](#), and partner websites ([Ministry of Law and Human Rights](#), and [KADIN](#) respectively).

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts and risks faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Mainstreaming Gender in Infrastructure in the context of Business and Human Rights

In coordination with Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP), B+HR in Indonesia conducted an inter-ministerial focus group discussion (FGD) aimed at sharing and reflecting on a draft set of recommendations for government on mainstreaming gender in infrastructural development. The FGD was conducted on 11 May 2023 in Jakarta with eight key ministries relevant to infrastructure development, namely MoWECP, Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry of Public Work and Housing, Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial planning.

The FGD uncovered potential government actions to implement the guidelines. Actions included, for example, for each ministry to map their business partners and private sector vendors (relevant to infrastructure development) and identify whether the business operations have incorporated a gender dimension based on the draft recommendations. Others recommended that a FGD be hosted with business, business associations, including chambers of commerce to reflect on the proposed government action, and reflect on the draft guidelines.

Output 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms

Activity 3.2.1: Conduct sector-specific trainings with representatives of government and business community on human rights due diligence, human rights impact assessments, grievance mechanisms, and other elements of Pillar 2 and 3 of the UNGPs.

Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD) Mapping Study: Field Visit to Citarum River

Between 7-8 February, B+HR Asia in collaboration with MARVES conducted a two-day training for companies operating along the Citarum river. The initial training was delivered to 34 company representatives. Business in attendance outlined the key challenges faced by companies in implementing HREDD practices, but offered recommendations for more robust implementation. A follow-training held in April 2023, raised awareness on HREDD as an area of practice, and acclimatized companies on the nexus between human rights protections and water pollution¹⁷. Companies noted key challenges including the cost of social audits such as the SA-8000 which many reported were too expensive and may impact competitiveness. The exchanges and information shared will inform the forthcoming Clean Water and BHR report and corresponding Self-assessment tool to be launched in early 2024.

The training is part of an ongoing partnership between B+HR Asia and MARVES. The findings from the initial trainings above will be used to ameliorate the checklist to be published in 2024, and further inform upcoming joint activities organized by the project and MARVES.

Event: Responsible Business Practices towards Safe and Clean Drinking Water – The Citarum River Story

In December 2023, B+HR Asia in partnership with the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime and Investment Affairs, hosted a townhall event in Bandung, West Java.¹⁸ The event was convened with the aim of unpacking the concerns of companies and communities in the Citarum river basin on the human rights impacts of pollution of the waterways. Couched within the recently adopted Presidential Decree on the NSBHR, the dialogue featured inputs from the Acting Governor of West Java, and Citarum Harum Task-Force representatives from a range of ministries, community leaders and businesses.

B+HR Asia strengthened partnerships through these events. Notably, local government and APINDO West Java strengthened their commitments for wider coverage for HREDD trainings, requesting the project's support on the same. At the global level, B+HR Asia in collaboration with MARVES were invited to be a part of a thematic working group for the World Water Forum 2024. In this role, the project will share lessons learned on the use of HREDD methodologies to respond to water pollution.¹⁹

Output 3.3: Capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations is strengthened

Activity 3.2.1: Conduct training with NHRIs, judiciaries and ministries of justice on legal issues linked to the UNGPs, including transboundary jurisdictional challenges, among others

Human Rights Due Diligence Training with KOMNAS HAM

B+HR Asia conducted a training for the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), which aimed to increase awareness and strengthen capacity of the commission to address adverse impacts of businesses on human rights, as well as promoting the role Komnas HAM can play in supporting access to remedies for victims of business-related human rights violations.

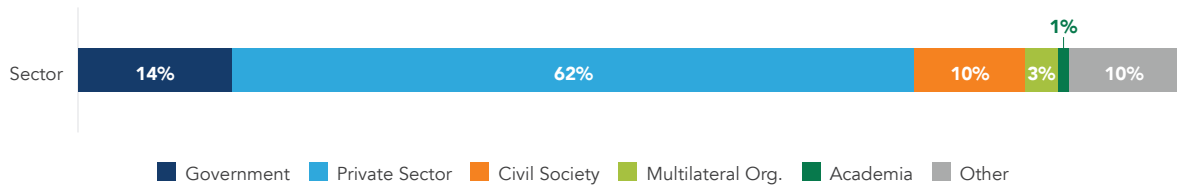
The training was conducted on 21-24 August 2023 in Bandung, West Java with a total of 24 participants, 16 of which were a part of the BHR team of Komnas HAM. Other attendees included 6 Komnas HAM commissioners from Aceh, Sumatra, Central Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, Maluku, and Papua. At the end of the meeting, KOMNAS HAM requested that more capacity building be offered to all staff.

The training was attended by representatives from University of Airlangga, Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN), and MOLHR as key speakers. A representative from a mining company also participated to showcase their best practices in respecting human rights within their business operations including in undertaking HRDD.

Based on the pre- and post-training survey, the participants reported an increase in understanding of BHR. Sixty-two percent of those surveyed reported an understanding of BHR and the UNGPs, while post-training survey showed 97% reported that the materials shared were beneficial, and that they had a deeper appreciation of the UNGPs.

KEY RESULTS

Breakdown of B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Malaysia 2023



- National baseline assessment on business and human rights completed, leading to an announcement by the Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform) on the planned drafting and adoption of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2025-2030) in 2024.
- Cumulative engagement of 819 stakeholders, representing an increase of 117% in engagement with government, private sector, civil society and other BHR actors.
- Delivered HREDD trainings involving 410 business professionals focused on the Malaysian electrical and electronics industry.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2023, B+HR Asia hosted a National Conference on BHR, securing yet another public announcement from the government that it was committed to drafting a NAP on BHR (NAPBHR). This would be the third commitment made by four governments, over the last seven years.²⁰ Despite skepticism from some, the **finalization of the National Baseline Assessment (NBA) on BHR in October** was still considered as an important policy development milestone.

Progress towards a long awaited NAPBHR was likely due to significant political tailwinds at the top of the year, following the election of Prime Minister (PM) Anwar Ibrahim. PM Ibrahim ran on a platform promoting democratic and institutional reform, and good governance.

Despite the PM’s appointment and the emergence of a more stable political environment, the issuance of a large number of withhold release orders (WROs) by the US government may have undercut the country’s reputation. According to the U.S. government, over 1 billion USD in Malaysian exports were subject to WROs from October 2022 to October 2023, primarily from the electronics industry. (By contrast, Chinese goods subjected to WRO only amounted to 257 million USD.) On a happier note, Malaysia was removed from the lowest tier of the US State Department’s Trafficking in Person’s Report 2023 and placed in the Tier 2 Watchlist.

Also making headlines in 2023, the Malaysian government, together with Indonesia, the world’s biggest producers of palm oil, waged a high-profile advocacy campaign over the provisions of the EU Deforestation Regulation, which they believe will harm the smallholder farmer. **Still, market access challenges from the US and EU did not translate into strong demand from the business community for trainings on HRDD.** According to some observers, companies in Malaysia would not likely adopt HRDD until required to by the government.

In contrast, programming in 2023 revealed that young people in Malaysia were clearly seized of the Business, Human Rights and the Environment agenda, and expressed eagerness in holding business and states accountable for violations of human rights and environmental rights. According to some observers, civil society organizations in Malaysia enjoy more space for activism and political engagement relative to their peers in other Southeast Asian countries. As noted by one academic, in 2022 and 2023, “progressive CSOs managed to carve out democratic spaces.”²¹

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Dialogue, training and knowledge sharing to encourage policy convergence with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights




Activity 1.1.1: Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs

National Baseline Assessment Consultation Series

B+HR Asia conducted an extensive series of consultations with a range of stakeholders from the agri-business, manufacturing, finance, and ICT sectors, and focused on SMEs. In addition, a robust desk review of laws and regulatory frameworks which would impact implementation of a NAP on BHR was conducted for the priority thematic areas identified: governance, environment, and labour. This analysis has also taken view of the cross-cutting themes of gender equality, digital rights, child rights, and inclusion through the consultation of vulnerable populations including indigenous communities.

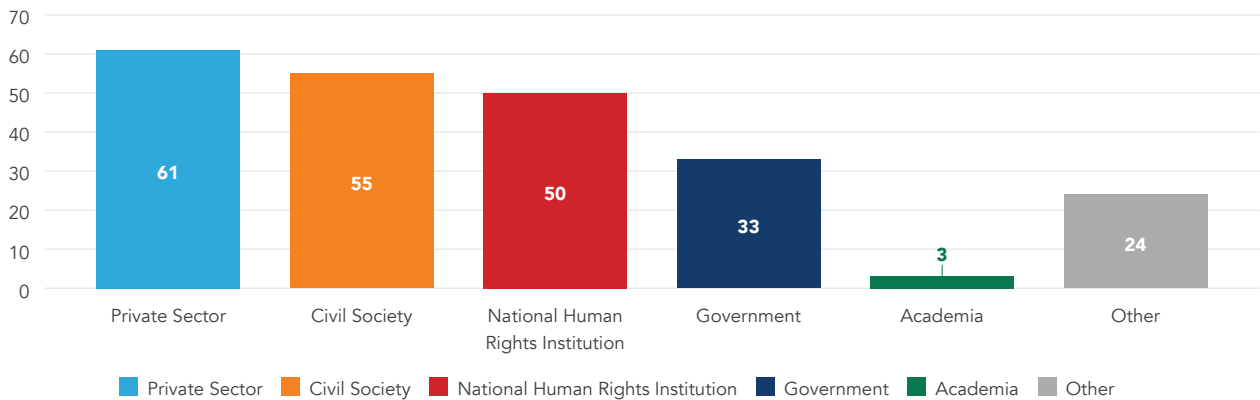
Consultations were also held with a variety of key partners including roundtable discussions with businesses organized in partnership with EuroCham Malaysia, UN Global Compact Network Malaysia and the plantation sector. The final consultation, the 'Multistakeholder Validation and Consultation for the National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights', was organized on **24 February** in partnership with the Government of Malaysia, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and the Collective of Applied Law and Legal Realism. The session, further supported by the EU Delegation to Malaysia, OHCHR and Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC), was opened by the Director of the Policy and Research Section, Legal Affairs Division of the PM's Department. One hundred and seventy attendees were present for the hybrid event, which included the endorsement of the key findings of the NBA, as well as feedback on areas of improvement.

Overview of thematic areas, National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights

 Governance	 Labour	 Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Priority area 1: Anti-bribery and anti-corruption— Priority area 2: Transparency and accountability of state institutions and corporations— Priority area 3: Institutional and practice barriers of enforcement— Priority area 4: Procurement, Investment and Tax— Priority area 5: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Priority area 1: Forced labour, child labour and other forms of labour exploitation— Priority area 2: Social protection— Priority area 3: Rights to Association and Collective Bargaining— Priority area 4: Effective grievance mechanisms and remedies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Priority area 1: Environmental Rights, Governance and Accountability— Priority area 2: Sustainable Forest Management & Biodiversity— Priority area 3: Pollution, waste management and circularity— Priority area 4: climate Change— Priority area 5: Environmental Justice, Human Rights Defenders, Indigenous People, SLAPP

Thematic summaries of the preliminary key findings and recommendations were presented, building up to the drafting process the NBA report. Proposed recommendations included exploring mandatory HRDD and risk assessment instruments, undertaking domestic measures to ensure effective implementation of the ILO's Protocol (2014), institutionalizing social protections for migrant workers, and introducing anti-SLAPP mechanisms to protect Human Rights Defenders.

Number of Stakeholders consulted in the drafting of the NBA on BHR



Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments reinforced

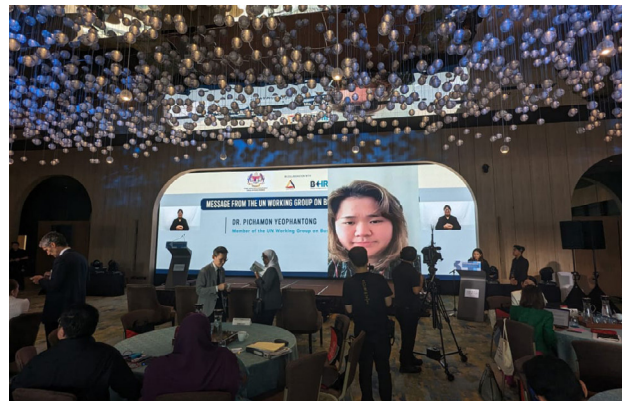
Activity 1.2.1: Raise Awareness of the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) with governments, making the normative and business-vase for adoption and implementation; host and facilitate bilateral peer learning events to showcase best practices in UNGP implementation

Flagship national conference on Business and Human Rights, and official presentation of the preliminary findings of Malaysia’s baseline assessment

On the 25th of October, B+HR Asia in collaboration with the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department (BHEUU) and the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia hosted the 2nd National Conference on Business and Human Rights, under the theme ‘Insights and Actions: Malaysia’s Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights’.

The event was attended by 143 stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector.

The high-level conference included a message by Dr. Pichamon Yeophantong, Member of the UN Working Group on Business Human Rights (UNWG), followed by discussions on the thematic areas of the baseline assessment, integration of the UNGPs in Malaysia’s current legal framework, the gender dimensions of responsible business, and trends in the development of NAPs on BHR in ASEAN. The conference culminated with an official announcement from the government of Malaysia committing to the development of a National Action Plan by 2024.



Stakeholders attending “Unveiling Insights and Actions” in 2023

“As we navigate this landscape, it is our collective duty to strive for inclusive, ethical and responsible business practices that not only boost economic growth, but also prioritize the welfare of Malaysians and citizens of the world who work in Malaysia.”

Dato’ Sri Azalina Othman Said, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform)



Activity 1.2.2: Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans

Technical Support to the Working Group on the development of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

Throughout 2023, B+HR Asia provided technical support to the Working Group on the development of the NAPBHR. The Working Group comprises the Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Department (BHEUU), the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia and UNDP.



Press conference on Malaysia’s commitment to develop a national action plan by 2024

Nine formal meetings, including a national Steering Committee meeting chaired by the Minister, were held to discuss progress on the National Baseline Assessment, including its review and adoption, as well as the steps to initiate the drafting of the NAPBHR. In the fourth quarter of 2023, after the official announcement on Malaysia’s commitment towards the action plan, the project team further supported the Working Group in developing the terms of reference for drafting support. In 2023, B+HR Asia provided 90 working days of technical expertise towards the finalization of the NBA and drafting of terms of reference of the NAPBHR. The project will continue to support the NAPBHR Working Group through the drafting process in 2024. A final draft is expected in April, though delays are expected.

Regional Mission to Malaysia to advance movement on the NAPBHR Malaysia

UNDP Malaysia hosted the regional Business and Human Rights Specialist Sean Lees' mission to Kuala Lumpur (29-31 May) for the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Regional Consultation on Business and Human Rights 2023, with several key side meetings organized as follows:



Key Outcomes of Bilateral Meetings

Meetings with Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department (BHEUU)

- The government shared progress on the development of the NAPBHR and raised challenges they have faced in the coordination process, given the breadth of the subject
- UNDP provided insight into NAP journeys from an ASEAN perspective, particularly, in Indonesia and Thailand
- BHEUU expressed commitment to finalize the NBA-BHR as a precursor to starting the drafting of the NAPBHR
- Requested support from B+HR Asia to host the national conference on BHR
- UNDP and BHEUU reaffirm strategic partnership based on advisory and technical support for the development phase of Malaysia's national action plan

Meetings with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

- BHR priorities (thematic area 6.4 on BHR) based on their 2020 Annual Report tabled in the second parliament sitting (30 May)
- SUHAKAM expressed interest to pursue deeper collaboration particularly on the corporate responsibility to respect human rights in the areas of non-discrimination, freedom of association, equitable working conditions and forced labour practices

Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

To mark the unveiling of the NBA findings, B+HR Asia launched a communications campaign to accompany the national conference on BHR.²² The conference livestream enjoyed over 419 views.²³ The social media campaign sharing the announcement from the Minister of Law and Institutional Reform reached over 403 views on Twitter/X.

Further to this, local and media covered the event, with features on [Malay Mail](#), [Bernama](#), [New Straits Times](#), and [The Edge](#) gaining a readership of over 2 million.

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Business, Human Rights and Climate Action: Youth Consultations

B+HR Asia began engaging and collaborating with UNICEF to support youth participation in policymaking through planned localized activities including a consultation as well as capacity building sessions in 2024. The collaboration entitled ‘Engaging Youth Perspectives on Business, Human Rights and the Environment’ will build the capacities of young people on the Business, Human Rights and the Environment agenda, as well as the role of youth in holding corporates and states accountable for violations of human and environmental rights. This effort aims to foster youth engagement on cross-cutting areas of the NAPBHR, namely child rights, environment, gender equality and youth engagement. Consultations will inform the drafting of the NAPBHR with support from the Youth Environment Living Labs (YELL) project.

Output 3.2: Skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operative effective grievance mechanisms is reinforced

Activity 3.2.1: Conduct sector-specific trainings with representatives of government and the business community on human rights due diligence, human rights impact assessments, grievance mechanisms, and other elements of Pillar 2 and 3 of the UNGPs.

HREDD trainings in the electronics and electrical (E&E) industry

In November 2023, the project launched a series of 8 HREDD trainings in the electronics and electrical industry. The trainings were conducted in collaboration with an ESG expert consultant, Wallbrook. The training included an overview of the UNGPs, global regulatory developments, the EU regulatory landscape, current BHR context in Malaysia. The training also provided detailed coverage of each step of the HREDD process with different strata of the E&E supply chain.

A total of 410 employees were trained, including SMEs based in the states of Johor, Penang and Selangor.²⁴ The training provided an overview of key challenges faced by companies in implementing ethical recruitment and migrant labour rights. Crucially, the training also saw commitments from companies to incorporate HREDD into their operations.

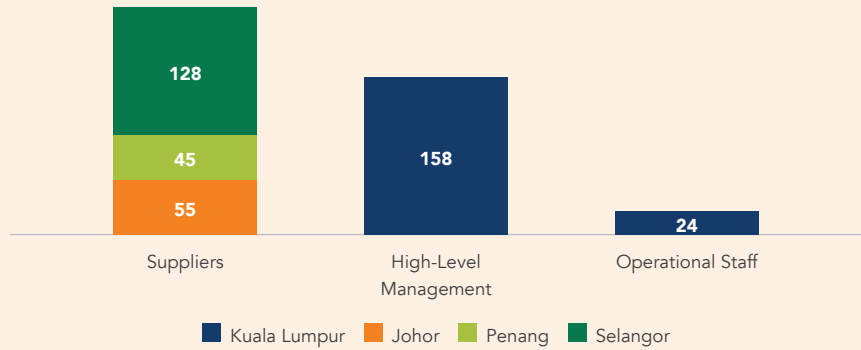
Component

Takeaways from Supplier Training Business and Human Rights



Reach of HREDD training

Illustrating geographic reach of trainings. High-level meetings included participation from mangers in Singapore.



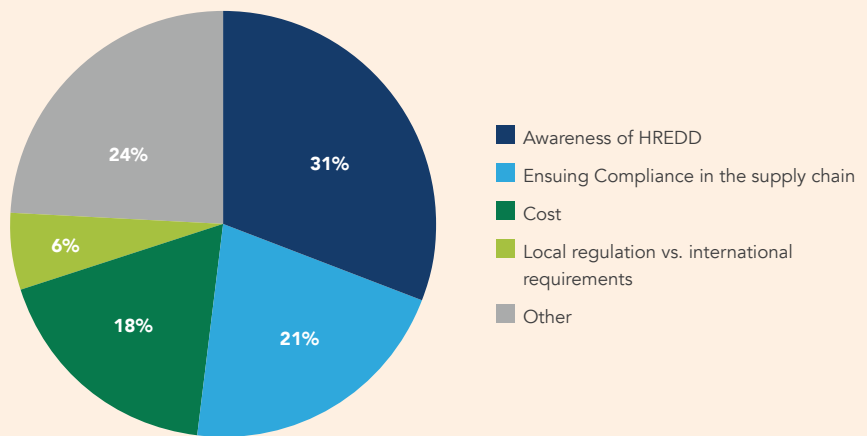
Company commitment to incorporate HREDD into operations

Commitments registered from 173 participants after HREDD training series



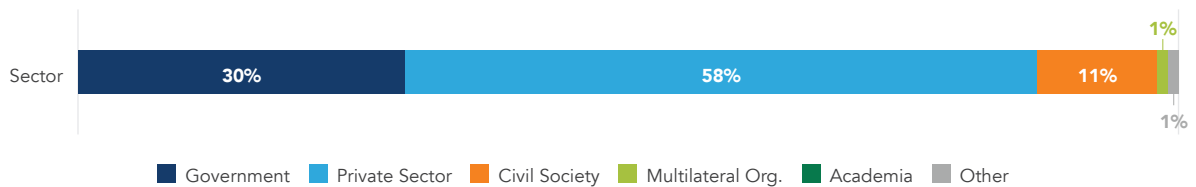
Key challenges you foresee in implementation of HREDD in your company

Challenges in implementation of HREDD for Malaysian E&E industry



KEY RESULTS

Sector-disaggregated chart illustrating B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Mongolia 2023



- Engaged over 1,866 stakeholders through events, trainings and awareness raising activities, an increase of 66% in civil society engagement from 2022.
- Launch of Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAPBHR) (2023-2027).
- Civil society grants focused on increasing meaningful engagement between affected workers and companies.
- Collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission Mongolia on digital rights in the context of the Business and Human Rights Agenda.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In June 2023, the Mongolian government launched a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAPBHR) after over four long years of research, consultation, and planning. The sudden acceleration in the speed by which the government drafted and finalized the NAP surprised many. The official launch event was covered extensively in national media and was followed by a series of workshops with key ministries on implementation.

In fact, in 2023, B+HR Asia experienced robust engagement with a multitude of stakeholders. B+HR Asia successfully leveraged partnerships with business associations— EuroChamber, Mongolian Food Industry Association (MFIA), and Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce—to help them deliver HRDD trainings to their members. Opportunities for B+HR Asia to work with civil society were many, given a healthy enabling environment, characterized by strong democratic values. According to an observer, “Mongolia’s civil society space remains open, allowing Western and local non-governmental organisations to engage in discussions about issues concerning political and civic rights.”

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Dialogue, training and knowledge sharing to encourage policy convergence with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Activity 1.1.1: Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs

Europe Day 2023

The project participated in Europe Day 2023 event organized by the European Delegation to Mongolia on May 14, 2023, at the main square of Ulaanbaatar city. During the event, B+HR Asia engaged 300 people, 40% of which were in the age range of 18 to 24. By using an interactive survey polling via Mentimeter, the project increased awareness among youth about the importance of BHR.²⁵ Participants gained a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and responsibilities related to business and human rights. Of note, the survey provided an opportunity to assess the key interests and entry points of young people and the BHR Agenda. Respondents indicated that their priorities in the world of work included inclusivity, flexibility, equality, and sustainability.

To further re-enforce the outcomes of EU-Day, the project mobilized and trained 18 volunteer students on BHR by partnering with local universities. Overall, the event inspired and motivated youth to act in favour of promoting and protecting human rights within the business sector. Both participants and students who helped organize gained insights into successful initiatives, projects, and best practices, which can serve as a source of inspiration for their own endeavors. Moreover, B+HR Asia opened pathways for deeper engagement with youth on the UNGPs with subsequent invitations to deliver presentations on BHR and HRDD during youth-led events – for example the Social Entrepreneurship National Forum 2023, co-organized by youth-civil society, Youth Business Mongolia and Development Solutions NGO.

Women's Economic Empowerment & the UNGPs

On 10 May 2023, B+HR Asia was invited to participate at the annual conference on women's rights and gender equality "Through Women's Eyes" under the theme of the care economy. The conference was hosted by MONFEMNET, a network of women's rights and gender equality NGOs. The event was attended by 200 participants and attracted media coverage from nearly 40 media outlets including newspaper, magazine, websites, television, and radio. Around 1,000 social media posts were shared through the participants using their social media accounts.

The conference was focused on the impacts of paid and unpaid care work on women based on case studies, and sought strategies to address gender imbalances in care and entrepreneurship and the labor market. Advocacy content was developed and disseminated including a package on workplace adjustment for persons with disabilities, women's access to financial services, social benefits for mothers, and obstacles faced by young women related to access to economic activities. B+HR Asia is working with MONFEMNET and the drafting committee to include a recommendation on HRDD in the final paper of the conference.

Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced.

Activity 1.2.2: Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans

Technical inputs in drafting the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

The Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights was endorsed by cabinet on 14 June 2023.²⁶ Prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the NAP was informed by the National Baseline Study supported by the B+HR Asia project.²⁷ In addition, the project supported the government in developing a BHR situational analysis and learning from international experiences for the drafting of the NAP. B+HR Asia provided technical support to the NAP Working Group, Executive Committee, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the course of the implementation period of the project.²⁸ Within the first half of 2023 alone, approximately 32 working days of technical inputs were made on the NAP. The project continues to work with government partners to translate the NAP into English, and, importantly, on implementation of the NAP.

Mongolian National Action Plan (2023-2027) Key Themes

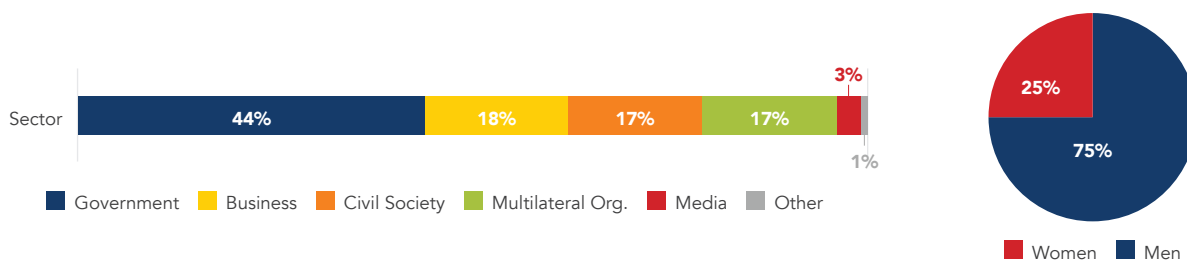
		
<p>Actions to improve the duty of the state to protect human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Legislation taking a human-rights-based approach — Legal framework for businesses to carry out HRDD — Occupational safety and health standards — Strengthening prohibition of forced labour and child labour — Anti-discrimination in the workplace, the right to a living wage, the right to freedom of expression — Consideration of human rights principles and criteria in environmental impact assessments — Informal sector — Inclusion of people with disabilities 	<p>Responsibilities of business enterprises to respect human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Promotion of the UNGPs, as well as the Gender Dimensions of the UNGPs — Private sector capacity to conduct HRDD — Promotion of conventions and laws related to employment of people with disabilities 	<p>Remedy for human rights violations, enhance the legal framework for compensation, and improve their effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Improve the system and mechanisms for preliminary hearings to resolve labour disputes — Improve private sector dispute resolution mechanisms for reviewing labour disputes and complaints of human rights violations — Capacity of sector-specific professional associations to resolve complaints and disputes and redress human rights violations — Improve the dispute resolution systems of the courts — Enhance the legal framework related to compensation of damages — Strengthen the complaints and dispute resolution activities of the NHRC — Raise citizens' awareness and understanding on remedy of human rights violations

Launch of Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

The Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights was launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 3 July 2023, marking it as the fourth NAP adopted in Asia. The NAP provides comprehensive measures to prevent, address and remediate human rights violations linked to business activities. With cross-cutting themes of gender equity and disability inclusion, the NAP provides detailed guideline to government, business, NHRIs, and civil society on their role in preventing and addressing business-related human rights violations as they occur.

The launch event was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support from the B+HR project in Mongolia. The event was opened by high-level officials including Ankhbayar Nyamdorj, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Elaine Conkievich, Resident Representative, UNDP Mongolia and Marco Ferri, Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to Mongolia. The event was attended by 61 representatives from government, business and civil society organizations.

Sector and gender profile of attendees of the launch of the Mongolian NAP



Workshops with key Ministries on implementations of the Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

After the launch of the NAP, B+HR Asia held a series of workshops with key ministries on the NAP, highlighting each ministry's role in the NAP and supporting them in mapping out a workplan for NAP implementation. Workshops were delivered for the following ministries, NHRI and NGOs:

- Ministry of Construction and Urban Development
- Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Economics and Development
- Ministry of Finance along with the General Department for Taxation
- Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
- Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry
- Ministry of Environment and Tourism
- National Human Rights Commission and their regional officers
- CSOs are based in the capital and in provinces.

Cumulatively, the workshops were delivered to 475 government officials. During the trainings it was clear that most of the participants were unaware of the NAP. Still, many showed enthusiasm for drafting their own implementation plans during a group exercise and some mentioned the importance of involving personnel from not only the ministries but from relevant agencies.

As a result of sensitization campaign targeting CSOs, the Human Rights NGO Forum, initiated a month-long campaign for the promotion of environmental and human-rights friendly businesses and sent out a letter to 16 ministries and 26 agencies requesting information of the status of efforts to implement the NAP.

“During the training workshop, the staff of the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development gained knowledge about the Guiding Principles on business and human rights, and the National Action Plan. The workshop was particularly important in determining ways to implement the National Action Plan’s activities related to the construction and urban development sectors and the need to develop a joint plan. I am fully confident that our cooperation will broaden in the future.”

Department of Public Administration Management
of the Ministry of Construction and Urban
Development

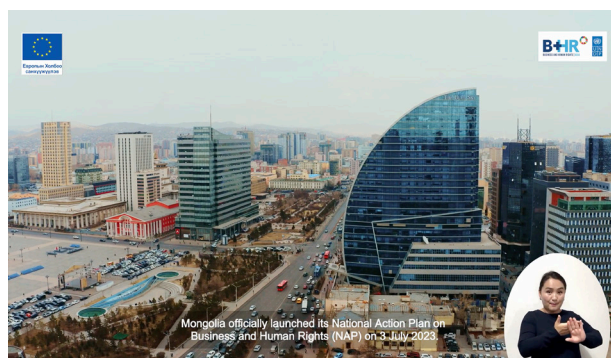
Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.1: Development of communication products is supported, furthering discourse and greater appreciation of the UNGPs and its positive impact on human rights

Three videos were launched to share the results of the project's activities including the NAP launch, HRDD training for businesses, and small grants engaging CSOs.

- [Launch of the National Action Plan on BHR](#)
- [Voices of Mongolian Business on Human Rights Due Diligence](#)
- [Business Responsibility to Respect Human Rights: Role of Civil Society](#)

All three products sought to increase public awareness on the UNGPs by highlighting good practices from business, civil society, and government alike. The videos were viewed 252 times.



Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

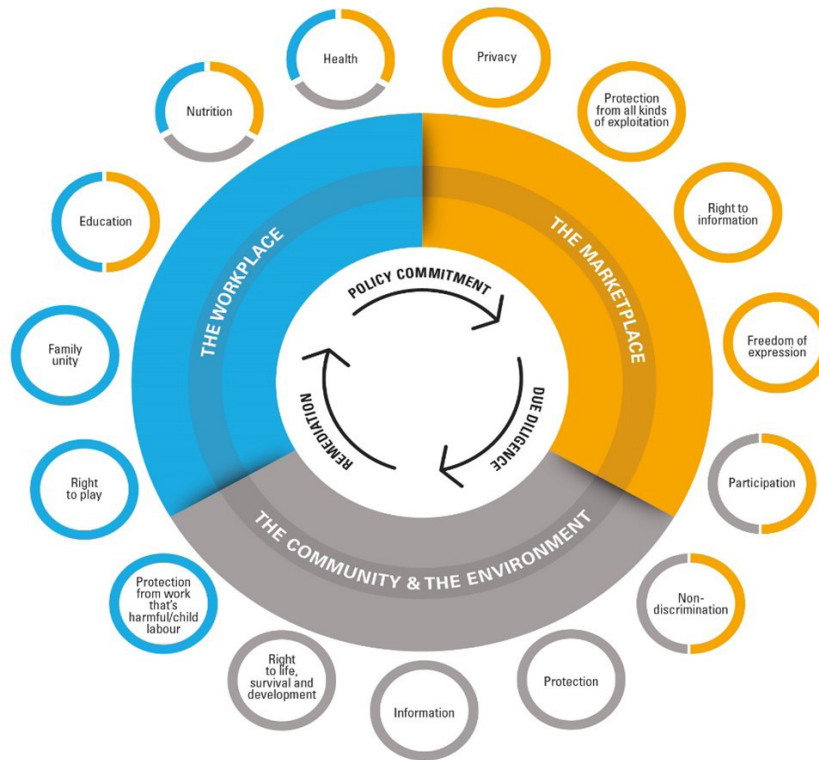
Communications Campaign and Outreach for the Mongolian NAP on BHR

The coverage of the launch of the NAP on the 3rd of July, was well received by the public via MNB World's Facebook and YouTube accounts which reached a total of 505 people and 37 engagements²⁹ as of December 29, 2023. The news of the event was also broadcast in [Mongolian National Radio](#). A short interview with the CEO of Trust Trade LLC was broadcast by [Mongolian National Radio](#), where she shared her company's experience participating in the HRDD initiative under the B+HR Asia project.

Case Study Booklet: Impact of B+HR Asia

To fully capture the impact of the B+HR Asia in Mongolia, the project launched a survey and interview series engaging government, civil society and private companies who have previously taken part in project activities. The survey sought to capture lessons learned as well as mid to long-term changes of programming. Early results include the interview of over 52 beneficiaries of B+HR Asia's 2022 HRDD trainings from Trust Trade LLC. A site visit and interviews which took place from 18-29 September 2023, revealed positive changes after the human rights risk assessment including changes made to human resources policies and the company's standard contracts in line with the UNGPs, and the introduction of flexible working hours for employees with disabilities. Key policy and practice outcomes will be launched as a case book to be disseminated in early 2024.

Overview of impact survey indicators



Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Three CSOs are promoting BHR through low value grants, raising awareness of companies and employees on the prevention of sexual harassment and strengthening of dispute resolution mechanisms at company level.

Oyu Tolgoi Watch (OT Watch)

B+HR Asia awarded a grant to OT Watch to work with business and civil society to increase awareness of grievance mechanisms in line with principle 25 of the UNGPs. Through the grant, OT Watch will deliver on training on international non-judicial grievance mechanisms, develop and disseminate knowledge products on the same, and further work with companies on incorporating the non-judicial grievance mechanisms in their procedures.

Mongolian Industry Trade Union Federation (MTUF)

MTUF sought to empower employee representative organizations with information on BHR, with a particular emphasis on the legal rights of workers. In addition to awareness raising activities, MTUF will also establish a dispute settlement mechanism in labour relations, following a training on business and labour rights for private sector representatives.

Mongolian Women's Employment Supporting Federation (MWESF)

B+HR Asia awarded a grant to MWESF to work the trade and service sectors to address workplace gender discrimination and sexual harassment. MWESF first set up a team of mentors comprised of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Light Industry, Ulaanbaatar City Government, Gender Equality Commission, the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, as well as human rights defenders, and a few professionals from the private sector. MWESF then held a series of trainings on BHR involving **147 people at six companies**. MWESF also received a commitment/letter from two companies, namely MCS Properties LLC and the State Bank who would like to MWESF mentor's teams to review their internal regulations related to harassment and sexual harassment and revise according to recommendations provided by the mentor's team.

Output 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms

A Training-of-Trainers on HRDD was provided to three business associations including EuroChamber, Mongolian Food Industry Association, and Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce for capacity building of companies.

Building on the lessons-learned from the implementation of HRDD trainings in 2021 and 2022, the project incorporated a gender equality diagnostic tool to the standard HRDD curriculum and provided training to 3 business associations. The updated HRDD assessment questionnaire will be used for capacity building activities to be delivered to member companies. The training was conducted jointly with the Mongolian Food Industry Association (MFIA) and reached 80 businesses representatives (89% women, 11% men) in the agri-food industry including top level and mid-level managers from June 22 to August 18, 2023. The participants also included human resource managers, legal advisors, and heads of labor safety and hygiene department.

Trainings jointly organized by EuroChamber and Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce are ongoing.

Guided Trainings in partnership with the Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce (UBCC)

With the aim of increasing capacities of the private sector and encouraging buy-in for HRDD practice among company executives, B+HR Asia in collaboration with UBCC provided extended HRDD trainings to 102 UBCC members. The trainings were attended by a range of public and private companies, and members of financial institutions. Overall, 86 percent of those trained recorded increased knowledge on BHR and HRDD processes, with many further expressing interest in incorporating the UNGPs as part of their company procedures.

"Based on information about human rights we acquired during the training on business and human rights, we are working to integrate human rights principles in our decision making and operations as policy. In this regard, we plan to organize a training and fair to support workers with disabilities."

Small and Medium Enterprise Support Center of Songinokhairkhan District

Two companies, Voltalm LLC and CrediTech Mongolia LLC, requested additional support from B+HR Asia and UBCC to support in the incorporation of HRDD in their operations. Initial meetings were held with senior management and follow up actions will be taken in early 2024.

To ensure sustainability of HRDD practice, training modules were uploaded to UNCC webpages, as well as similarly placed business associations, namely, GS1 Mongolia and Association of Non-Bank Financial Institutions (NBFIs).

Following the training, participants were asked by UBCC whether they have taken any action. Out of 8 respondents, 5 participants answered affirmatively and shared concrete examples. For example, one respondent offered that they are conducting activities to ensure staff rights, customers' rights, and protect personal information. Two participants answered that they have "developed a plan" such as forming a task group on BHR within the organization.

Guided Trainings in partnership with the Mongolian Food Industry Association (MFIA)

Drawing from the trainings delivered in 2022, B+HR Asia worked with MFIA on guided HRDD trainings. These were delivered to management-level executives among their membership ranks. The focus on management was a direct result of learnings taken in 2022, where many of the trainees remarked that HRDD approaches would be difficult to implement without the buy-in from leadership. The 2023 trainings were held for 80 management-level staff from 40 food enterprises, and included a deep-dive into the industry-level risks the food industry poses in Mongolia. Overall, 86% of those who attended the trainings indicated increased knowledge and a commitment to incorporate internal human rights analysis in their operations.

Profile of companies that took part in the guided HRDD training delivered with MFIA

Milk Products Sector	Meat Products Sector	Bakery Sector	MFIA Board Chairs & other Food Sectors
10 participants (management-level and human resources staff)	12 participants (management-level)	11 participants (management-level)	49 participants (management-level)
5 enterprises	8 enterprises	7 enterprises	20 enterprises

In addition to the trainings, MFIA selected four companies to undergo extended HRDD processes: Jur Ur LLC, MCS Coca-Cola LLC, Gazar Shim Factory and Hos Ivel LLC. The latter two started their HRDD process this year, and the latter will begin in Spring 2024. Key results from the internal HRDD for 2023 from Gazar Shim Factory and Hos Ivel LLC include the following:

Corporate Impact Story



Hos Ivel LLC

MFIA with support from B+HR Asia provided HRDD training for company staff, and continues to work with different departments to identify, assess, prioritize, and address adverse human rights risks and impacts. A marker of the company's commitment, Hos Ivel LLC Director, V. Baigalmaa signed and adopted the company's first [Human Rights Policy Pledge](#) in October 2023.



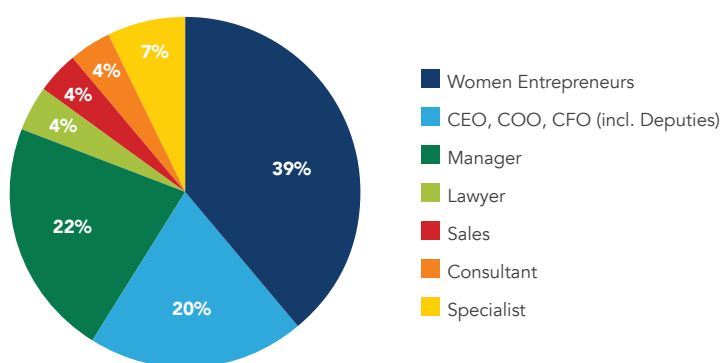
Gazar Shim Factory JSC

Gazar Shim Factory is Mongolia's first vegetable canning factory. The listed company is certified ISO 9001 and ISO 22000 and received support to fortify their HRDD systems. MFIA through B+HR Asia has since delivered HRDD training to key personnel, and further conducted interviews with factory workers, lawyers, middle management, and senior leadership. Since the beginning of this exercise, the company has adopted a [Human Rights Policy Pledge](#), and further launched 30 regulations and instructions to support trace and investigation for human rights and environmental abuses across its supply chain.

Guided Trainings in partnership with the EuroChamber (Mongolia)

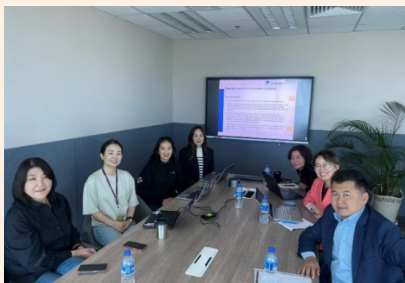
Between September to November 2023, B+HR Asia delivered HRDD trainings to 55 participants from 49 companies.³⁰ The aim of the in-person trainings was to deepen understanding of HRDD and further engage company leadership in HRDD practice. The trainings also presented an opportunity to roll-out gender-responsive components of the HRDD manual and saw participation of women entrepreneurs. Eighty-eight percent of the trainees expressed an increase in understanding of BHR and HRDD, with some indicating that they would further incorporate it in their daily work. Some of those trained expressed skepticism that HRDD would be adopted across their supply chains with one participant remarking:

Three-part gender-responsive HRDD training delivered in partnership with EuroCham



“Large corporations may have the bargaining power to demand that their suppliers respect human rights, but for smaller companies in Mongolia who try to import cheaper goods from [external] suppliers, demanding respect for human rights is not realistic”.

Corporate Impact Story



WellBee LLC

WellBee LLC specializes in cosmetics, lifestyle, and medical supplies, and distributes products sourced from suppliers located in the US, Canada, France, Italy and Germany. In 2023, B+HR Asia in collaboration with EuroCham trained staff on HRDD and worked with the company to map out the risks their operations pose to human rights and the environment. Key results recorded thus far include the establishment of a company Human Rights Working Group, introduction of regular human rights risk trainings for management and procurement staff (to be rolled out to all staff), and commitment from management to deliver gender-related training to all staff. The project will continue to work with management and staff in 2024 to address the human rights impacts already identified in the preliminary HRDD exercise.

In addition, Zandan Bilegt, EuroChamber’s CEO and one of the trainers, presented on Business and Human Rights at the Mining Week’s “Responsible Mining” session on 10th October 2023 in Ulaanbaatar.

Output 3.3: To set up actions that strengthen capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations

Training of Trainers: Personal Data Protection and the Business and Human Rights Agenda

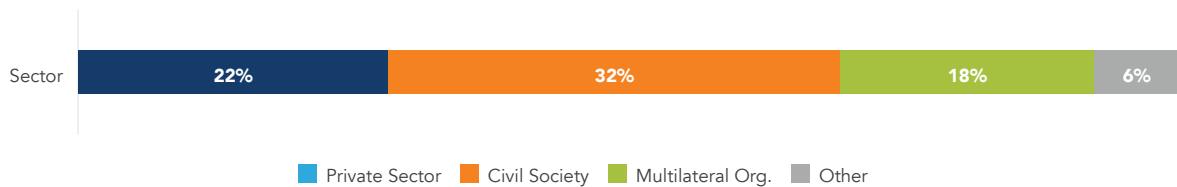
Trainees from: NHRCM, Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce, National Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and EuroCham

B+HR Asia in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia (NHRCM), and with the support of PwC, launched a series of trainings to increase awareness and corporate compliance with the Law on Personal Data Protection (PDPL).³¹ Between March and December 2023, B+HR Asia worked with partners in developing customized training curricula which sought to articulate the human rights risks associated with PDPL, and company responsibility to address these risks as they occur within their supply chain. The Guidebook will be published in early 2024.

The modules in the practical training guide were delivered as part of a 13-part Training-of-Trainers workshop to members of the Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce, EuroChamber and the Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

KEY RESULTS

B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Myanmar 2023



- Despite insecurity and other factors, heightened HRDD subnational trainings were delivered in Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi and Southern Shan State
- Community human rights awareness sessions, and local legal aid consultations, were provided in Ayeyarwady and Rakhine provinces with support of civil society partner Legal Clinic Myanmar

PROJECT OVERVIEW

BHR programming continued in Myanmar, albeit in limited measure, against a backdrop of enhanced security concerns due to armed clashes between State Administration Council (SAC) forces, Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), and People’s Defence Forces (PDF). Clashes occurred across the country but were most intense in Shan, Sagaing, Kayah, Rakhine, and Chin, leading to the substantial displacement of civilians. At the end of 2023 . Internal displacement was estimated to have risen to 2.3 million people, and UNHCR recently reported around 1.35 million refugees, people in refugee-like situations, and asylum-seekers from Myanmar.³²

The economic situation also remained precarious throughout the year. Despite indications of a recovery earlier in the year, the economy was severely constrained by conflict, limited access to foreign currency, supply chain disruptions, banking sector restrictions, and international sanctions.

These factors combined created a challenging environment for both local and foreign businesses. Announcements from a few international companies that they would phase out their operations in Myanmar received considerable media attention, most notably H&M, which stated its intention to pursue a gradual responsible exit.³³ Receiving less media attention were statements from companies, such as Maersk, that announced their intention to continue to operate in Myanmar having conducted heightened Human Rights Due Diligence.

B+HR Asia delivered heightened Human Rights Due Diligence (hHRDD) trainings in Yangon, Mandalay, and Taunggyi. The small group workshops attracted participants from some of Myanmar’s major businesses, MSME owners, and CSOs. Feedback following the trainings was positive with some participants indicating that it was the first time they had heard about UNGPs and HRDD.

B+HR Asia also worked closely with CSO partner, Legal Clinic Myanmar (LCM) providing legal consultations and awareness-raising sessions in Rakhine State, Ayeyarwady, and Yangon regions. A total of 307 legal consultations were provided by the LCM. With prospects for gainful employment dwindling, this activity was particularly relevant to help address the increasing reports of exploitation.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

Activity 2.1: Produce communication products including short-form documentaries, video animations and social media promotional materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus.

Two animated films were created in Myanmar and Rakhine languages. These films raised awareness of the risk of child labor, forced labor, slavery, and human trafficking. The films highlight real-life scenarios to demonstrate ways everyday people can help combat labor abuse and exploitation. The first film depicts labor abuse, exploitation, and harsh working conditions prevalent in the fishing industry, and the second tells the story of two children under the age of 14 who suffered extreme forms of labor exploitation and physical abuse by a tea shop owner. Both films were published in April 2023. The first film received 610 views, while the second film garnered 744 views.



Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

To drive environmental rights awareness in the lead up to World Environment Day, B+HR Asia in collaboration with Myanmar Sustainable Business Network (MSBN) partners and UN-Habitat, Thant Myanmar, WWF, Prevent Plastics, and Mercy Crops launched a social media campaign on Facebook. The campaign focused on the role of business and consumers in reducing plastic waste and adopting sustainable practices through the lens of the UNGPs. The campaign was carried out from 25 May to 5 June, with the advocacy messages shared by partners through their respective social media accounts resulting in 6,000 views.

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Civil society Engagement

To ensure workers have access to legal aid, B+HR Asia worked with CSO partner, Legal Clinic Myanmar (LCM), providing legal consultations and awareness-raising sessions in Rakhine State, Ayeyarwady, and Yangon regions.³⁴

- **Legal Consultations:** A total of 307 legal consultations were provided by the organization, LCM. These consultations were offered through both a hotline service and in-person sessions. Workers were able to seek guidance and support regarding labor-related issues, ensuring they had access to legal advice and information.
- **Legal Representation:** In addition, legal aid support was provided to vulnerable workers. Further to general legal aid and mediation support, LCM through the B+HR Asia project also provide legal representation in court for one of the original seven cases lodged during project period. The outcomes will be detailed in the final report.
- **Legal Awareness:** To further enhance labor rights awareness, community-based paralegals conducted educational sessions in Rakhine and Ayeyarwady. These sessions focused on informing beneficiaries about their labor rights, and routes to effective remedy should those rights be violated. A total of **188 beneficiaries** were reached through labor rights awareness sessions.

Output 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms

Engagement with Business and other stakeholders: World Environment Day

On 5 June, B+HR Asia in collaboration with MSBN Partners, UN-Habitat, Thant Myanmar, WWF, Prevent Plastics, and Mercy Crops convened a hybrid in-person and online panel discussion for World Environment Day which brought together 179 stakeholders from private sector, civil society and multilateral organizations.³⁵



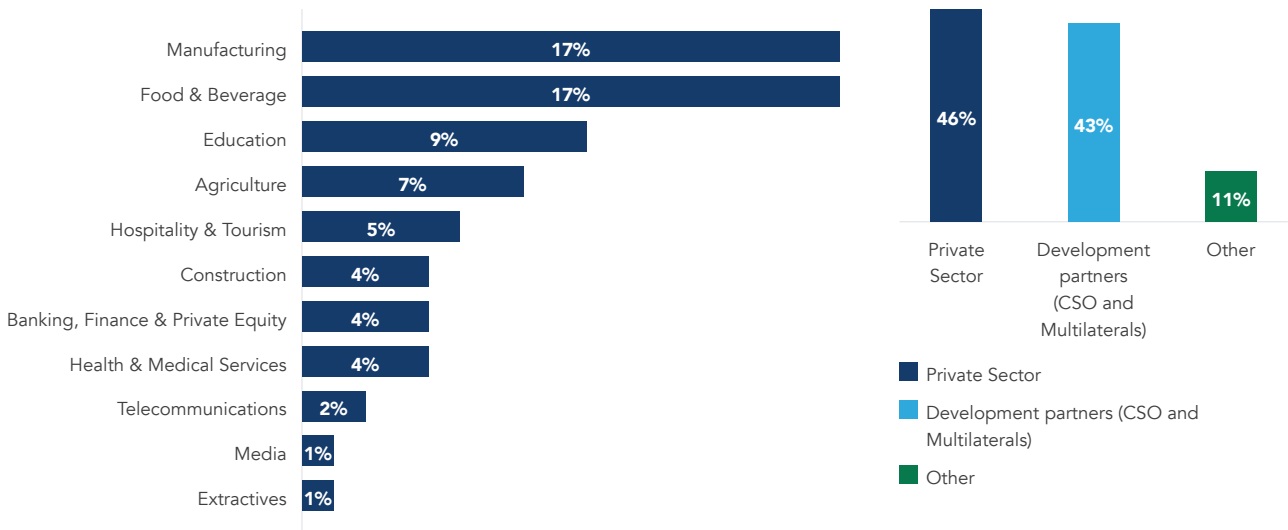
Trio of images from the World Environment Day Event, 5 June. Patrick Sandoval (Delegation of the EU to Myanmar), Titon Mitra (UNDP Myanmar), and Catarina Camarinhas (UN Habitat) left to right.

The event focused on best practices from businesses, measures and actions to tackle plastic pollution, and promotion of behavioral change towards responsible plastic consumption and disposal. Highlights include:

- **Circular Economy:** A panel discussion moderated by UNDP. with representatives from Coca Cola, Recycglo, Thant Myanmar and Prevent Plastics addressing topics such as the circular economy, its application to waste management, and strategies for businesses to reduce plastic pollution across the value chain.
- **Engagement of Medium and Small Sized Enterprises (MSMEs):** B+HR Asia invited 8 MSMEs to share their best practices and alternative solutions by addressing environmental challenges, fostering sustainability, and promoting responsible business practices.

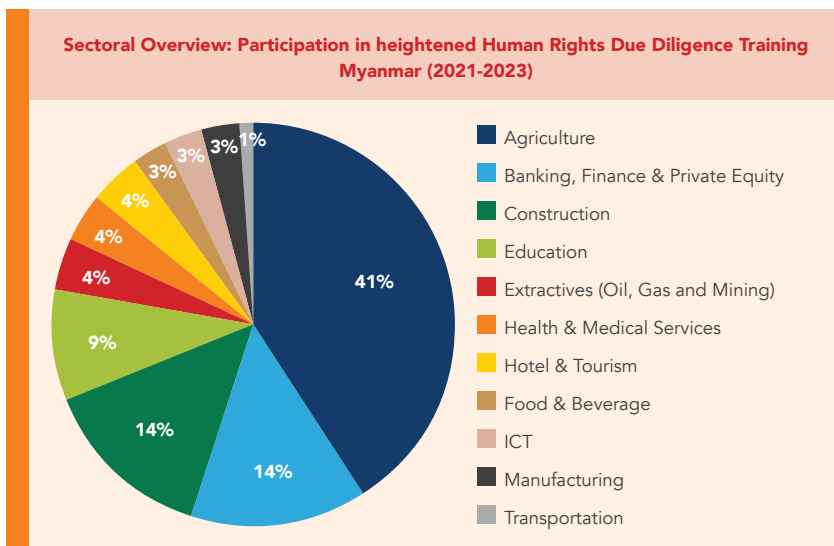
Building on the success of the WED event, a series of 15-person meet-ups were held at local businesses providing an opportunity for participants to network and see sustainable initiatives in practice.

Three-part gender-responsive HRDD training delivered in partnership with EuroCham



Sub-National heightened Human Rights Due Diligence (hHRDD) Trainings

In November and December 2023, B+HR Asia delivered heightened Human Rights Due Diligence (hHRDD) trainings primarily for local companies in Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi (Southern Shan State). Given Myanmar’s complex socio-political landscape, discussions on human rights issues remains sensitive. As a consequence, the project took precautionary measures to ensure the safety of participants and trainers. The training provided an opportunity to increase the capacities of private sector, including financial institutions and SMEs, on hHRDD at the subnational level.



“Being an SME there are many requirements, and we need a lot of knowledge and capacity building to help us understand how to be in line with these requirements”

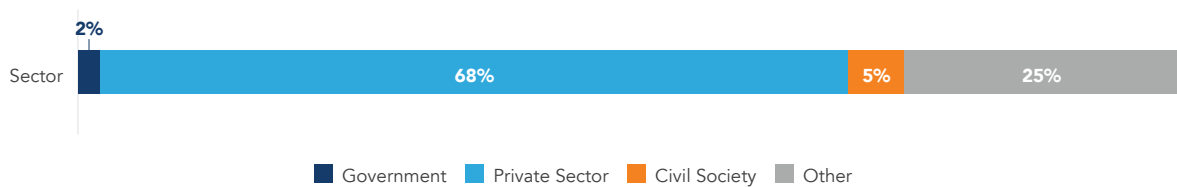
SME participant, Mandalay training

E-Learning Course

Two online e-learning courses on Responsible Business Practices and Risk Management were delivered in the Myanmar language in early 2024. The RBP courses were split into beginner level courses covering general human rights concepts and the obligation of businesses to respect human rights (UNGPs Pillar II). The intermediate level RBP course will provide more insight into conducting hHRDD focusing on proportionate requirements for small businesses. The risk management course will provide step-by-step guidelines on risk management process and risk management strategies for MSME owner

KEY RESULTS

Profile of B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Sri Lanka 2023



- Over 977 stakeholders were engaged through events, trainings, and civil society initiatives. Notably, B+HR Asia saw an 113% increase in engagement with the private sector in Sri Lanka in 2023.
- Ongoing work with the Ministry of Justice to identify entry points for government action on Business and Human Rights leads to the establishment of a Working Group on BHR and the development of a scoping study for a NAP on BHR.
- Advocacy work on abuses of the microfinance industry results in 279 appeals to the Central Bank and 45 complaints to the Human Rights Commission

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In the first quarters of 2023, Sri Lanka’s political and economic crisis led to food insecurity and public health and safety concerns.³⁶ Workers in the garment and tea industries faced layoffs and suspended employment. Alarmed at the pace and scale of the disruption, the Joint Secretary of Free-Trade Zones and General Service Employees Union called for companies to “respect fundamental human rights and labour rights.” In this context, B+HR Asia in Sri Lanka made considerable headway in its engagement with government on the BHR Agenda. Following a series of meetings, The Ministry of Justice of Sri Lanka established a Working Group on Business and Human Rights and requested that B+HR Sri Lanka carry out a scoping study to identify already existing initiatives aligned with the UNGPs. The findings will be presented to The Working Group, which is led by the Ministry of Justice, and includes members from the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Food Security and Ministry of Investment Promotions.

Despite the economic turmoil Sri Lanka faced in 2023, B+HR Asia experienced strong uptake of sector-specific HREDD trainings among 120 representatives from small to medium sized companies in the agri-foods and textile industries. Separately, 5 companies were selected from lists of companies who attended prior trainings, to go through policies and unpack challenges, develop action plans. Ad hoc engagements with UN Global Compact Sri Lanka are ongoing.

In 2023, B+HR Asia continued working with the Centre for Policy Alternatives, to strengthen policy and corporate action on unregulated microfinance practices and its impact on women’s rights. The primary focus has been on empowering women and women-led businesses, enhancing their capacity to comprehend the intricacies of loan conditions, and fostering resilience against exploitation. The current phase offers vital support in accessing legal referrals to victims of predatory micro-finance practices. Access to remedy trainings were also provided to workers in Sri Lanka’s free trade zones through engagement with two CSOs, Stand-Up Movement Sri Lanka, and the Women’s Center.

Despite an active civil society, CSOs in Sri Lanka reportedly faced increased hostility and threats from the government in 2023. According to observers, the government clamped down on protests and security agencies and the military continued their surveillance, intimidation and harassment of civil society organizations, the media, families of the disappeared, former combatants, and Tamil political and civic activity in conflict-affected areas.³⁷ Notably, in 2023, proposed amendments to the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was tabled at Parliament. (The PTA has reportedly enabled the perpetration of torture, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and other human rights violations.³⁸) However, the proposed counter-terrorism legislation did not, according to observers, remedy the defects of the PTA which included vague definitions and sweeping powers for government to arbitrarily detain citizens.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Dialogue, training and knowledge sharing to encourage policy convergence with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Activity 1.1.1: Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs

Listening Session: Youth, Climate Action and the Business and Human Rights Agenda

In August 2023, B+HR Asia in partnership with UN Global Compact Network Sri Lanka held a listening session with youth on the nexus between climate action and the UNGPs. The session aimed to sensitize youth on the climate change impacts that Sri Lanka continues to face. Issues such as responsible consumption, and corporate engagement of young people on sustainable production were unpacked with the audience of young entrepreneurs, and civil society actors.

As a next step these inputs will feed into future programming at the country level, and also be shared with relevant stakeholders, who are working with this target group on the climate action agenda.



Young climate activist sharing their experiences working with business on the climate agenda

Government participation at the UN South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights

In 2023, B+HR Asia formally engaged the government and advocated that the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) draft and adopt a NAP on BHR. In March 2023, the project facilitated the participation from the MOJ at the UN South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights, held in Kathmandu, Nepal. B+HR Asia briefed the Secretary on the basics of the UNGPs and the most salient human rights risks posed by business in Sri Lanka. Following the meetings, the Ministry requested support to conduct a scoping study on entry points for implementation of the UNGPs in Sri Lanka (see Output 1.2.) B+HR Asia completed the report and submitted it to the Secretary of the MOJ which was then forwarded to the Presidential Secretariat (See below, activity 1.2.2).

Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced.

Activity 1.2.2: Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans

Scoping Study and support to the Working Group on Business and Human Rights

IN second quarter of 2023, the MOJ requested that B+HR Asia carry out a scoping study to identify existing government initiatives on responsible business, and to further present these to what would be the Working Group on BHR. The Working Group is led by the MOJ and includes members from the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Food Security and Ministry of Investment Promotions.

Building on the legal gap analysis³⁹ conducted in 2021, B+HR Asia further conducted interviews with companies, business associations, civil society and academia engaged in agriculture, apparel, tea, and tourism industries. A sample of the findings and recommendations is summarized in the table below:

Finding	Recommendation
The informal sector is an important piece of the economy with over 67% of Sri Lanka's working population engaged in informal employment. ⁴⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Government should work to consolidate existing legislation and move more workers from the informal sector towards formal employment. — Business should be encouraged to extend benefits and protections to informal workers in their supply chain.
Some good practices are in place in the apparel industry aligned with internationally recognized standards. There is also a desire to adopt human rights due diligence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Industry bodies can do more to share best practices on how to align with UNGPs. — Corporate senior leadership should work to outline a company's commitment to human rights across its value chain.
Access to remedy remains uneven across different corporate entities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — All stakeholders should strive to provide accurate information on remedy pathways in all three official languages — Government to streamline legal aid assistance for vulnerable workers

Upon the completion of this study, a validation workshop will be held in collaboration with the MOJ and other government partners. During the workshop, the study's findings will be presented, and this will provide government representatives with the opportunity to contribute their insights and feedback. These inputs will serve as the foundation for the MOJ to convene a group of representatives who will carry forward the BHR agenda in Sri Lanka.

The full report and recommendations will be presented to the MOJ and the BHR Working Group in early 2024. In addition to the scoping study, B+HR Asia in partnership with the MOJ will follow up with representatives of the above-mentioned ministries to propose a roadmap/framework for the implementation of business and human rights in Sri Lanka. The roadmap will contain clearly defined milestones from which to measure progress.

Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.1: To support the development of research and policy pieces furthering public discourse and greater appreciation of the UNGPs and its positive impact on human rights, including women's rights



Adopting Responsible Business Practices in a COVID-19 Era: Lessons from MSMEs in Sri Lanka

In January 2023, B+HR Asia in partnership with research partner, Marga Institute, published the research report, 'Adopting Responsible Business Practices in a COVID-19 Era: Lessons from MSMEs in Sri Lanka'. The research unpacked the human and environmental rights obligations of MSMEs in Sri Lanka, in the context of poly-crisis and shocks.

Some key outcomes of this research piece being:

- There is a need for targeted capacity-building programs for MSMEs to enhance their understanding of human and environmental rights, equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary for compliance.
- MSMEs should integrate resilience-building measures equipping them to navigate and mitigate the impacts of crisis.
- More collaboration between MSMEs, government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and local communities is needed to address human and environmental rights concerns.



Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

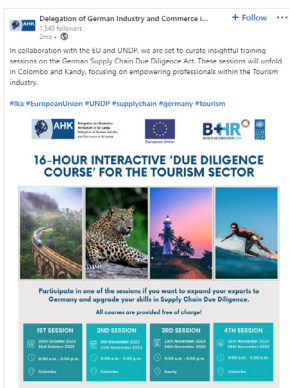
Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

Communications Campaigns to raise awareness on UNGPs

In 2023, B+HR Asia pursued a two-pronged approach to communications campaigns: 1) create content for social media to raise the profile of the UNGPs in Sri Lanka and 2) work with media organizations to promote emerging BHR priorities via comprehensive communications strategy.

Under the first prong, the project shared key BHR messages reaching over 12,086 views. B+HR Asia also ran a social media campaign in partnership with the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka. The campaign was run over 2 months, and cumulatively reached 365 social media accounts.

To disseminate BHR messages further, the project partnered with local media house ROAR Media, to develop audio-visual content on prevailing BHR stories including on the impact of unregulated microfinance practices on women workers, and gendered-human rights risks in the workplace.



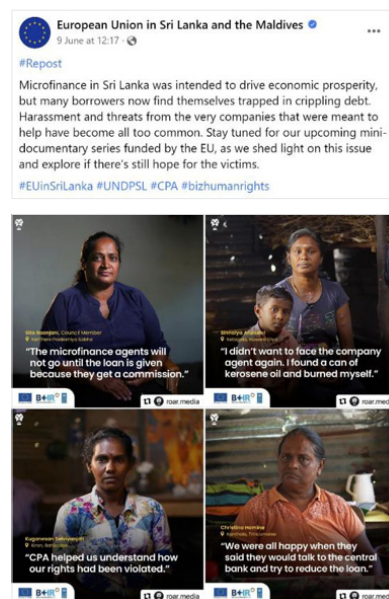
Sample of UNGPs Social Media Campaign

Video Documentary Series in collaboration with ROAR Media and CPA

A video documentary series was produced with Centre for Policy Alternatives, that spotlighted the story of three women impacted by the predatory practices of microfinance institutions. The initiative was rolled out in partnership with ROAR media, a local media organization.

The series spotlights the stories of women entrepreneurs from rural and peri-urban backgrounds, who face rights violations at the hands of microfinance institutions operating on the ground.⁴¹ The first and second episode have to date garnered over 749 views, and the complementary communications campaign received 824 page views.⁴²

The documentary also played a key role in influencing policymakers and regulatory bodies to act on the issues highlighted, leading to the development and implementation of regulations that better protect individuals especially women, from exploitative practices. The documentary was shown widely and socialized with policymakers as part of the localization of the Microfinance Credit Regulatory Bill (see Output 3.1).



Social Media Campaign (click [here](#) to view)

Animation: Women's Rights in the Workplace (in collaboration with ROAR Media)⁴³

In celebration of Human Rights Day 2023, B+HR Asia jointly released a video with the EU Delegation in Sri Lanka. This coincided with the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and emphasized the need to adapt to present and future realities while upholding the UDHR's aspirations for a freer and fairer world. The video also spotlighted the robust partnerships between the European Union, particularly in-country, and highlighted how BHR, has been actively promoting human rights as a catalyst for change, aligning our efforts with the UNGPs. In addition, the social media campaign reaped higher than average views with 37,760 recorded on Facebook and Instagram respectively.

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Centre for Policy Alternatives (2022-2023)⁴⁴

B+HR Asia continues working with civil society organization Centre for Policy Alternatives, to strengthen policy and corporate action on unregulated microfinance practices and its impact on women's rights. In Phase 1 of the grant initiative, focused on empowering women and women-led businesses, enhancing their capacity to comprehend the intricacies of micro-finance loan conditions, and fostering resilience against exploitation. In the current phase (Phase 2) of the initiative, capacity building efforts have been extended to 472 women residing in the Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura, and Ampara Districts, offering them vital support in accessing legal referrals and seeking remedies. 8 video clips and a newsletter have been circulated to raise awareness of the general public on how unregulated micro-finance practices impact human rights.⁴⁵ Further to this, 4 district-level networks were established and activated to sustain community advocacy for the rights of women entrepreneurs. Networks were further enrolled in a residential training on the rights of women workers.



Community capacity building and legal awareness sessions on the impact of unregulated microfinancing practices in Anuradhapura and Vavuniya districts respectively

Other key results noted as follows:

- **Access to Remedy:** 279 women have submitted individual appeals to the Central Bank, 45 complaints to the Human Rights Commission and 45 group RTI Applications submitted.
- **Policy Interventions:** 12 advocacy meetings were conducted with key stakeholders on microfinance policy reforms including, the Governor of the Eastern and Northern Provinces, Chief Secretary of the North Central, Eastern and Central Provinces, Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid Commission, Asia Foundation, Minister of Justice and Members of the Parliament. Initial outcomes from advocacy meetings, include the submission of 10 public petitions requesting policymakers to enact the Microfinance and Credit Regulatory Act at the local-level.

In 2024, B+HR Asia will work with CPA on follow up actions related to the Micro-Finance Bill, which was drafted by special committee appointed to review by-laws. Comments have been received and the bill is scheduled to be finalized in 2024.⁴⁶

Women's Centre (2022-2023)

A grant awarded to Women's Centre in 2022 came to end in Q2 of 2023. This initiative sought to build on the recommendations offered by 2022 study, the [Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women Garment Workers in Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zones](#). B+HR Asia worked with Women's Centre to raise capacities of 75 women workers in Free-Trade Zones (FTZs) on their rights in the context of the workplace; including labour rights and remedy options for sexual and gender-based violence. On the latter, 40 women received legal and psychosocial support through referrals and awareness raising sessions.

To strengthen the sustainability of interventions held training-of-trainers initiatives with key stakeholders at community level on topics such as the impact of the economic crisis on the rights of women workers. This was mirrored by advocacy campaigns on similar subject areas on international days such as Human Rights Day, and International Day of Decent Work.

Stand Up Movement Sri Lanka (2023-2024)⁴⁷

In late 2023, B+HR Asia awarded a new low-value grant to Stand Up Movement Lanka. The initiative named “Hand to Hand” broadly focuses on the areas of awareness raising, legal empowerment and redress and strengthening protection mechanisms through information sharing targeting workers in the Free Trade Zones. To date, the Hand-to-Hand initiative has achieved the following results:

- **321 workers** in Free-Trade Zones were provided with training-of-trainers on access to remedy for women workers. This included training of 15 factory managers in Wathupitiwala, Koggala and Biyagama districts
- **149 complaints** were received relating to business abuses of human rights. Stand Up Movement is currently reviewing complaints and providing advice on remedial options.
- **Over 20 case studies** were recorded and compiled highlighting common business-related human rights abuses in FTZs
- **5 mobile clinics** set up to provide legal advice in Katunayake, Biyagama, Wathupitiwala and Koggala districts.⁴⁸ Overall 68 complaints were filed as a result of project interventions

Similar to the two other civil society grants, Stand Up Movement aims to increase awareness of the BHR Agenda at the subnational level, while also presenting local communities with sustainable models of engagement on issues such as advocating for effective remedy. In 2024, Stand Up Movement will consolidate case studies and lessons learned, which will be shared widely as part of an Advocacy Forum.

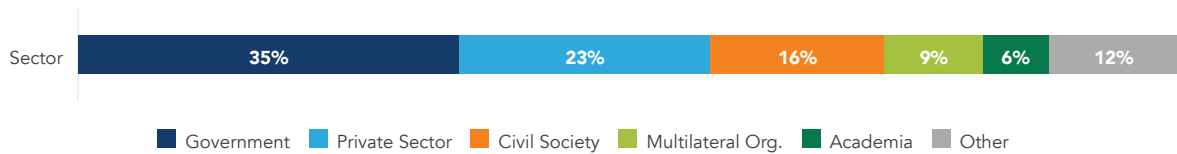
Output 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms

Awareness Session on the German Supply Chain & Due Diligence Act for SMEs in the Agriculture and Tourism Sectors

In collaboration with the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the project team organized an awareness session and a training series on the German Supply Chain & Due Diligence Act (LkSG).⁴⁹ The trainings were designed to promote awareness and understanding of the Act’s implications and cultivate an understanding of emerging corporate sustainability policy. They were tailored and delivered to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the agriculture and tourism sectors. Additionally, two panel discussions featuring experts from these industries were held to facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. This event marked the commencement of a series of planned training sessions. The event was attended by over 60 representatives from both sectors.

KEY RESULTS

Sector-disaggregated chart illustrating B+HR Asia multi-stakeholder engagement in Thailand 2023



- Launched the second Thailand National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP II).
- Engaged over 2,347 stakeholders, representing an increase of 103% over 2022.
- Publications launched on strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), and protection of human rights defenders.
- National consultation conducted, exploring readiness of Thai companies on mandatory HRDD

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In September, Thailand launched its second NAP on BHR making it the first country in Asia to adopt two NAPs on BHR, the first in 2019 and the second in 2023. The launch was made after a period of significant political instability. In March, Thailand's king dissolved parliament, paving the way for a general election. After elections were held in May the Thai Election Commission confirmed that the opposition, Move Forward Party, won the largest share of seats by a wide margin. However, with legal and political pressures mounting against the Move Forward Party, its presumptive coalition partner, the Pheu Thai Party announced a controversial pact to form a new government with parties backed by Pheu Thai's longtime rival, the Thai military. In late August, Pheu Thai Party's prime ministerial candidate Srettha Thavisin won parliament's endorsement to become the country's 30th prime minister. One month later, the NAP on BHR was launched to much fanfare with several hundreds of stakeholders in attendance.

The Thai NAP on BHR was adopted against a backdrop of worrying economic indicators, including rising interest rates, shrinking exports and inflationary pressures. Indeed, Thailand's post-COVID economic growth has been described as "anemic" by many observers. Still, interest in the BHR agenda among business stakeholders remained strong in the country. Evidencing this, B+HR Asia co-hosted the Bangkok Business and Human Rights week (BBHR) drawing in nearly 700 participants including a large segment from the private sector. Events during BBHR focused on the agribusiness industry, and the intersection of environmental and human rights issues.

According to reports, civil society champions continue to face intimidation, harassment including surveillance and physical threats Under the Computer Crime Act, the government has reportedly limited access to information and pressured service providers to remove material on websites deemed offensive to public officials. There is reportedly a rise in the use of surveillance technology to monitor activists.

The use by business of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP) in Thailand also gained increased public attention in 2023. Prominent writer and economist, Ms. Sarinee Achavanuntakul, was sued by Gulf Energy Development for defamation in both civil and criminal cases. The company demanded more than 100 million Thai baht in damages, claiming that Ms. Sarinee had accused them of monopolizing power plants. In addition to this case, the company has sued at least five parties who are known journalists, politicians, and media, on similar allegations. Ms. Sarinee is a close partner to UNDP Thailand, having authored important reports on BHR.

In June, B+HR Asia launched a study analyzing 109 SLAPP cases filed between 1997 to 2022. The report was developed at the request of the Ministry of Justice with a view to providing key stakeholders – the judicial system, government, state-owned enterprises and private sector – with recommendations to address growing prevalence of SLAPPs. The study has also been submitted to the National Committee for NAP Implementation. B+HR Asia also launched a study on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Thailand, which assessed violations of human rights defenders from 1993 to 2022. The report provides an overview of the state of protections afforded to HRDs, and further highlights recommendations on how to heighten protections and provide HRDs with access to effective remedy. Separately, UNDP also convened a series of multistakeholder dialogues to promote environmental justice and human rights in five provinces.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy and NAP support

Output 1.1: Dialogue, training and knowledge sharing to encourage policy convergence with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Activity 1.1.1: Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policymakers, prominent civil society groups and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs

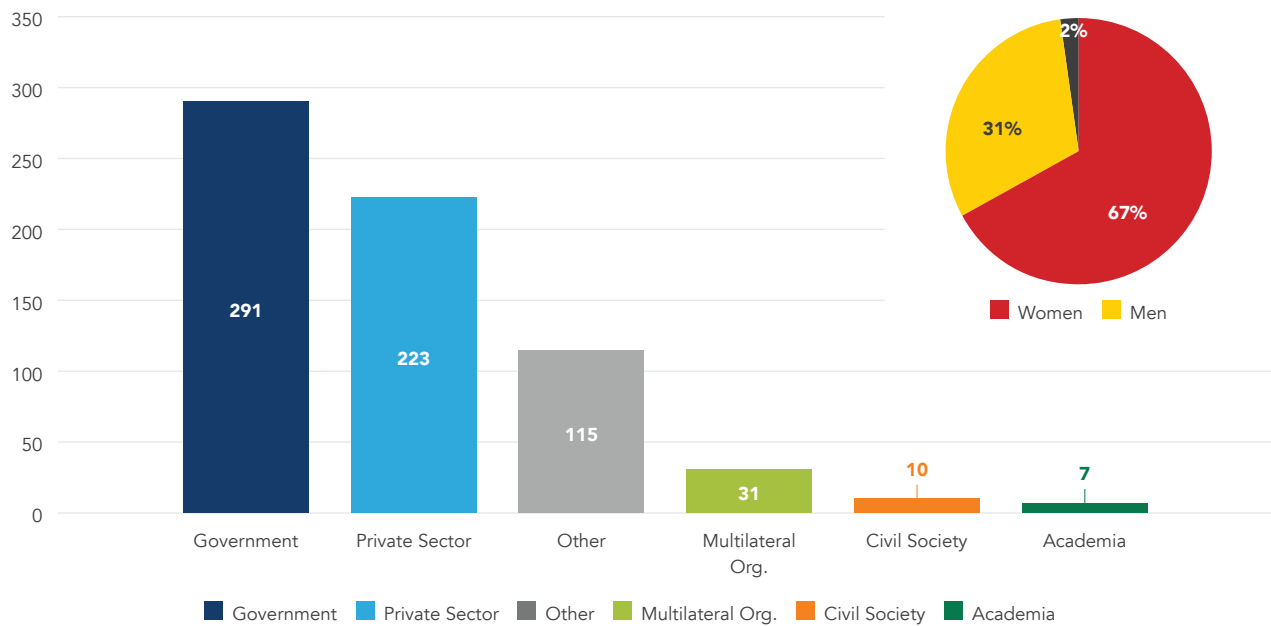
Seventh (7th) Bangkok Business and Human Rights Week (BBHR)

Between 29 May – 9 June, B+HR Asia co-organized “BBHR Week,” an annual week-long event which provides the opportunity for multi-stakeholder discussions on the BHR agenda, responsible business practices, and sustainable development in Thailand. In 2023, BBHR Week sought to unpack the three pillars of the Protect, Respect and Remedy framework in depth. The event was co-organized with the Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice, Global Compact Network Thailand, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI).⁵⁰

One of the central themes of this year’s BBHR Week focused on the intersection of environmental impacts and human rights, a pressing concern for Thailand, particularly following the Human Rights Council’s recognition of the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment in 2021. The BBHR Week program specifically catered to the agribusiness sector, a pivotal industry in Thailand that accounts for over 35% of the country’s total labor force. The week featured discussions on responsible business practices tailored to the Thai agribusiness sector, providing a platform for participants to exchange insights into their successful approaches and challenges in addressing human rights issues within their business operations and supply chains, including issues related to labor practices and the effects of climate change.

The 7th BBHR Week was attended by nearly 700 participants including from the private sector, state-owned enterprises, government agencies and civil society organizations from Thailand and beyond.

Disaggregated data of participation for 7th BBHR 2023



Human Rights Day Campaign and the 7th National Dialogue on BHR

In December 2023, B+HR Asia co-hosted a series of events to commemorate Human Rights Day. These events were bookended by discussions at the National Dialogue on BHR.

A Human Rights Day event was co-organized with the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), OHCHR, Thailand Institute of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. A key discussion of the event is “Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All”, reflecting on the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition to panel discussions by human rights activists, awards were presented to 9 individuals and organizations for outstanding achievements in promoting, protecting, and defending human rights in 2023.

On 12 December, B+HR Asia hosted the 7th National Dialogue on BHR with the theme “Embracing digital transformation, achieving sustainable business”. This event was hosted in partnership with the Rights Liberty and Protection Division (RLPD) of the Ministry of Justice and Global Compact Network Thailand. The event was also attended by 75 private sector actors including business associations and chambers of commerce, as well as government entities. The aim of discussions was to enhance knowledge and understanding about the intersection of human rights and the digital transformation and the ways business use digital technology to drive sustainable business.

Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced.

Activity 1.2.1: Raise Awareness of the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) with governments, making the normative and business-case for adoption and implementation; host and facilitate bilateral peer learning events to showcase best practices on UNGP implementation

Launch of Thailand's Second National Action Plan on BHR

September served as a milestone for Thailand due to its adoption of the Second National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights (2023 – 2027). The launch event of the Second NAP was organized on 8 September 2023 by the Rights and Liberties Protection Department (RLPD) of the Ministry of Justice, a focal agency for developing and implementing the Thai NAP. Building on the success and lessons-learned from the first NAP, the second NAP will continue to promote responsible business practices and respects for human rights throughout business value chain with the aim of sustainable economic growth. The second NAP also provides guidelines for action in various sectors with a view of protecting individuals and communities from human rights violations caused by the business sectors.

Thailand National Action Plan (II) Key Themes

			
<p>Labour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Ratification of ILO conventions including on forced labour, and protection of right to organize — Protection of vulnerable workers including informal workers, and seasonal migrant workers as they are disproportionately impacted by climate change and aging society — Effort to amend Labour Relation Act and State Enterprise Act — Alignment of Compensation Act in line with international principles — Antidiscrimination, and re-enforcement of right to education for children of migrant workers — References to 'workforce of the future' 	<p>Community, Land, Natural Resources and the Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Re-enforcement of the need for meaningful and "genuine participation" — Review, Improve, Amend and propose laws and regs. on Community Health Impact, industrial Waster management, and incentives for eco-friendly agricultural methods — Fair land allocation for agriculture and contract farming, including a study to inform a regulation on climate change — Strengthening Strategic Environment Assessment, including greater information disclosure — Access to information for ethnic minority groups affected — Expanded scope for information disclosure on human rights and environmental impact 	<p>Human Rights Defenders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Strengthening measures to protect HRDs — Safeguarding HRDs ability to conduct activities both on and offline — Develop capacities of the judiciary and prosecutors on human-rights suits — Enhancing capacities on strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPP) — New sections on appeals, mediation and overall access to remedy 	<p>Cross-border investment and multinational enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Judicial process for effective remedy for stakeholders affected by operations of Thai companies — HRDD mechanisms for multinational enterprises' subsidiaries, affiliates and contractors — Capacity building for judicial officers on impacts of multinational enterprises — Business to establish Operational Grievance Mechanisms based on the UNGPs and OECD Guidelines for MNEs

In addition, the second NAP further strengthen the Thai government's commitment and obligations on human rights, including ratification of remaining human rights standards and conventions, such as the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention 1948 (ILO No. 87), the ILO convention on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention 1949 (ILO No. 98) and Forced Labour Convention (ILO No.29).



Activity 1.2.2: Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans

NAP II Workshops

After the official launch of the second NAP, RLPD in collaboration with B+HR Asia co-organized a series of workshops to build awareness and capacities within various sectors, government agencies, state enterprises and civil society organisations. This initiative aimed to build technical capacities, and further unpack roles of the different actors within the context of NAP II.

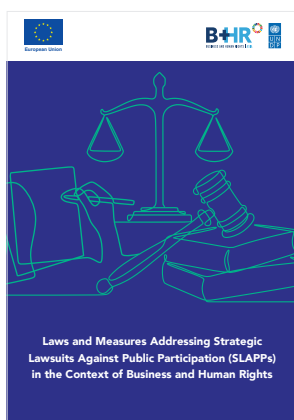
At the workshops, B+HR Asia had the opportunity to deliver a special presentation on the UNGPs and relevant international frameworks and regulations to raise the awareness of the importance of the business and human rights agenda. The workshops also featured rich discussions by representatives from model government agencies and private companies who had shared good practices and insights on how to effectively integrate business and human rights in their work.



Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

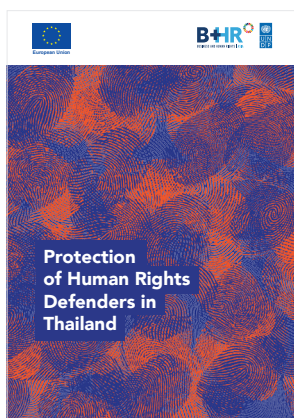
Activity 2.2.2: Produce communication materials to enhance understanding of the UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus



Laws and Measures Addressing Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in the Context of Business and Human Rights

Developed at the request of the Ministry of Justice, and launched on 27 June 2023, the study provided an analysis of the 109 SLAPP cases filed between 1997 to 2022, with a view of outlining the common charges and providing key stakeholders – the judicial system, government, state-owned enterprises, and private sector – with recommendations to address the growing prevalence of SLAPPs. The study has also been submitted to the National Committee for NAP Implementation.

The study has been downloaded 268 times in 2023.



Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Thailand

A study assessing violations of human rights defenders from 1993 to 2022, the knowledge product aims to provide an overview of the state of protections afforded to HRDs, and further highlight recommendations to key actors – judges, public prosecutors, and law enforcement – on how to heighten protections and provide them with access to effective remedy. The study was downloaded 219 times in 2023.

Output 3: Access to Remedy

Output 3.1: Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Activity 3.1.1 Provide grants to civil society actors working with human rights defenders and women's rights activists, seeking innovative approaches

Civil Society Activity: ReFresh Farm – Advocacy with Young People on Urban Farming

In March 2023, B+HR Asia conducted a monitoring field visit of CSO grant activities conducted by partner HOST International. HOST International is a B+HR Asia CSO grantee that is currently implementing the "[REFresh Farm, Urban Refugee Agriculture and Social Enterprise Project](#)" to promote rights of Jarai urban refugees who live in Nonthaburi province. Around 48 Jarai refugees have been beneficiaries of the initiative thus far, with 8 of these being youth refugees. The project activities included a series of job trainings on mushroom cultivation and outreach activities with schools, universities, and private business sector to raise awareness of refugee rights and rights to work through community building approach. The field visit sought to monitor and participate in the youth-focused awareness raising activity held at Ruamruedee School, Ratchapruerk Campus. The objective of this activity was to promote engagement between refugee members and youth in Thailand by learning from each other's experience on promoting and protecting human rights. Nine refugee youths participated in this activity and led a session on interactive urban farming activity (click [here](#) for more information).

Civil Society Activity: Risk Mitigation and Human Trafficking Prevention in Small-scale Agri-businesses

In July 2023, the B+HR project team participated in a stakeholder consultation on "labour migration and trafficking in persons in the context of Thailand" organized by Labour Protection Network (LPN) ASEAN-ACT, and the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University. UNDP supported this initiative through a grant activity with LPN. The event also featured a rich discussion by experts from various sectors who shared views on challenges and good practices on labour management and specific issues on migrant workers who are most at-risk to labour exploitation and human trafficking.

As part of the grant activity, LPN conducted a study on Risk Mitigation and Human Trafficking Prevention in Small-scale Agri-businesses in Mae Sot District, Tak Province. The study aims to identify appropriate policies and measures for enhancing the quality of life of migrant workers and preventing human trafficking and exploitation. The result of this research project reflected a strong need for Thailand to further protect and advocate the rights of migrant workers as well as to prevent any forms of harassment against them. This is in line with the objectives of the second NAP on BHR. The study is expected to be finalized by Q1 of 2024.

Activity 3.1.2: Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts faced by vulnerable groups in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies

Series of multistakeholder dialogues on Environmental Justice and Human Rights

UNDP convened [a series of multistakeholder dialogues](#) to promote environmental justice and human rights in five provinces, namely Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Udon Ratchathani and Songkla. The initiative focuses on the adverse human rights impacts of air pollution, water pollution, waste management, climate change and deforestation.

Around 160 participants attended the multistakeholder dialogues in all four provinces. Overall, this initiative had raised awareness among right holders regarding access to remedies for adverse environmental and human rights impacts, leading to informed and mobilized communities that are capable of seeking redress for violations and advocating for sustainable solutions.

Target beneficiaries include woman human rights defenders (WHRDs), some of which also belong to youth and ethnic minorities. The initiative is expected to empower WHRDs in engaging in decision-making processes related to environmental matters at community and policy levels.



Multistakeholder stakeholder dialogues, in partnership with CRC

Output 3.2: Skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms reinforced

National Consultation for Exploring Thai company readiness on HRDD

B+HR Asia in partnership with Sal Forest Co., Ltd organized a National Consultation for Exploring Thai companies' Readiness on Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) on 28 April 2023. This national consultation is part of a series of consultations with key stakeholders to present and validate the findings of the study on HRDD Requirements for Thai companies.

The national consultation explored the readiness of Thai companies in conduct HRDD and challenges facing them, including for both large and SMEs. The event was attended by more than 100 representatives of Thai businesses, who participated virtually and physically at the meeting.

The outcome of the study has been submitted to the Ministry of Justice to consider possible options for mandatory HRDD practice for Thai companies in the future.

Human Rights Due Diligence for the Hospitality Sector

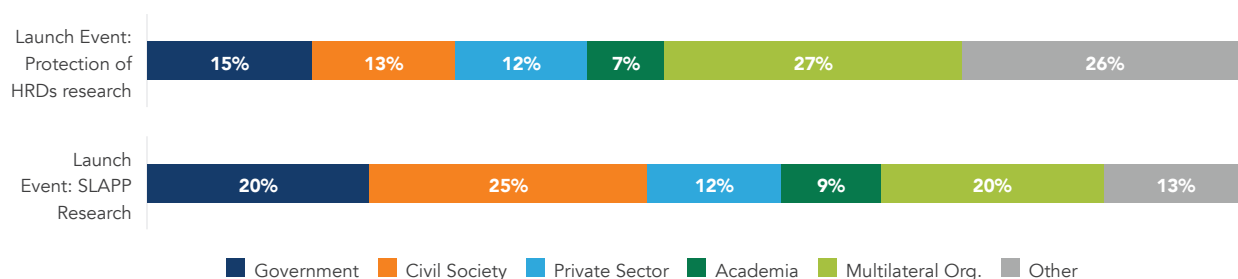
B+HR Asia, in collaboration with partners Sal Forest Co, LTD, the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), Ministry of Justice and the SME Development Bank, continued working on a HRDD training curriculum and a self-assessment tool for Thai SMEs. Capacity building for private sector on HRDD has been one of key priorities in this project. B+HR Asia and the NHRCT conducted trainings on HRDD for the hospitality and tourism sectors in Phuket as the first pilot province. In May 2023, the two organizations also visited the office of the SME Development Bank to discuss potential collaboration of this initiative. The SME Development Bank said it would encourage its clients to participate in the training. In addition, the SME Development Bank said it would consider developing a HRDD checklist for SMEs as a part of its due diligence requirements before providing loans.

In December 2023, UNDP together with its key partners above, conducted a stakeholder consultation in Phuket to introduce the HRDD initiative and seek collaboration from key local partners. The Phuket Deputy Governor, representatives of Phuket Provincial office, SME Bank Phuket branch, the Provincial Justice office, the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, and local business associations and academic institutions attended the consultation and agreed to promote this initiative with SMEs in Phuket. To formalize this collaboration, B+HR Asia, NHRCT, the MOJ and the SME Bank will sign an MOU promoting responsible business practice with the Phuket Provincial Office in the first quarter of 2024.

Publication Launches: Launch of SLAPP, and Protection of HRDs Studies

The launch of the reports on SLAPP cases in Thailand and the treatment of human rights defenders (HRD) attracted 240 stakeholders and provided a platform to openly discuss pressure points and how to take recommendations forward. During one launch event, an attorney from the Thai government approached a HRD and took more interest in her case, leading to the development of commission that investigated the role of a mayor and the lending practices of a local bank. At the time of publication of this report, the charges of criminal defamation filed against the whistle blower/HRD look likely to be dropped or dismissed.

Following the launch events, UNDP submitted the outcome of the two studies to the National Committee of the NAP on BHR Implementation. Some of the recommendations in the studies were incorporated in the second NAP which was adopted in September 2023, strengthening Thailand’s commitment and effort on promoting and protecting rights of defenders. Recommendations include capacity enhancement for judicial actors and law enforcement officers—lawyers, investigating officers, prosecutors and judges—to build their understanding of human rights principles and the use of relevant laws to prevent judicial harassment against defenders through SLAPP practices.



Output 3.3: To set up actions that strengthen capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations

B+HR Asia and the Judicial Integrity Network ASEAN (JIN ASEAN) project collaborated with the Judicial Training Institute to co-organize a two-day workshop on Improving Access to Justice to Leave No One Behind (LNOB). The objective of this workshop was to equip judges with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively respond to the unique needs and challenges faced by LNOB groups.

B+HR Asia had an opportunity to deliver a presentation on human rights defenders in the context of BHR in Thailand as part of this workshop. Key findings from our recent studies on laws and measures addressing SLAPP and the protection of human rights defenders (activity 2.2.2) were included in this presentation.

Over 80 judges from courts of justice across Thailand attended the workshop and discussed issues related to human rights defenders, anti-SLAPP legislation, gender justice, access to justice for youth, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities. The judges were also exposed to innovative approaches to people-centered judicial services.

As a follow up, UNDP will collaborate with other potential partners, such as NHRCT and the Ministry of Justice, in developing training curriculum on human rights defenders for judicial actors. A discussion about this collaboration will take place in the first quarter of 2024.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

Output 2: Communication and Research

Output 2.1: Development of communication products

Activity 2.1: Produce communication products including to enhance the understanding of UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus

The CSERA communications campaigns, quarterly newsletters, and Trending in Asia news updates, afforded high levels of visibility for the B+HR Asia joint-action, including positive association for both the EU and UNDP with environmental, human rights and responsible business themes.

Quarterly newsletter

In response to the increasing interest in business and human rights, B+HR Asia revamped its quarterly newsletter in early 2023. The updated version now features segmented sections that highlight quarterly accomplishments, provide country-specific updates, list upcoming events, and introduce supplementary resources.⁵¹

The newsletter enjoys an average open rate of **39% compared to 32.6%** in 2022 and exceeded the benchmark with peer organizations (**32%**) by a wide margin. Open rates were highest in the USA, followed by Thailand, Sweden, and India.

Trending in Asia⁵²

In 2023, B+HR Asia continued to produce its 'Trending in Asia' quarterly news update, providing a monthly summary of the top-trending English-language news stories on BHR across seven programming countries in Asia. As highlighted in previous reports, this initiative has proven to be a valuable tool for knowledge sharing and promotions. The data indicates significant interest among our 10,000+ subscribers, with each issue surpassing a 40% open rate, notably higher than regular program updates.

Campaigns in support of the Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights Asia (CSERA) conference

At the regional level, a series of campaigns were launched to promote the Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia (CSERA) conference, held on 4-5 October. The campaigns were conducted across multiple social media platforms. In total, campaigns were comprised of 36 posts and received approximately 18,000 impressions on Twitter and LinkedIn. The average engagement rate reached 10 percent. Two videos were developed to convey key messages from various stakeholders and conference speakers (Pre-conference video and Post-conference Recap). It was difficult to know whether these videos had more impact than the static, non-animated posts.

Email marketing is considered the most effective way to engage our targeted audience made up of more than 10,000 newsletter subscribers.⁵³ To further boost the participation of businesses, partnerships were forged with a leading regional news outlet, Eco Business. Through email marketing, a promotional email was sent to 58,300 recipients with a 21 percent open rate.

In addition, a CSERA conference website was built. Driven by the social media campaign and complemented by the email marketing, the site received 20,857 views and 4,790 unique visits, average duration of visitors to the site was about 8 minutes.

Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy

Activity 2.2: Develop knowledge-based products on to enhance the understanding of the UNGPs and promote the broader BHR agenda

Report – Asia in Focus: ESG Investing and the BHR Agenda

Interest in ESG investing has been a major force driving a wider sustainability agenda in Asia. According to a [recent report](#) released by OECD, demand for ESG investment products in the Asia has been climbing. But the speed of growth in ESG by investment firms and retail investors is slower and arguably less sophisticated in its deployment compared to other regions.

In 2023, the B+HR Asia team produced a report focused on the status of ESG investment in Asia coupled with recommendations linked to the UNGPs. The report, tentatively titled, “ESG and the BHR Agenda in Asia,” provides unique insights from Asia-based financial experts. The report is going through the internal process for quality assurance and will be released in the early months of 2024.

HRDD Training Facilitation Guide and online HRDD Self-Assessment Training Tool

Given its accessibility and focus, the B+HR Asia: HRDD Training Facilitation Guide continued to be among UNDP’s most downloaded knowledge products. To date, the guide is available in 10 languages (English, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, Nepali, Russian, Mongolian, Thai, Turkish, and Burmese) and is being widely used for training globally. The English version of the training guide has been downloaded 2,903 times.



In 2023, the bespoke online software application, HREDD Self-Assessment training tool, was regularly maintained and updated. The tool was designed by the B+HR Asia team in 2020. In 2023, website infrastructure has been built into the site to host multiple languages. Use of the tool exceeded expectations. In total, the tool has received 17,000K views and drew in 10,148 new individual users, with over 7,750 arriving at the site through organic search. Among programming countries, the largest number of users of the site were from India, Malaysia, and Thailand in descending order.

2023 RBHR Forum Session: Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Asia: Principles and practices in Action

To stoke dialogue on the EU’s proposed directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, B+HR Asia hosted a session at the 2023 Responsible Business and Human Rights (RBHR) Forum, titled “[Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Asia: Principles and Practices in Action](#)”. The session outlined the challenges and opportunities of implementing HREDD in Asia and asked whether Asian businesses were ready to embrace a new wave of due diligence regulations coming from other regions. Speakers hailed from various sectors and brought in diverse perspectives, including Hideaki Umetsu, a partner at a prominent Japanese law firm, and Leena Ghosh from the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSOP). The session was attended by 189 people.

Output 4: Business, Human Rights, and the Environment

Output 4.1: Knowledge sharing at the regional level to foster action on responsible business practices towards the environment, climate, and human rights

Activity 4.1 Create knowledge products on topics addressing the intersection of human rights, environmental degradation, climate change, and related priorities in Asia

Report: Asia in Focus – Biodiversity and the Business and Human Rights Agenda

Decades of economic expansion and urbanization have resulted in the loss of 45 percent of Asia’s biodiversity since 1970, with serious implications to economic welfare, food security, social and political stability, and human rights. In 2023, B+HR Asia’s developed a report on Biodiversity in Asia, its link to human rights, and the role of business. The report is based on an extensive desk review and interviews with 22 experts and other stakeholders.

Briefing Note and Report: Asia in Focus – Corporate Accountability and Climate Change

The [Briefing Note](#) and [White Paper](#) on Corporate Accountability and Climate Change provide overviews of impact of climate change in Asia, and the tensions between economic growth and sustainability goals. Targeting business, government, and civil society actors the report includes policy recommendations aligned with the UNGPs and other globally recognized frameworks. A [digital hub](#) was developed for further dissemination of the key findings.

In less than six months, the two related publications were downloaded 710 times, and the digital hub’s engagement rate reached 64.6 percent.



Webcasts: Asia in Focus – Climate Justice and the Business and Human Rights Agenda

B+HR Asia webcasts on Climate Justice and Business and Human Rights agenda, provided a detailed picture of climate justice efforts in Asia stressing regional perspectives. The show hosted representatives from ASEAN, civil society organizations and academic institutions. The two webcast episodes enjoyed 1,237 views, with a total watch time of 83 hours.

Activity 4.2 Engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue on the impact of business operations and supply chains on the environment and climate

2023 RBHR Forum Sessions: Business, Human Rights and the Environment

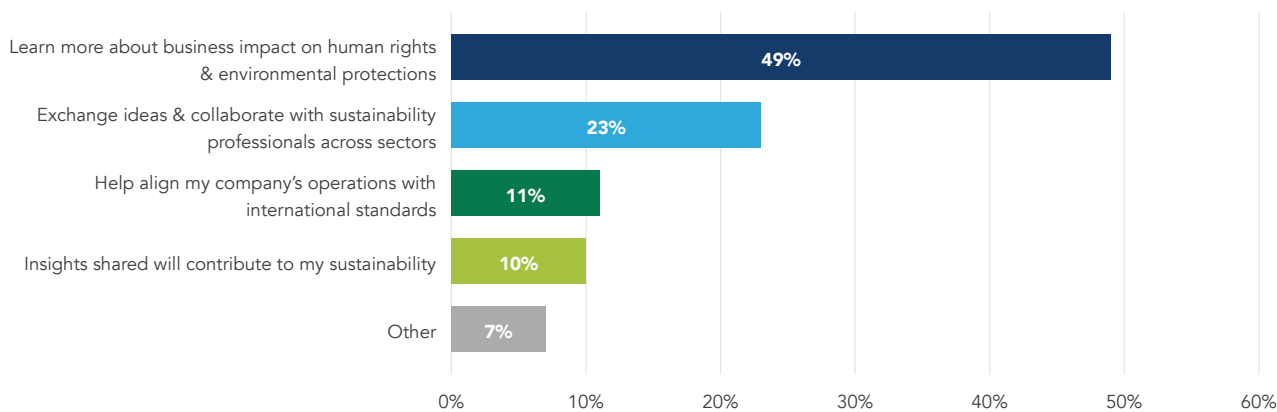
At the 2023 Responsible Business and Human Rights (RBHR) Forum, B+HR Asia organized a session titled, 'A Climate Action Agenda for Asia: Priorities and entry points for action', to identify top priorities for climate action in the region and to articulate entry points. The panel was joined by Kanishk Negi from Schneider Electric, together with other leading voices from academia and civil society, including Gregorio Rafael P. Bueta, Surya Deva, Justine Nolan, and Sara Philips. The session attracted 150 participants.



2023 Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia (CSERA) Conference

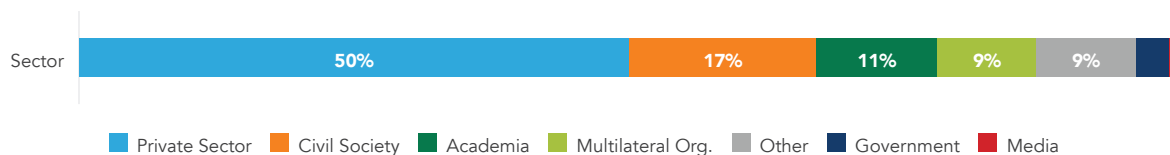
At the regional level, the Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia conference convened over 275 experts, business leaders and civil society actors to unpack the role of business to respect, support and strengthen the newly recognized right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment (R2HE). Discussions were dominated by the changes in the global regulatory environment, including on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence, EU Deforestation Regulations and Carbon Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). A survey was conducted to understand why participants attended the event. Most responded that they came to learn more about business impacts on human rights and environmental protections (49%).

Audience responses to the survey question 'Why do you want to attend the CSERA Conference?'



Details on outcomes from the conference can be found in the CSERA Conference Report 2023. To date, the recordings of the sessions at the conference have received 2,128 views on YouTube.⁵⁴

Bar chart illustrating sector of attendees of the CSERA Conference 2023





IV. EXPENSES

In May 2023, UNDP received a fourth tranche of the EU contribution in the amount of 1,886,193 USD. Including funds rolled over from the prior year, 1,914,471 USD was utilized in 2023 over a 7 month programming period.

Under Heading 2, Project activity budget, a total of 1,164,585.60 USD was expended. This figure is detailed below under each of the four outcomes articulated in the DOA.

A total of 224,588.47 USD was spent on Outcome 1, Policy coherence and NAP support. The project's support on NAP development was double that of 2022, due to work involving consultations, technical support, and NAP launch events which took place in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand. In addition, support was provided to holding consultations with private sector, civil society, and key ministries on the National Baseline Assessment in Malaysia. Activities also included supporting dialogue aimed at inspiring policy action to advance UNGPs in India and Sri Lanka.

On Outcome 2, Communications and public diplomacy, the project utilized a total of 103,397.50 USD. Of this, 53,696.54 USD was expended on communications and visibility at the country level. The total communications expenditure constitutes a 50% reduction from the previous implementation year. This reduced spending volume was taken per the advice by the EU Delegation during Joint Steering Committee meeting held in early 2022. The project invested more heavily in communications products in non-English languages such as the production of video content in Hindi, Mongolian and Burmese. Investments were made, too, in media collaborations with grassroots organizations as in Sri Lanka. Further to this, research was conducted on emerging topics such as the adoption of the UNGPs by MSMEs, and the nexus the BHR agenda with artificial intelligence, the environment, and gender equality.

On Outcome 3, Remedy and Prevention, the project spent 618,963.53 USD. Due to an increase in private sector demand for sector-specific capacity building, the project spent 306,677.83 USD on HRDD trainings and 312,285.70 USD was utilized on CSO-grants and research and discussions on remedies.

On Outcome 4, Awareness raising on business, human rights and the environment, the project utilized 217,636.10 USD. On October 4-5, B+HR Asia organized the CSERA conference, and further supported sessions during the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum. Knowledge products on Corporate accountability and climate change were produced in collaboration with research partner, Economist Impact. The project also began developing research on Trends, Challenges and Opportunities of the Economic, Social and Governance (ESG) Asset Class in Asia, and a report on Corporate Sustainability and Biodiversity in Asia including an accompanying biodiversity platform. To consolidate the different knowledge and web-products, B+HR Asia also launched the Business, Human Rights and the Environment web platform.

Under Heading 3, Direct project personnel costs, the staff costs of 4 regional team members and 7 BHR specialists at the country level was 492,744.86 USD. The cost reduced from previous year due to a brief gap between the resignation of the specialist in Myanmar, and the recruitment of their replacement. Also, a rearrangement of human resources in Mongolia contributed to savings and spending 25% of the salary of Regional Project Advisor was not included in the year 4 budget, as the regional advisor moved to Geneva to take up a global advisory role.

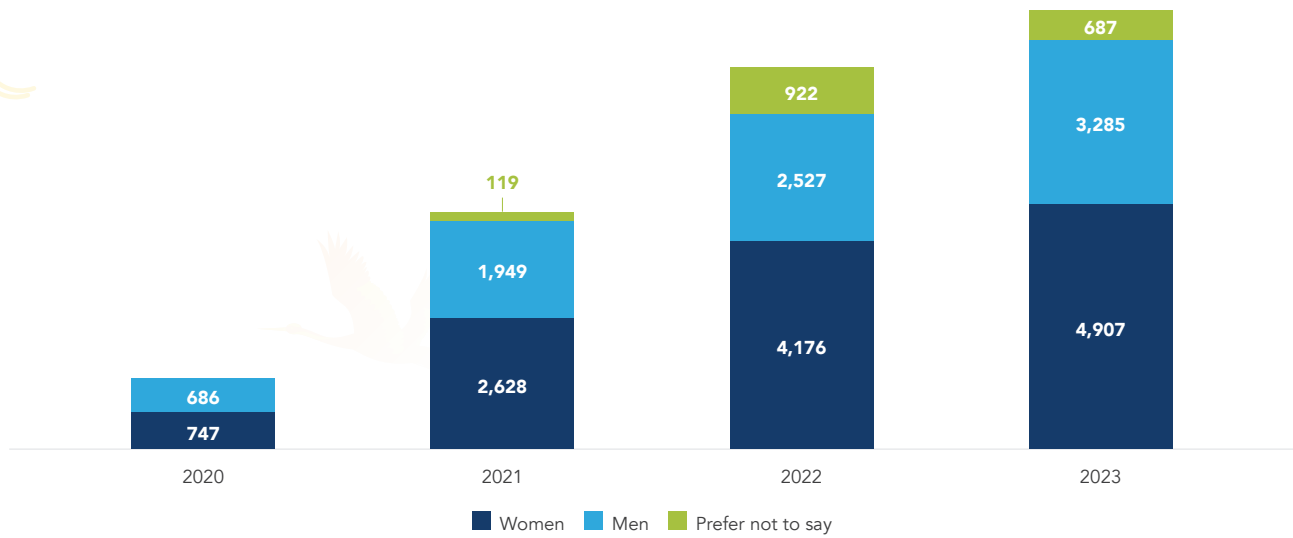
Under Heading 4, Direct project management costs, 59,906.83 USD was utilized in 7 countries and at the regional level.

Under Heading 5, Monitoring and Evaluation, the project spent 33,129.98 USD. The project procured the final evaluation consultant to assess the performance of the project from the beginning until the end of the project (January 2020 – June 2024).

Finally, under Heading 6, Communication, and visibility, 52,279.82 USD was used on communications products and tools including the production of Asia in Focus webcast series, enhancing graphic design elements of research products, webhosting for online properties, and a MailChimp subscription for distribution of the B+HR Asia quarterly newsletter and other relevant updates.

V. GENDER

Gender equality and inclusion remained a key tenant of programming for B+HR Asia. In 2023, the project sought to consolidate progress made in advancing gender equity through the UNGPs by finalizing ongoing initiatives and/or strengthening sustainability of progress made. Overall, the project maintained 56% women's participation (see graph below).



At the country-level, B+HR Asia worked with government at national and local level, business, civil society, and media to advance equality goals.

India: Understanding the gendered human rights impacts of the AI industry

Building on the success of the 2022 research paper, [‘Artificial Intelligence and Potential Impacts on Human Rights in India’](#) the project is taking a closer look at the gendered impacts of the use of generative artificial intelligence in India, in collaboration with research partner Aapti Institute. This will include a deep dive into how AI contributes to perpetuating harmful gender norms and stereotypes which have been proven to lead to a rise in violence against women and girls.⁵⁵ It will also include an examination of the duties borne by the tech industry in preventing and addressing gendered human rights abuses across their supply chains. The research initiative was launched in 2023 and will be published in 2024.

Indonesia: Gender-Responsive Infrastructure Development

On the basis of its findings of the 2022 Issue Brief, [Infrastructure Development and Women’s Rights in Indonesia](#), developed in partnership with the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP). B+HR Asia developed a set of guidelines for government and business alike to identify, assess, prioritize, and address the impact of new infrastructure projects on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The guidelines include recommendations for gender-sensitive expropriation, material sourcing, procurement, and community engagement. The guidelines were shared with 11 ministries who in turn shared entry-points for implementation of the guidelines. For example, the Ministry of Public Works proposed the application of the guidelines with new infrastructure projects. In 2024, B+HR Asia will work closely with MoWECP on the finalization and roll out of the guidelines (which will include a final consultation with private sector).

Mongolia: Incorporating gender equality as part of the HRDD trainings, and strengthening women workers' access to effective remedy

Unequal treatment of women in the workplace is expressed in the form of gender discrimination in hiring and promotion practices, inadequate occupational safety equipment, and sexual harassment and abuse. Further, women subject to these abuses are left with few or no pathways for redress or inadequate measures for independent investigation or access to remedy. In order to effectively address the intersecting challenges, B+HR Asia took a three-pronged approach in Mongolia:

Policy	Human Rights Due Diligence	Civil Society Engagement
The project supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in drafting the gender-components of the now-adopted National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights	Partnering with business associations, EuroCham, UB Chamber, Mongolian Food Industry Association (MFIA), B+HR Asia co-designed and delivered gender sensitive, HRDD trainings which included detailed review of the risks business operations pose to women's rights and entitlements.	B+HR Asia in partnership with CSOs and the Mongolian Women's Employment Supporting Federation (MWESF) are creating an enabling environment towards the realization of gender equality in business.
Awareness Raising of Gender Dimensions of the UNGPs (including Award criteria for companies promoting gender equality in their operations).	Forty companies received the 2023 training	Set up multistakeholder network of mentors to promote gender equality and the realization of women's rights in corporate spaces.
Gender-inclusion capacity building for labour dispute mechanisms and data collection.	Moving from policy to practice, select companies were provided an overview of the risks of their operations, including to gender equity	Developed and delivered training on company duties to advance gender equality in line with Mongolia's NAP.
Gender sensitivity training for prosecutors and law enforcement in the context of gendered business-related human rights violations	Moving from policy to practice, select companies provided an overview of the risks of their operations, including to gender equity	Official commitment from 2 companies to review internal regulations related to gender discrimination, abuse and harassment.

Sri Lanka: Enhancing visibility of the gender-dimensions of BHR through creative partnerships

Similar to activities in Mongolia, B+HR Asia addressed the intersecting challenges to inequity through a multi-pronged approach: 1) increasing visibility of the nexus between gender and BHR and; 2) promoting action through civil society partnerships.

Partnering with the media organization, ROAR Sri Lanka, B+HR Asia developed a catalogue of media assets (3 videos, press releases and multilingual social media campaigns), highlighting gender discrimination in the workplace, and the impact of unregulated microfinancing on women's rights. Overall, the strategic communications reached over 2,000 online users.

Strategic media engagement was enhanced by engagement with civil society partners Stand Up Movement Sri Lanka, Women's Centre, and Centre for Policy Alternatives. Key results for each initiative are outlined in the [Sri Lanka chapter](#). Cumulatively over 860 women workers in the Free-Trade Zones were provided with training on access to remedy pathways for corporate violations of women's rights.

VI. PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, B+HR Asia engaged 70 partners, employing diverse modalities. A sample of the rich palate of partners B+HR Asia engaged is presented in Annex 3 below.

In India, where the government expressed dimming enthusiasm for policy work on BHR, B+HR Asia engaged with journalism schools and champions of responsible business from the private sector. Facing delays in the NAP development process in Malaysia, B+HR Asia pursued partnerships in the electrical and electronics industry, providing technical training on HRDD to 410 business professionals representing 223 companies. In Indonesia, B+HR Asia developed a partnership with an academic institution to develop guidance on HREDD and water pollution for businesses operating along the Citarum River. In Sri Lanka, B+HR Asia partnered with a local news outlet – ROAR – to craft a series of stories shedding light on human rights violations within unregulated micro-finance sector. At the regional level, B+HR Asia joined forces with Eco-business, a news platform specializing in news on sustainability in Asia, to encourage businesses' participation in the Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia conference held in October. Fifty percent of attendees were from the private sector, a significant increase of this stakeholder group as compared to other regional events UNDP hosts on responsible business.

Currently, the nexus between BHR and environment issues is a matter of intense interest among stakeholders in Asia. Yet, there is a scarcity of professionals skilled in both domains to help develop trainings and lift the discourse on policy. As such, B+HR Asia at the regional level reached across the organization to leverage the knowledge of UNDP expertise in climate adaptation and biodiversity. In 2023, collaboration across UNDP technical teams was instrumental in crafting two reports on BHR and the environment, and for ensuring the success of the CSERA conference.

VII. PROJECT RISKS AND ISSUES

#	Risk Type	Description	Time Of Identification + Submitted By/ Updated By	Impact/ Priority	Countermeasure/Mngt Response	Status And Notes
1	Political	Shifting levels of political will leads to delays in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles or related action.	Project document / Updated, December 2023	M/H	The project will work closely with BHR national champions and trusted advisors to government with strong connections to policy makers. UNDP Country Offices, building on the expertise of OHCHR and the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. The project will pursue close co-ordination with governmental counterparts to ensure ownership of the BHR agenda. UNDP will bring together regional actors to discuss opportunities and challenges and facilitate peer learning to help states clarify what investments and what returns on investments in this project they can expect. In addition, the EU will make all necessary diplomatic efforts to ensure that the BHR agenda remains a priority in the targeted partner countries.	<p>Interest in the UNGPs continues to grow as Mongolia, Thailand, and Indonesia adopt National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. Despite this, it remains unclear whether the trend will continue, or if this is the high-water mark. Political priorities are clearly focused on economic development. In response, B+HR Asia is positioning the BHR agenda as a pathway towards sustainable economic recovery. Further, B+HR Asia is encouraging South-South exchange, and bringing in UNWG members, national champions and other partners to the table.</p> <p>Continued developments in Myanmar are being monitored closely with risk mitigation efforts taken for each activity.</p> <p>Sri Lanka's political trajectory remains a cause for concern and will be watched closely.</p>
2	Political	Election cycles in target countries might delay implementation.	Project document/ Updated, December 2023	M	Project activities will be implemented through UNDP Country Offices and advice will be sought from the UN Resident Coordinators and their Peace and Development Advisers so as to calibrate the approach to any changes in leadership or structure following elections.	<p>National elections in India may further delay conversations on the development of the NAP on BHR. (General elections in 2023 delayed the release of the NAP in Thailand and the NBA in Malaysia but otherwise, had no impact on programming.) Upcoming elections in the region include in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Mongolia, Sri Lanka. The project will continue to monitor progress closely.</p> <p>After a period of brief political turmoil, Sri Lanka is settling into a new political dispensation. Economic recovery is evident, and the government has expressed strong interest in conducting a NAP on BHR.</p>
3	Organizational	Engaging with private sector actors can prove difficult if a 'business case' is not fully developed. Moreover, business can pose reputational risks to the organization "blue-washing".	Project document/ Updated, December 2023	M	The project will work with credible business associations which may include the UN Global Compact Networks, national and international chambers of commerce, and industry-specific bodies to create interest in sustained actions and investments. UNDP will organise events and invite private sector champions to help showcase the progress of private sector actors to reward and validate their efforts. UNDP will host knowledge-sharing labs and other events, made up of NHRIs, CSOs, UN-system actors and business champions which will encourage heightened business participation and ownership in support of behavioral change in the business sector. UNDP will keep its base of business partners as broad as possible and yet explore the need to develop a sustainable-business partner programme to qualify engagement.	<p>UNDP is working with credible business associations, which are increasingly eager to engage on BHR due to a tightening regulatory environment in Europe and North America. This risk of business disengagement is diminishing.</p> <p>However, the risk of blue washing still exists. UNDP continues to apply risk-management and due-diligence principles for appropriate activities.</p>

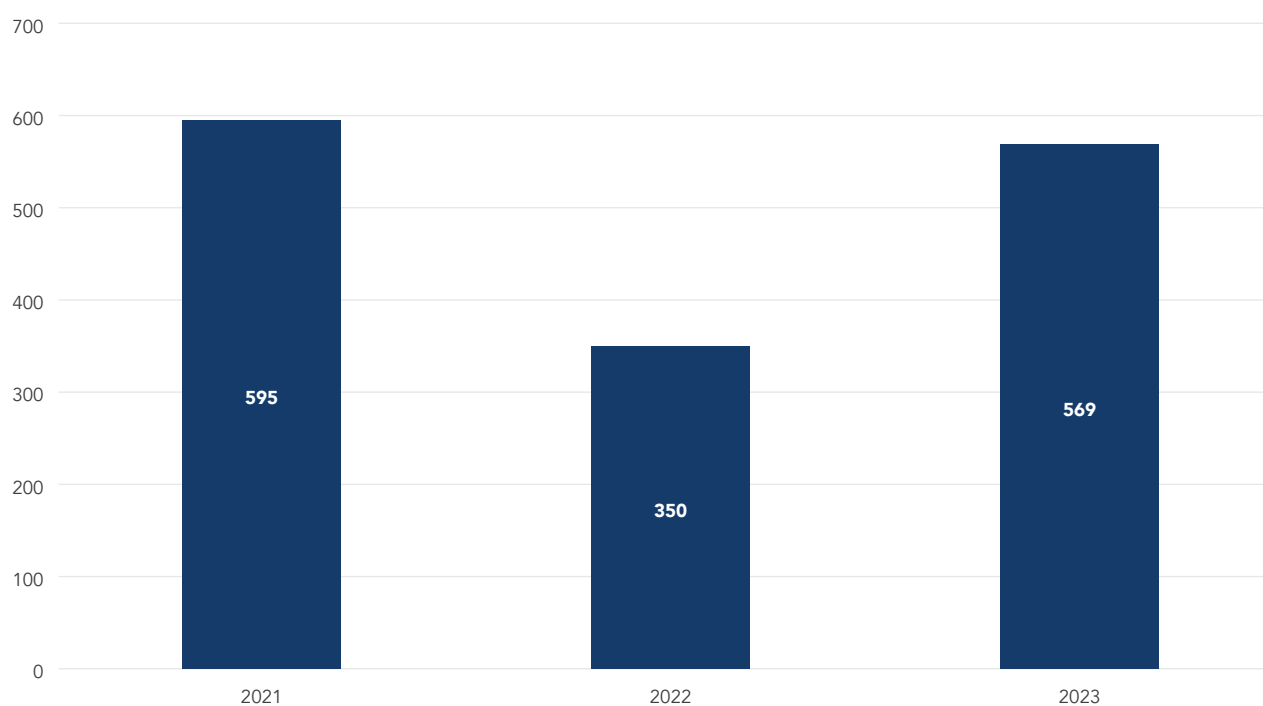
#	Risk Type	Description	Time Of Identification + Submitted By/ Updated By	Impact/ Priority	Countermeasure/Mngt Response	Status And Notes
4	Operational	Government uses the NAP process and engagement with the UN for public relations purposes without the real intention of implementation. NAP is of poor-quality owing to lack of seriousness put to NAP development.	Project document/ Updated December 2023	M	UNDP will take appropriate measures, including the possibility of disengagement or support, to help ensure that government commitments under the BHR agenda are not merely for public relations purposes. UNDP will build on the expertise of OHCHR and the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights to ensure the quality of NAPs through advocacy missions and dialogue, training and roundtables that include policy makers at regional meetings. UNDP will also deploy its own technical capacities and CSO partner expertise where necessary. It will convene stakeholder consultations and validation exercises. It will bring human rights and environmental rights defenders to the table to voice their challenges in a safe space. UNDP will leverage the Universal Periodic Review process, and international fora such as the UN Forum on BHR, to facilitate review of NAPs by recognised authorities and peers. UNDP will also encourage at the early stage of development that countries request the UN Working Group on BHR to plan an official country visit. UNDP will facilitate CSO participation in all review events.	UNDP continues to provide the best possible expert advice, and couch NAP processes in multi-stakeholder consultations. Civil society engagement and partnerships with multiple ministries is leveraged to maintain credibility and legitimacy of NAP development processes.
5	Operational	NHRI commissioners rotate according to laws which mandate their composition and governance structure. Current commissioners which show interest in BHR will over time rotate out, and a focal point within an NHRI will be lost.	Project document/ Updated, December 2023	L	UNDP will actively deploy technical assistance and advice to help relevant NHRIs to monitor, report, and investigate human rights abuses more effectively and in a timely manner. This will also ensure that more than one commissioner will have the capacity and interest in continuing work as others rotate out reduce the risk of downgrading. Further, UNDP will also provide strengthen support to the secretariat function, including the secretary-generals of the NHRIs to ensure continuity of engagement on BHR.	NHRIs are engaged in NAP consultations and awareness raising events in all project countries: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. In 2023, the project accelerated its engagement with NHRIs, and sought to build capacities of staff (middle management and specialists) beyond commissioners, to mitigate risk of loss of knowledge/interest of BHR issues amongst NHRIs. The impact that this strategy has had on institutional capacities will be monitored closely.
6	Political	Human rights and environmental rights defenders, and victims of abuses may be placed in danger by the project's support to CSOs and community-based organizations leading to an increase in conflicts or security risks.	Project document/ Updated, December 2023	M	The project will continuously assess security risks and revise project activities accordingly. Conflict analyses routinely developed by UNDP Country Offices will be used to inform the implementation of the activities and ensure conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm approaches. B+HR Asia activities are led by	The project continuously reflects on the dangers it poses to HRDs. HRDs are being engaged in dialogues and research consultations.
7	Organizational	Delay in establishing appropriate platforms for discussions and knowledge sharing internally and externally, due to events outside project control.	Project document/ Updated, December 2023	L	The activities are designed to be flexible and should be revised based on achievements in years prior. Focus on forward planning will mitigate risks of delays.	The project will continue applying in-person, virtual and hybrid conference solutions for conducting meetings, provide for CSO grants and establish front-line partnerships, and further commit to online communications.

VIII. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Consolidating Policy Engagement

In 2023, B+HR Asia specialists spent an enormous of time on policy-level work to advance NAPs on BHR. Indeed 569 working days of expertise was logged in five countries to this end, which culminated in the adoption and launch of 3 NAPs in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand.

Number of working days logged towards National Action Plan drafting, adoption and engagement



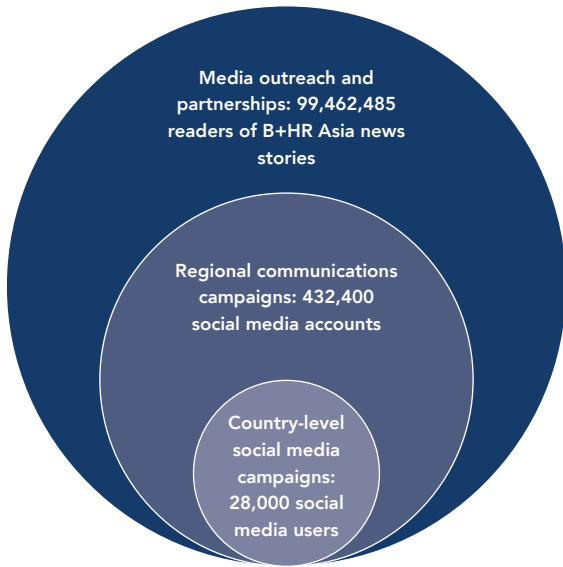
Lesson-learned:

As detailed in the graph above, the increased investments made in technical support to government correlate with the finalization and adoption of NAPs on BHR in 2023.

2. Localization of Media to enhance Communications efforts

In 2023, B+HR Asia explored engagement with external media to broaden the reach of key messages. This included partnerships with regional media platforms such as Eco-Business, and at the country-level local media partners such as ROAR Media in Sri Lanka. B+HR Asia registered greater reach by making direct appeals to journalists to attend key events and to conduct interviews.

Illustration of magnified impact of engagement with media



Lesson-learned:

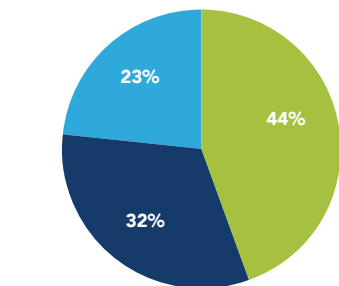
Future efforts to maximize reach of BHR-related programming messaging should involve dedicated investments in traditional journalism at major media outlets. Less reliance on messaging on social media, despite the potential of these messages to go viral, might be considered. Furthermore, partnerships with media organizations can help amplify communications products well-beyond expectations. Still, these investments do not mean messages will be picked up, or that viewership will necessarily increase. Significant investments of time cultivating relationships may be required for results.

3. Impact of training with business

Over the course of 2023, B+HR Asia embedded surveys into all training events to better capture the impact of sector specific HRDD trainings at country level. Importantly, the project sought to better capture what concrete steps were being taken by companies to incorporate HRDD within their operations and across their supply chains.

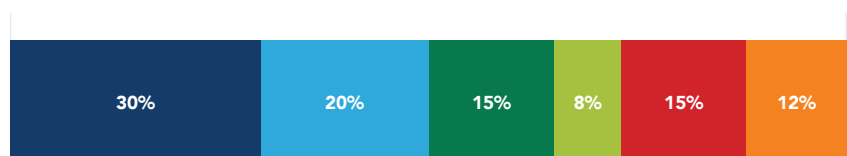
Responses from 221 companies on whether they have taken any steps to integrate Human Rights Due Diligence practices into their company after the training

Immediate Actions Post-Training: Have you taken any action after the training?



- Not yet
- Yes, partially
- Yes (developed a human rights plan)

Actions post-training



- Assessment of human rights risks operations pose
- Staff training and awareness sessions
- Advocacy with labour unions on risks noted during the training
- Developed plan (not operational yet)
- Working to address risks identified in plan
- Initial presentations to management

Lesson-learned:

Surveys are often thought of last, after the programming and event planning has taken place. Where surveys are front loaded, the objectives of activities are more fully in frame providing for stronger design and implementation. B+HR Asia surveys captured important results as illustrated above, but these surveys could also have been approached more methodically, with more standardization to showcase results across industries, countries, and programming year. Then again, the varied approach to survey canvassing meant that the surveys were more fully contextualized than they might have been otherwise. For example, in India, a survey on the challenges of HRDD was conducted through a business roundtable seeking qualitative results, and then followed up by informed questions. In Mongolia, trainings were provided to CSOs and Business associations on impact reporting, and gender sensitive HRDD. The impact of our interventions was measured through surveys (quantitative) and field visits (qualitative). This approach was essential given that we are working with diverse companies, from MNEs to SMEs, operating in diverse contexts.

Given that in 2023, we deployed surveys to define key metrics, in 2024, we are now at liberty to launch a shorter “one-size fits all” survey to test the 2023 baseline.

4. Corporate accountability to human rights and the environment

In 2023, B+HR Asia encouraged BHR practitioners to wade more deeply into the discourse of BHR and the environment through the production of talk-show webcasts, reports, tools, and large format events, including the CSERA conference and the RBHR Forum. The table below illustrates the top markets of engagement and suggests that stakeholders in advanced economies are far more heavily invested in the business/environmental rights link compared with their peers in less developed settings. Stakeholders from only three countries of programming focus (India, Malaysia and Thailand) made it on the list of top consumers of our BHR and environment products.

Lesson-learned:

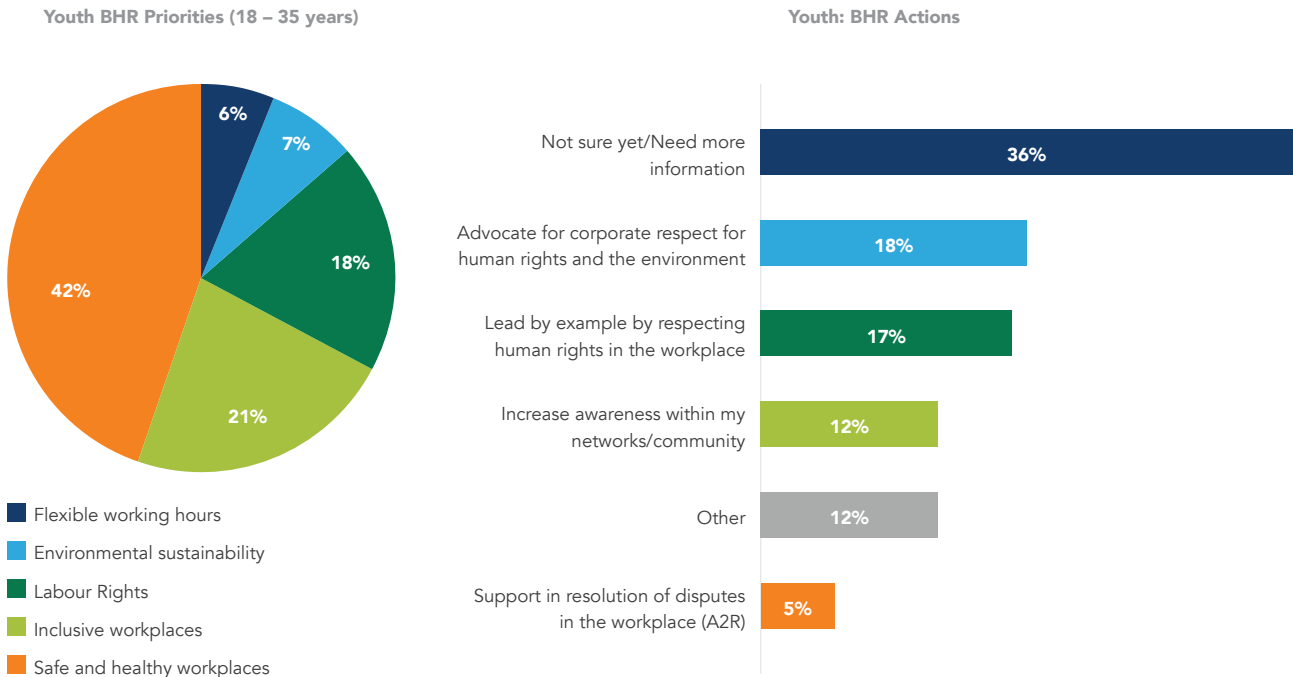
More analysis of the reasons for these outcomes are necessary to understand the opportunities and limitations of programming on the BHR and environment topic and the potential consequences of the medium used (web platforms, YouTube channels, PDF files and in-person events). These outcomes above may also call into question the effectiveness of regional programming in reaching stakeholders in some countries.

Top Markets (external)	Top Asian Markets
— India (3,912)	— India (3,912)
— Philippines (2,046)	— Philippines (2,046)
— France (1,851)	— Indonesia (1,416)
— Indonesia (1,416)	— Thailand (741)
— USA (787)	— Singapore (586)
— Thailand (741)	— Vietnam (417)
— Singapore (586)	— Hong Kong SAR (334)
— Vietnam (417)	— Malaysia (280)
— Hong Kong SAR (334)	— China (126)
— Malaysia (280)	— Japan (103)
— United Kingdom (274)	— Cambodia (71)
— Netherlands (263)	— South Korea (69)
— Italy (205)	— Nepal (48)
— Finland (150)	— Mongolia (44)

5. Emerging Stakeholders: Youth

Before 2023, youth were overlooked as a priority stakeholder. However, this year, youth environmental activists were identified as key supporters of the BHR agenda in programming countries. In Asia, the project rolled out surveys and listening sessions in Mongolia and Sri Lanka and at the regional level to better understand the margins of youth interest in the agenda.

Responses from 339 respondents between the ages of 18 to 35 years on top Business and Human Rights Actions young people should take to advance the UNGPs



Lesson-learned:

Engaging youth is a necessity in any future programming on BHR. The interest and potential uptake can be significant. Events in particular should be designed in part to attract the greatest level of participation from youth possible. Still, an unscientific survey conducted of young students and professionals in Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and at the regional level demonstrated that interest was not necessarily focused on the most salient human rights risks in business operations. Indeed, chief among youth concerns was having a safe and healthy workplace that respects human rights, followed by inclusion in hiring and promotion practices, labour rights and environmental sustainability. Signalling further need to engage on BHR with youth, about 36% of those who took the survey indicated needing more information on the UNGPs before taking concrete actions in their personal capacity.

IX. SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

1. Consolidating Policy Engagement

In 2023, B+HR Asia specialists spent an enormous of time on policy-level work to advance NAPs on BHR. Indeed 569 working days of expertise was logged in five countries to this end, which culminated in the adoption and launch of 3 NAPs in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand.

In 2023, South-South cooperation was pursued to foster policy and technical knowledge sharing. This included an exchange of experiences in drafting and adopting NAPs and a technical-level exchange between business and other stakeholders on corporate accountability for human and environmental rights abuses.

At the country-level, during the National Conference on Business and Human Rights in Malaysia, presentations were made by experts from Indonesia and Thailand on the pathway towards adoption and implementation of a NAP on BHR. Thailand shared its experiences and lessons-learned from implementation of its first NAP, and process of adoption of its second NAP. Whereas Indonesia, shared its roadmap towards adoption of the Presidential Decree on the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights. The detailed exchange, provided Malaysian officials with a practical view of actions they could take towards adoption of the NAP (scheduled for release in 2024).



Presentation of Thailand and Indonesia's NAP Journeys during the Malaysian National Conference on Business and Human Rights

X. COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

In 2023, communication activities amplified programme priorities and enhanced the public profile of BHR in the region. through newsletters, campaigns, social media platforms, and partnerships with media organizations. (See section above, Output 2 for details).

Beyond advocacy campaigns and regular project updates for stakeholders, B+HR Asia took more deliberate steps to enhance knowledge product dissemination.

Dissemination often proves to be a significant hurdle in ensuring research and studies reach their intended audiences. To address this issue, the team devised dissemination strategies which involved internal and external channels, including MailChimp, internal email promotions, and social media campaigns. The cumulative number of downloads for all publications in 2023 amounted to 2,123. Given this figure, more investments in planning are necessary to justify the costs and time required to produce these reports.

Digital Presence:

In 2023, B+HR Asia expanded its digital footprint across various platforms, while updating existing sites, pages and channels and undertaking new experiments.

B+HR Asia Programme Website

According to Google Analytics, the B+HR Asia programme website showcasing our work gained 12K new users in 2023. The following is the image of website visits by country for the year of 2023. Programming countries including India, Indonesia and Thailand were among the top countries from where the website was accessed.



Knowledge Hub on Business, Human Rights, and the Environment

At the beginning of 2023, a micro-site was built to further consolidate and disseminate all forms of project-generated knowledge products on business, human rights, and the environment. To date, the site has enjoyed 1,100 views, including 546 unique visitors. Top countries for views including India, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States.



Social Media Channels

X (previous Twitter)

During the reporting period, the B + HR Asia's X account gained 607 new followers totaling 4,057. This equates to an 18% increase in the account's followers. The B+HR Asia's X account generated 317.4K impressions.

LinkedIn

In 2023, B+HR Asia expanded its presence on LinkedIn enhancing engagement with new groups of audiences. Over a 12-month period, the newly created page (jointly managed with SIDA-funded project) gained 2,787 followers and generated 115K organic impressions. The analytics indicate that over 30% of the visitors are from the private sector. Throughout the promotion of the CSERA conference, LinkedIn emerged as the primary source of traffic driving visitors to the conference website.

YouTube

The B+HR Asia YouTube channel (jointly administered by EU and SIDA-funded projects) provided for longer lifespans for our communications outputs, events, and knowledge products compared to other social media platforms. In 2023, the B+HR Asia YouTube channel gained 378 of 1,044 subscribers in total. Throughout the year, the channel attracted 16,768 views. Notably, recordings from the CSERA conferences, along with videos highlighting Asia in Focus, ranked as the top 10 most-viewed content. Regionally speaking, the most views came from India, Nepal, Malaysia and Thailand.

XI. FUTURE PLANS

As per the workplan agreed in a no-cost extension (NCE), the project will continue working towards the achievement of targets until 30 June 2024.

At the country level, the focus will be the support of the implementation of newly launched NAPs in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Thailand. In addition, the B+HR Asia will seek to accelerate progress towards the Malaysian NAP, which is projected to be passed in June of 2024.⁵⁶ In India, the project will continue to engage the National Advisory Committee on movement on the NAP, while also consolidating its policy level support towards strengthened implementation of the BRSR framework. The project will finalize and consolidate HRDD trainings in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Further to this B+HR Asia will also conclude and assess impact of ongoing civil society grant initiatives and launch pending research products.

As in previous years, the project will continue to monitor EU processes on business, human rights and environment and capture any policy developments. These will be distilled and shared with stakeholders in Asia stakeholders. At the regional level, B+HR Asia will implement activities to promote communication and knowledge products connecting the BHR agenda to environmental issues, including a report on the intersection of BHR and Economic, Social and Governance (ESG) investing, and a report on 'Biodiversity and the BHR Agenda in Asia.' The latter of which is aligned with emerging regulations such as the Global Biodiversity Framework, and the EU's Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). The project will also produce two more installments of the Asia in Focus webcast series, exploring the nexus of the UNGPs and emerging thematic priorities of the just energy transition, and ESG. Furthermore, efforts will be made to explore synergies and complementarities with new EU initiatives such as the EU-OECD partnerships on Responsible Business Conduct or Green, Digital and Resilient Supply Chains in Asia. B+HR Asia will round-up year 4, activities with a final report and final evaluation of the project.

ANNEX 1: FINANCIAL REVIEW

ANNEX III – Budget for the Action (USD)	Budget	Commitments	Incurred costs	Total
Budget Summary				
Heading 1: Inception and Coordination	\$25,000.00	–	\$8,797.47	\$8,797.47
Heading 2: Project Activity Budget	\$877,024.32	\$321,973.54	\$842,612.06	\$1,164,585.60
Heading 3: Direct project personnel cost	\$775,511.50	–	\$492,744.86	\$492,744.86
Heading 4: Direct project management cost	\$63,294.00	–	\$59,906.83	\$59,906.83
Heading 5: Monitoring and Evaluation	\$15,000.00	\$32,100.00	\$1,029.98	\$33,129.98
Heading 6: Communication and visibility	\$40,000.00	\$4,547.50	\$47,732.32	\$52,279.82
Total direct project costs	1,795,829.82	\$358,621.04	\$1,452,823.52	\$1,811,444.56
Indirect costs (max 7% of total direct project costs)	\$125,708.09	–	\$103,027.16	\$103,027.16
Total Budget	\$1,921,537.91	\$358,621.04	\$1,555,850.68	\$1,914,471.72

Inception and Coordination – Year 3				
Planning and inception meetings				
Conferences and seminars (at the international, regional and country levels), including launch event	\$25,000.00	–	\$8,797.47	\$8,797.47
Sub-total	\$25,000.00	\$–	\$8,797.47	\$8,797.47

Project Activity Budget – Year 3				
Output 1.1: To set up actions enhancing common understanding and policy convergence with implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights				
Activity 1.1.1. Facilitate tripartite discussions involving relevant policy makers, prominent civil society groups and European and Asian business associations on the UNGPs, with a view to expanding the number of actors playing an active role in policy making	\$29,970.00	\$4,179.07	\$43,651.69	\$47,830.76
Activity 1.1.2. Conduct trainings on a range of standard setting guidelines including the UN Guiding Principles and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and detail linkages with trade and investment policy	\$29,750.00	–	–	–
Activity 1.1.3. Design and develop knowledge products that further policy convergence between UNGPs and other internationally recognized instruments	\$49,585.22	–	\$27,409.03	\$27,409.03
Output 1.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments				
Activity 1.2.1. Raise awareness of the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs) with governments, making the normative and business-case for adoption and implementation; host and facilitate bi-lateral peer learning events to showcase best practices on UNGP implementation	\$80,742.60	\$15,303.69	\$66,157.41	\$81,461.10
Activity 1.2.2. Provide technical assistance to government ministries responsible for drafting and implementing National Action Plans	\$89,250.00	\$4,749.75	\$63,137.83	\$67,887.58
Sub-total Outcome 1 Project Activity	\$279,297.82	\$24,232.51	\$200,355.96	\$224,588.47

Project Activity Budget – Year 3				
Output 2.1: To support the development of research and policy pieces furthering public discourse and greater appreciation of the UNGPs and its positive impact on human rights, including women's rights				
Activity 2.1. Produce communication products including short-form documentaries, video animations and social media promotional materials to enhance understanding of UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus. Link up all communication work to EU action on public diplomacy, in particular to all existing and future PI action on policy outreach in Asia	\$39,666.66	\$2,316.02	\$51,380.52	\$53,696.54
Output 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy				
Activity 2.2. Conduct research and publish short think pieces on trade and investment issues as they relate to the UNGPs and broader Business and Human Rights agenda	\$34,750.00	\$43,674.13	\$6,026.83	\$49,700.96
Sub-total Outcome 2 Project Activity	\$74,416.66	\$45,990.15	\$57,407.35	\$103,397.50

ANNEX III – Budget for the Action (USD)	Budget	Commitments	Incurred costs	Total
Project Activity Budget – Year 3				
Output 3.1: To set up actions relating to greater awareness and access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts				
Activity 3.1.1. Provide grants to civil society actors working with human rights defenders and women's rights activists, seeking innovative approaches	\$177,561.00	\$43,001.82	\$117,666.99	\$160,668.81
Activity 3.1.2. Convene discussions and conduct trainings on the adverse impacts and risks faced by women in the context of business operations, and potential remedies and prevention strategies	\$50,160.59	\$12,559.68	\$106,786.93	\$119,346.61
Activity 3.1.3. Develop and convene discussions on innovative means of achieving access to information and access to justice for groups adversely impacted by business operations	\$33,716.66	–	\$16,414.68	\$16,414.68
Output 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms				
Activity 3.2.1. Conduct sector-specific trainings with government regulators and business on human rights due diligence, human rights impact assessments, grievance mechanisms, and other elements of Pillar 2 and 3 of the UNGPs	\$119,000.00	\$150,577.58	\$156,100.25	\$306,677.83
Output 3.3: To set up actions that strengthen capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations				
Activity 3.3.1. Conduct trainings with NHRIs, judiciaries and ministries of justice on legal issues linked to the UNGPs, including transboundary jurisdictional challenges, among others	\$33,716.66	\$457.80	\$15,397.80	\$15,855.60
Sub-total Outcome 3 Project Activity	\$414,154.91	\$206,596.88	\$412,366.65	\$618,963.53

Project Activity Budget				
Output 4: To strengthen efforts in Asia to mitigate the adverse impact of business operations and supply chains on climate and the environment				
Activity 4.1. Create knowledge products on topics addressing the intersection of human rights, environmental degradation, climate change, and related priorities in Asia	\$50,000.00	\$40,339	\$84,970.26	\$125,309.26
Activity 4.2. Engage in policy dialogue on the impact of business operations and supply chains on the environment and climate	\$30,000.00	\$4,815.00	\$69,566.19	\$74,381.19
Activity 4.3. Promote communications products in furtherance of efforts to address the impact of business operations on the environment and climate	\$29,154.93	–	\$17,945.65	\$17,945.65
Sub-total Outcome 4 Project Activity	\$109,154.93	\$45,154.00	\$172,482.10	\$217,636.10
Total Project Activity Budget	\$877,024.32	\$321,973.54	\$842,612.06	\$1,164,585.60

Direct Project Cost – Year 3				
Cost of project personnel				
Regional Project Advisor (P5) – 25%	\$67,814.50	–	–	–
Regional Technical Specialist and Project Manager (P4)	\$234,399.00	–	\$136,875.34	\$136,875.34
Regional Project Knowledge Management/Comms Officer (UNV)	\$61,875.00	–	\$41,468.59	\$41,468.59
Regional Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (UNV)	\$61,875.00	–	\$40,919.01	\$40,919.01
Regional Project – Finance and Admin Assistant (SC SB3)	\$34,548.00	–	\$28,599.07	\$28,599.07
National Specialist – India	\$45,000.00	–	\$36,886.19	\$36,886.19
National Specialist – Indonesia	\$45,000.00	–	\$46,341.17	\$46,341.17
National Specialist – Malaysia	\$45,000.00	–	\$34,219.03	\$34,219.03
National Specialist – Mongolia	\$45,000.00	–	\$23,082.14	\$23,082.14
National Specialist – Myanmar	\$45,000.00	–	\$28,615.34	\$28,615.34
National Specialist – Thailand	\$45,000.00	–	\$56,725.51	\$56,725.51
National Specialist – Sri Lanka	\$45,000.00	–	\$19,013.47	\$19,013.47
Total Project Personnel Cost	\$775,511.50	–	\$492,744.86	\$492,744.86

Total direct project management costs – Year 3				
National Project Office Costs (x7) and Regional Project Office Costs (x3)				
Individual space consumption, computer equipment costs, stationary, transportation and photocopy	\$63,294.00	–	\$59,906.83	\$59,906.83
Total Operation Costs	\$63,294.00	–	\$59,906.83	\$59,906.83

Monitoring and Evaluation – Year 3				
Mid-term and final evaluation	\$12,000.00	\$32,100.00	–	\$32,100.00
Monitoring activities and field visit, and knowledge management	\$3,000.00	–	\$1,029.98	\$1,029.98
Total Monitoring and Evaluation	\$15,000.00	\$32,100.00	\$1,029.98	\$33,129.98

Communication and visibility – Year 2				
Communication and visibility materials, including procurement of print and audio visual	\$40,000.00	\$4,547.50	\$47,732.32	\$52,279.82
Total Communication and visibility cost	\$40,000.00	\$4,547.50	\$47,732.32	\$52,279.82

With reference to art. 11.3 of the General Conditions, Heading 1: Inception and Coordination – Heading 2: Project Activity Budget – Heading 3: Direct project personnel cost – Heading 4: Direct project management cost – Heading 5: Monitoring and Evaluation – Heading 6: Communication and visibility constitute budget headings which are subject to the 25% rule stipulated in art. 11.3 GC.

ANNEX 2: WORKSHOP AND EVENTS

Name of the event	Number of events	Event type	Number of participants	Key partners engaged / organising parties	Date	Country
National Human Rights Orientation Series on Business and Human Rights	1	Training	43 (28m:14f: 1 Prefer not to say)	National Human Rights Commission of India	1 February 2023	India
Business Roundtable on Human Rights Due Diligence and Business and Human Rights	1	Event	10	Indo-German Chamber of Commerce, German Embassy in Delhi, and amfori	21 February 2023	India
Project Partners' Meeting	1	Event	25 (9m:15f)	EU Delegation to India	17 March 2023	India
Business Certification Training on Business and Human Rights	5	Training Series	31	Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Private Sector and Industry Associations	April – June 2023	India
Student Workshop: Reporting on Business and Human Rights	1	Workshop	60 (42m:18f:1 Prefer not to say)	Indian Institute of Mass Communications, Private Sector and Media	30 June 2023	India
B20 Summit Side Event: Driving the 2030 Agenda through Responsible Business Actions	1	Event	199 (105m: 94f)	UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Confederation of Indian Industry, and European Union	24 August 2023	India
Seminar on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	45 (27m:12f: 6 Prefer not to say)	National Human Rights Commission of India, Private Sector and Industry Associations	20 September 2023	India
Community trainings on Business and Human Rights in the context of iron-ore mining	3	Training Series	96 (66m:29f:1 Prefer not to say)	Environics Trust, and the District Legal Service Authority (Chaibasa)	March – June 2023	India
Student Workshop: Business and Human Rights in the context of iron-ore mining	2	Workshop	81 (43m:38f)	Environics Trust, National University, and National University of Study and Research in Law (NUSRL)	April – May 2023	India
Legal Awareness Workshops on access to remedy in the context of the impact of the iron-ore mining industry	2	Workshop	40 (23m:16f:1 Prefer not to say)	Environics Trust, and the District Legal Service Authority (Chaibasa)	May 2023	India
Subnational community workshops on corporate non-financial disclosures and access to remedy	2	Workshop	76 (44m:32f)	CIVIDEP, and Industry Associations	October 2023	India
Project Partners' Meeting	1	Event	61 (33m:28f)	EU Delegation to Indonesia	11 January 2023	Indonesia
Human Rights and Environment Due Diligence Mapping Study (Field Visit to Citarum River)	1	Field Visit	34 (27m:7f)	Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Investments and Fisheries, Private Sector and Industry Associations	30 – 31 January 2023	Indonesia
Human Rights and Environment Due Diligence Training for Companies	1	Training	33 (26m:7f)	Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Investments and Fisheries, Private Sector and Industry Associations	7 – 8 February 2023	Indonesia
Gender-Responsive Infrastructure Focus Group Discussion	1	Focus Group Discussion	36 (14m:22f)	Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection	11 May 2023	Indonesia
Joint-High Level Event on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	107 (53m:54f)	The German Embassy to Indonesia, GIZ, and Private Sector	31 May 2023	Indonesia
Public Consultation on the draft National Strategy on Business and Human Rights (Surabaya)	1	Consultation	70 (35m:30f:4 Prefer not to say)	Ministry of Law and Human Rights, and Indonesia Human Rights Commission	13 July 2023	Indonesia
Human Rights Due Diligence Training for KOMNAS HAM Staff	1	Event	33 (19m: 14f)	National Human Rights Commission Indonesia (KOMNAS HAM)	22-23 August 2023	Indonesia
Launch of the Presidential Decree on the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	174 (77m:97f)	Ministry of Law and Human Rights, and the National Working Group on NS-BHR	6 November 2023	Indonesia

Name of the event	Number of events	Event type	Number of participants	Key partners engaged / organising parties	Date	Country
Town Hall on SDG 6: Responsible Business Practices towards Safe and Clean Drinking Water – Citarum River Story	1	Event	47 (33m:14f)	Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Investments and Fisheries	12 December 2023	Indonesia
National Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights Consultations	5	Consultation Series	57 (19m:36f:2 Prefer not to say)	Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department (BHEUU), Centre for Applied Realism (CALR), EU Delegation to Malaysia, EuroCham Malaysia, IOM, UNICEF, and UN Global Compact Network	January – April 2023	Malaysia
National Baseline Assessment Multistakeholder Validation Meeting	1	Event	170 (60m:109f:1 Prefer not to say)	Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department (BHEUU), Centre for Applied Realism (CALR), and NAP-BHR Working Group	24 February 2023	Malaysia
National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights Working Group Meetings	6	Meeting Series	42 (11m:30f:1 Prefer not to say)	Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department (BHEUU), Centre for Applied Realism (CALR), and NAP-BHR Working Group	January – August 2023	Malaysia
National Conference on Business and Human Rights: Unveiling Insights and Actions Malaysia's Baseline Assessment on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	143 (59m:82f:2 Prefer not to say)	Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department (BHEUU), and NAP-BHR Working Group	25 October 2023	Malaysia
National Steering Committee meeting, chaired by the Minister of Law and Institutional Reform	1	Meeting	46 (25m:21f)	Legal Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department (BHEUU), and Minister of Law and Institutional Reform	2 November 2023	Malaysia
Human Rights and Environment Due Diligence Training for Malaysian Suppliers in the E&E Sector	8	Training Series	410 (126m:56f:228 Prefer not to say)	Panasonic, Wallbrook, and Private Sector	6-23 November 2023	Malaysia
Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment and Business and Human Rights	1	Event	200 (20m:180f)	MOFEMNET, Asia Foundation, and Civil Society	10 May 2023	Mongolia
Human Rights Due Diligence training for the Agri-foods industry	2	Training Series	80 (9m:71f)	Mongolian Food Industry Association	22 June – 18 August 2023	Mongolia
Human Rights Due Diligence Trainings for Private Sector	3	Training Series	102 (20m:82f)	Ulaanbaatar Chamber of Commerce	7 September to 11 November 2023	Mongolia
Human Rights Due Diligence training for EU companies	3	Meeting	55 (11m:44f)	EuroCham Mongolia	21 September to 13 October 2023	Mongolia
Launch of Mongolian National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights	1	Meeting	61 (15m:46)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Executive Committee on Business and Human Rights	3 July 2023	Mongolia
Ministerial Trainings on the NAPBHR	10	Training Series	475 (228m:246f: 1 Prefer not to say)	Ministry of Construction and Urban Development, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economics and Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, General Department of Taxation, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, and civil society	September – November 2023	Mongolia
Trainings on access to remedy for survivors of workplace harassment and sexual exploitation	6	Training Series	147 (49m:98f)	Mongolian Women's Employment Support Federation	September – November 2023	Mongolia
Consultations on access to remedy for survivors of workplace harassment and sexual exploitation	3	Consultation	408 (88m:319f:1 Prefer not to say)	Mongolian Women's Employment Support Federation	September – November 2023	Mongolia
Consultations on Pillar 2 and Pillar 3 of the UNGPs	1	Consultation	52 (19m:30f:3 Prefer not to say)	Trust Trade LLC	August – October 2023	Mongolia
Training on BHR and Data Protection Laws	13	Training Series	286 (66m:220f)	National Human Rights Commission Mongolia, and private sector	September – November 2023	Mongolia
World Environment Day 2023: Beating Plastic Pollution	1	Event	179 (162m:95f)	UN Habitat, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Prevent Plastics, Mercy Corps, and EU Delegation to Myanmar	5 June 2023	Myanmar
Community-Awareness Raising Sessions in Patheingyi, Pyaw B, Pyaw U, Sittoung, Thandwe & Kyaukpadaung Districts	3	Workshop Series	188 (57m:131f)	Legal Aid Clinic Myanmar	January – February 2023	Myanmar

Name of the event	Number of events	Event type	Number of participants	Key partners engaged / organising parties	Date	Country
Legal Assistance Meetings and Community Consultations in Yangon, Rakhine, and Ayeyarwady	10	Meeting	44 (21m:23f)	Legal Aid Clinic Myanmar	January – April 2023	Myanmar
Heightened Human Rights Due Diligence Training (Yangon)	1	Training	13 (4m:8f:1 Prefer not to say)	Yever, and Myanmar Sustainable Business Network (MSBN)	22 November 2023	Myanmar
Heightened Human Rights Due Diligence Training (Mandalay)	1	Training	19 (3m:15f:1 Prefer not to say)	Yever, and Myanmar Sustainable Business Network (MSBN)	24 November 2023	Myanmar
Heightened Human Rights Due Diligence Training (Taunggyi, Shan State)	1	Training	8 (4m:4f)	Yever, and Myanmar Sustainable Business Network (MSBN)	14 – 15 December 2023	Myanmar
SME Capacity Building Training Session	1	Training	102 (79m:23f)	German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK), and private sector	26 September 2023	Sri Lanka
Human Rights Due Diligence Training for the Tourism Sector	1	Training Series	57 (33m:20f:4 Prefer not to say)	German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK), and private sector	30 October – 16 November 2023	Sri Lanka
Human Rights Due Diligence Training for the Agriculture Sector	1	Training Series	74 (49m:16f:9 Prefer not to say)	German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK), and private sector	7 – 17 November 2023	Sri Lanka
Youth, Climate Action and the Business and Human Rights Agenda	1	Event	18	UNDP Sri Lanka	October 2023	Sri Lanka
Meeting with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka on Human Rights Issues with Manpower Workers in FTZs	1	Meeting	20 (5m:15f)	National Human Rights Commission Sri Lanka	10 August 2023	Sri Lanka
Training of Trainers on Access to Remedy for Women Workers in the Free Trade Zones	1	Training Series	20 (5m:20f:3 Prefer not to say)	Stand Up Movement	15 – 16 August 2023	Sri Lanka
Focus-Group Discussions on Access to Remedy for Women Workers in Free Trade Zones	5	Consultations	320 (78m:242f)	Stand Up Movement	August – November 2023	Sri Lanka
Training of Trainers for Women's Groups on access to remedy related to unregulated microfinancing practices	2	Event Series	40 (14m:26f)	Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA)	August – November 2023	Sri Lanka
Awareness Raising Campaign and Series Events on access to remedy related to unregulated microfinancing practices	4	Event Series	211 (20m:191f)	Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA)	August – November 2023	Sri Lanka
Subnational awareness sessions on gender discrimination in the workplace	1	Event Series	75 (75f)	Women's Centre	Jan – June 2023	Sri Lanka
Legal and Psychosocial Support Referral Meetings	3	Meeting Series	40 (40f)	Women's Centre	Jan – June 2023	Sri Lanka
Advocacy Event with Young People on Urban Refugee Agriculture and BHR	1	Event	24 (9m:15f)	ReFresh Farm	18 March 2023	Thailand
Series of trainings on BHR (in the context of urban migration)	6	Training Series	60 (8m:52f)	Labour Protection Network	January – March 2023	Thailand
Youth interactions on sustainable livelihoods, rights of refugees and BHR	6	Workshop	45 (13m:32f)	Labour Protection Network	27 January – 5 May 2023	Thailand
National Consultation: Exploring Thai Company Readiness for mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence	1	Consultation	93 (45m:47f:1 Prefer not to say)	Sal Forest Co. Ltd, and Ministry of Justice	29 May 2023	Thailand
Bangkok Business and Human Rights Week	4	Event	677 (211m:450f:16 Prefer not to say)	Department of Rights and Liberties Protection, ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), and Global Compact Network Thailand	29 May – 2 June 2023	Thailand
Launch Event of a Study on 'Laws and Measures Addressing Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in the Context of Business and Human Rights'	1	Event	127 (53m:71f:3 Prefer not to say)	Department of Rights and Liberties Protection (Ministry of Justice)	12 July 2023	Thailand
Workshop to promote the launch of Thailand's Second National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights	1	Workshop	176 (84m:87f:5 Prefer not to say)	Department of Rights and Liberties Protection	1-2 September 2023	Thailand
Launch of Thailand's Second National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	489 (219m:256f:14 Prefer not to say)	Department of Rights and Liberties Protection (Ministry of Justice)	8 September 2023	Thailand

Name of the event	Number of events	Event type	Number of participants	Key partners engaged / organising parties	Date	Country
Launch Event of UNDP's Study on "the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Context of Business and Human Rights"	1	Event	113 (38m:73f:2 Prefer not to say)	Department of Rights and Liberties Protection (Ministry of Justice)	16 October	Thailand
Series of multistakeholder dialogues on Environmental Justice and Human Rights	5	Group Event	163 (79m:84f)	Community Resource Centre (CRC)	16-17 August 2023	Thailand
High-Level Stakeholder Consultation on Human Rights Due Diligence in the Hospitality Industry	1	Consultation	30 (16m:14f)	National Human Rights Commission Thailand, Ministry of Justice, SME Development Bank, and Sal Forest Co. Ltd.	29 November 2023	Thailand
National Dialogue on Business and Human Rights	1	Event	75 (33m:40f:2 Prefer not to say)	Ministry of Justice, and UN Global Compact Network Thailand	12 December 2023	Thailand
Human Rights Day ceremony	1	Event	275 (122m:145f:8 Prefer not to say)	National Human Rights Commission Thailand, OHCHR, Thailand Institute of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Social Development and Human Security	14 December 2023	Thailand
RBHR Forum Session – A Climate Action Agenda for Asia: Priorities and Entry Points for Action	1	Session	189	Private Sector, Civil Society, and UN agencies	8 June 2023	Regional
RBHR Forum Session – Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Asia: Principles and Practices in Action	1	Session	150	Private Sector, Civil Society, and UN agencies	9 June 2023	Regional
Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia Conference	1	Event	275 (121m:151f:3 Prefer not to say)	EU-FPI, Government of Sweden, UNEP, and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	4-5 October 2023	Regional
Total	171 events		8,894 participants			

ANNEX 3: PARTNERS ENGAGED

Partner	Country
Environics Trust	IND
CIVIDEP	IND
UN Resident Coordinator's Office India	IND
Change Alliance	IND
Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs	IND
Confederation of Indian Industry	IND
Indo German Chambers of Commerce	IND
Centre for Responsible Business	IND
GIZ	IND
Amfori	IND
National Human Rights Commission, India	IND
Danish Institute of Human Rights	IND
Ministry of Law and Human Rights	IDN
Coordinating Ministry of Maritime and Investment Affairs	IDN
Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection	IDN
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	IDN
Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises	IDN
Foundation for International Human Rights Reporting Standard (FIHRRST)	IDN
Indonesia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN)	IDN
The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)	IDN
Jakarta Japan Club/JCC (Japan Chamber of Commerce)	IDN
Legal Affairs Division, Prime Minister's Department	MYS
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)	MYS
Collective of Applied Law and Legal Realism (CALR)	MYS
Wallbrook	MYS
Human Rights Center for Citizens NGO	MNG
Mongolia National Federation of the Blind NGO	MNG
Women's Association in Mining Sector NGO	MNG
Mongolian Food Industry Association	MNG
Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association	MNG
EUROCHAM Mongolia	MNG
Ulaanbataar Chamber of Commerce	MNG
Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry	MNG
Oyu Tolgoi Watch	MNG
Mongolian Women' Employment Supporting Federation	MNG
Mongolian Industry Trade Union Federation	MNG
National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia	MNG
National Legal Institute	MNG
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	MNG

Partner	Country
PwC Mongolia	MNG
Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business	MMR
Yever	MMR
Loening (think tank)	LKA
Centre for Policy Alternatives	LKA
Women's Centre	LKA
Center for Environmental Justice	LKA
UN Global Compact Network Working Group on Business and Human Rights	LKA
The Rights and Liberties protection Department, Ministry of Justice	THA
Securities and Exchange Commission of Thailand (SEC)	THA
Global Compact Network of Thailand	THA
The Listed Company Association	THA
Young Entrepreneur Chamber of Commerce (YEC)	THA
National Human Rights Commission of Thailand	THA
Community Resources Foundation	THA
Sal Forest	THA
IOM Thailand	THA
Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC)	THA
Federation of Thai SMEs	THA
Thai SME Bank	THA
ILO Thailand	THA
UNICEF Thailand	THA
The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	BKK
The Porticus Foundation	BKK
The Economist Impact	BKK
Business for Nature	BKK
Dalberg	BKK
International Union for the Conservation of Nature	BKK
UNEP	BKK
Eco-business	BKK
Sidekick	BKK

ANNEX 4: POLICY AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS PRODUCED

#	Knowledge-based product	Country	Typology	Published (yes/no)	Status	Year
1	Women Migrant Workers in the Garment Sector in India – A Baseline Assessment Report on awareness about laws and access to remedy	India	Report	Yes	Published	2021
2	UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2021
3	Responsible Business in India	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2021
4	Translation: The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Hindi)	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
5	Translation: The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Tamil)	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
6	Translation: Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting Framework (Hindi)	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
7	Translation: Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting Framework (Tamil)	India	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
8	Introducing Human Rights Due Diligence to the Private Sector in India: An Analysis	India	Report	Yes	Published	2022
9	Human Rights Due Diligence Training for the Private Sector	India	Report	Yes	Published	2022
10	Artificial Intelligence and Potential impacts on Human Rights in India	India	Research	Yes	Published	2022
11	Environmental Laws: Application & Efficacy in the context of Business & Human Rights	India	Research/Policy Analysis	Yes	Published	2022
12	Labour Laws Application & Efficacy in the context of Business & Human Rights and COVID-19 Pandemic	India	Research/Policy Analysis	No	Repurposed as YouTube animation	2023
13	Infrastructure Development and Women's Rights in Indonesia	Indonesia	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021
14	Translation: Human Rights Due Diligence and COVID-19: Rapid Self-Assessment for Business (Bahasa Indonesia)	Indonesia	Publication	Yes	Published	2021
15	Research on Trade and Investment and UNGPs	Indonesia	Research	No	Informed B+HR Asia's support to the Ministry of Law and Human Rights on the G20 Summit in 2022	2023
16	Research on Infrastructure Development and Gender Dimensions	Indonesia	Research	No	In progress	2023
17	Policy review on Omnibus Bill	Indonesia	Policy Analysis	No	Due to political circumstances, report considered too sensitive to publish.	2022
18	Translation: The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Bahasa Indonesia)	Indonesia	Publication	Yes	Published	2023
19	Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Asia: The Right to Safe & Clean Drinking Water – A Case Study of the Citarum River Basin	Indonesia	Research	Yes	In progress	2023
20	Five Key Business and Human Rights Priorities for Malaysia's Emerging Recovery Period	Malaysia	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021

#	Knowledge-based product	Country	Typology	Published (yes/no)	Status	Year
21	<u>Malaysia: The UNGPs And ESG Investment Policies in Government-linked Investment Companies</u>	Malaysia	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021
22	<u>Advancing COVID-19 Recovery in Malaysia: Strengthening Access to Remedy and Ethical Recruitment</u>	Malaysia	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021
23	<u>Business and Human Rights Competition (Awareness Materials)</u>	Mongolia	Publication	Yes	Published	2021
24	<u>Translation: Human Rights Due Diligence Facilitation Guide (Mongolian)</u>	Mongolia	Publication	Yes	Published	2021
25	Data Protection and Business and Human Rights	Mongolia	Publication	No	In progress	2023
26	<u>The Untapped Trade and Investment Potential of the Business and Human Rights Agenda in Sri Lanka</u>	Sri Lanka	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021
27	<u>State Duties: Women's Participation in Sri Lanka's Workforce and the UNGPs</u>	Sri Lanka	Issue Brief	Yes	Published	2021
28	<u>The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Women workers in Free Trade Zones and Garment factories in Sri Lanka</u>	Sri Lanka	Infographic	Yes	Published	2021
29	<u>The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women Garment Workers in Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zones (FTZs)</u>	Sri Lanka	Research	Yes	Published	2022
30	Legal Gaps analysis (the legislative gaps in the context of BHR in SL)	Sri Lanka	Research/Policy Analysis	No	Incorporated into Ministry of Justice Scoping Study: Entry Points for Govt. intervention on UNGPs (to be published 2024)	2023
31	Legal Gaps analysis (environment rights and climate actions)	Sri Lanka	Research/Policy Analysis	No	Incorporated into Ministry of Justice Scoping Study: Entry Points for Govt. intervention on UNGPs (to be published 2024)	2023
32	<u>Adopting Responsible Business Practices in a COVID-19 Era: Lessons from MSMEs in Sri Lanka</u>	Sri Lanka	Report	Yes	Published	2023
33	<u>Policy Paper: Solutions to Achieve Fair and Ethical Recruitment and Decent Work of Migrant Workers in Thailand during COVID-19 Recovery</u>	Thailand	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
34	<u>Translation: Human Rights Due Diligence Facilitation Guide (Thai)</u>	Thailand	Publication	Yes	Published	2022
35	<u>The Protection on Human Rights Defenders in the context of Business and Human Rights</u>	Thailand	Research/Policy Analysis	Yes	Published	2023
36	<u>Laws and Measures addressing Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPPs) in the context of Business and Human Rights</u>	Thailand	Research/Policy Analysis	Yes	Published	2023
37	<u>Human Rights Due Diligence and COVID-19: Rapid Self-Assessment for Business – 2021 update</u>	Regional team	Self-Assessment tool	Yes	Published	2021
38	<u>Business, Human Rights and the Environment – Survey Summary</u>	Regional team	Survey publication	Yes	Published	2021
39	<u>Human Rights Due Diligence Training Facilitation Guide</u>	Regional team	Guide	Yes	Published	2021
40	<u>Human Rights Due Diligence Self-Assessment Online Training Tool</u>	Regional team	Training Tool	Yes	Published	2022
41	<u>Asia in Focus: Clean Air and the Business and Human Rights Agenda</u>	Regional team	Research/Digital Hub	Yes	Published	2022
42	<u>Asia in Focus: Climate Change and the Business and Human Rights Agenda (Briefing Note)</u>	Regional team	Publication	Yes	Published	2023
43	<u>Asia in Focus: Corporate Accountability and Climate Change</u>	Regional team	Research/Digital Hub	Yes	Published	2023
44	<u>Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia Conference Report</u>	Regional team	Report	Yes	Published	2023
45	Asia in Focus: Biodiversity and the Business and Human Rights Agenda	Regional team	Research/Digital Hub	No	In progress	2023
46	Asia in Focus: ESG and the Business and Human Rights Agenda	Regional team	Research/Digital Hub	No	In progress	2023

ANNEX 5: CSO GRANTS AWARDED IN 2023

Country	No. of Grant	Name of Grant recipient	Title of grant	Amount of grant (USD)	Beneficiaries	Description	Contract duration (dd/mm/yy – dd/mm/yy)
India	1	Environics Trust	Legal Awareness and aid for communities in India's Iron Ore Mining Areas	28,688	Communities, individuals, and human rights defenders impacted by iron ore mining operations in the State of Jharkhand	To set up actions relating to greater awareness on corporate disclosures and access to remedies for communities adversely affected by business operations on key priority issues related to environment, human rights, labour rights, circularity, and consumer awareness.	15 September 2022 – 15 May 2023
India	1	CIVIDEP India	Legal Awareness and capacity building for Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) on Corporate Non-Financial Disclosures	34,990	Trade Unions, HRDs, and grassroots activists from leather and garment sector in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu states.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To set up actions relating to greater awareness on corporate disclosures and access to remedies for communities adversely affected by business operations on key priority issues related to environment, human rights, labour rights, circularity, consumer awareness etc. – To strengthen capacities of paralegal volunteers, human Rights defenders, activists and lawyers to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations with a particular focus on India's BRSR framework 	1 July 2023 – 31 March 2024
Mongolia	1	Oyu Tolgoi Watch NGO	Building Capacity to Employ Grievance Mechanisms	9,885	NGOs, local communities, business sector actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Disseminating knowledge about international non-judicial grievance/accountability mechanisms; – Training on the use of international non-judicial grievance/accountability mechanisms; and – Supporting the creation of project-level grievance mechanisms meeting UNGPs standards for independent grievance (remedy) mechanisms in the private sector duty bearers. 	30 June 2023 – 29 February 2024
Mongolia	1	Mongolian Women's Employment Supporting Federation NGO	People-friendly workplace	9,817	Employees of businesses operating in the trade and service industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trainings on workplace sexual harassment; – Work with companies to improve the internal rules to have a sense of human rights; and – Create a people-friendly workplace culture without any pressure and violence. 	30 June 2023 – 20 March 2024
Mongolia	1	Mongolian Industrial Trade Union Federation NGO	Preventing human rights violations in the workplace by strengthening the work of the Labor Rights Dispute Resolution Commission (LRDRC), and supporting access to remedy efforts.	3,950	Employees of the wool cashmere industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improving knowledge and information about the legal and labor rights of workers, and further empower employee representative organizations; and – Provide methodological support for the establishment of a permanent commission to resolve labor disputes. 	30 June 2023 – 15 February 2024

Country	No. of Grant	Name of Grant recipient	Title of grant	Amount of grant (USD)	Beneficiaries	Description	Contract duration (dd/mm/yy – dd/mm/yy)
Myanmar	1	Legal Clinic Myanmar	Protection of Migrant Workers and Access to Justice	5,321	Current or former workers of industrial and production sectors and their families, with a focus on the poor and most vulnerable individuals and groups in any township and location in Yangon, Mandalay, Rakhine, and Ayeyarwady.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Raise legal awareness of workers, focusing on migrants, vulnerable groups and their families in Yangon, Mandalay, Rakhine, and Ayeyarwady; and – Train paralegals, CSOs, and lawyers on labour laws and related legal areas in Yangon, Mandalay, Rakhine, and Ayeyarwady – Provide legal assistance to current or former workers, focusing on migrants, vulnerable groups and their families in Yangon, Mandalay, Rakhine, and Ayeyarwady 	1 January 2022 – 30 April 2023
Sri Lanka	1	Centre for Policy Alternatives	Promoting access to justice and remedy of women entrepreneurs affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.	30,184	Women working in micro and small-scale businesses, women entrepreneurs, and women affected by debt-traps in rural communities. Geographic scope: Kantale and Kabalagamuva Divisional Secretariats of Trincomalee district and Passara, Banadarawela and Haliella Divisional Secretariats of Badulla districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved advocacy capacities of women entrepreneurs and women's groups on procedures of legal referrals for remedies to resolve violations of social and economic rights; and – Increased awareness on operationalizing the right to information among women entrepreneurs and women's groups. 	May 2022 – January 2024
Sri Lanka	1	Women's Centre	Ensuring the Human Rights of Female Workers in the Free Trade Zones & Garment Factory Areas during and after the COVID-19 pandemic	23,032	Women garment workers in Katunayake in Gampaha district (Western Province), Koggala (Galle District), Mulathive, Kilinochchi, and Vavuniya districts (Northern Province). Indirect beneficiaries include: 50 representatives of civil society, government officials, employers, and members of the general public (estimated 1,000 people).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Empower women workers through training on their rights under international human rights law, the UNGPs, and applicable business and human rights frameworks – Increased awareness of grievance mechanisms at national level (including on pathways to access grievance mechanisms); – Improved and increased awareness of the need for a decent working environment in the Free Trade Zone & garment factories through advocacy. 	June 2022 – February 2023
Sri Lanka	1	Stand Up Movement	Hand to Hand initiative: Increasing awareness of access to remedy options for women workers in Free-Trade Zones	31,819	Workers and Factory-owners in the Free Trade Zones	The Hand-to-Hand initiative broadly focuses on awareness raising, legal empowerment, and improving access to remedy for women through information sharing targeted at women workers in the Free-Trade Zones.	10 May 2023 – 31 January 2024
Thailand	1	Community Resource Center (CRC) Foundation	Stakeholder consultations on environmental justice and BHR	Grant disbursed in 2022	Affected communities in three pilot provinces, namely Loei, Rayong and Songkla	To launch innovative access to remedy interventions in communities that are subjected to impact of business-related human rights abuses in Rayong, Loei and Songkla provinces.	5 July 2023 – 3 May 2024
Thailand	1	Sansaicisco	Awareness raising and capacity building of local ethnic communities on sustainable food production and consumption in the context of BHR	9,653	Aka and Lahu ethnic communities, including women and youth in Chiang Rai	Raise awareness of BHR among local and ethnic communities through the entry point of sustainable food production and consumption.	9 September 2022 –15 July 2023

Country	No. of Grant	Name of Grant recipient	Title of grant	Amount of grant (USD)	Beneficiaries	Description	Contract duration (dd/mm/yy – dd/mm/yy)
Thailand	1	Labour Protection Network (LPN)	Risk Mitigation and Human Trafficking Prevention in Small-scale Agri-businesses in Mae Sot District	10,000	Mae Sot District, Tak Province which is a significant area for many migrants from Myanmar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a change in practices of businesses in agricultural sector through raising awareness of human rights issues, establishing mitigating measures and building capacity of agri-food businesses on responsible business practice; and – Identify and respond to risks faced by migrant workers in agricultural sector in the border province, especially in the small/medium business. 	1 October 2022 – 30 September 2023
Thailand	1	HOST International Thailand Foundation	REFresh Farm, Urban Refugee Agriculture and Social Enterprise Project	Grant disbursed in 2022	Jarai refugees in Nonthaburi province (same Montagnard ethnic group who used to live in the highland in Vietnam and Cambodia)	Increase awareness of rights of refugees within the Business and Human Rights framework. This includes training and other activities to bridge the gap between enterprises as duty bearers and urban refugee communities.	1 September 2022 – 30 June 2023
TOTAL	12 CSO grants	–		US \$220,686			

ANNEX 6: EU RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please note that this framework includes the EU indicators only. Results against UNDP indicators are presented in Annex 7.

	Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline (2018)	2023 Actual ²⁷ Value	Targets	Source of Verification	Assumptions
Overall objectives – impacts	To contribute to strengthening EU-UN partnership on Human Rights and environmental protection in the context of business operations	IMP1: Number of EU bilateral, regional, inter-regional and multi-lateral cooperation partnership strategies which have been enhanced	–	–	–	Outcome statements from annual meetings; evolved agendas	Not to be filled-in
	To contribute to strengthening the competitive positioning of EU in attracting investment and trade flows	IMP3: Number of approaches and/or practices beneficial to the achievement of the EU2020 strategy which have been taken up in partner countries	–	–	–	Outcome statements; Trade and investment agreements	
Specific objectives – outcomes	To support the regional momentum to strengthen Human Rights and environment protection in the context of business operations	OC1: Number of processes related to state-level and sub-state level (bilateral, regional, multi-lateral) partnership strategies and policy dialogues which have been influenced	0	4	4	Monitoring of political/policy developments (eg statements by individual partners)	Shifting levels of political will not lead to undue delays in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles or related actions. UNDP B+HR Asia project will work closely with BHR national champions and trusted, but independent advisors to government with strong connections to policy makers to ensure the uptake of National Action Plans and other strategic policy documents in support of UNGP implementation. UNDP will link national champions to ongoing programming efforts at UNDP Country Offices to maximize advocacy and technical support efforts
	To contribute to the take up of implementing measures by relevant stakeholders in line with internationally agreed principles, incl.: – adoption and implementation of NAPs by governments – enhanced access to effective remedies – adoption of HR policies, DD protocols and grievance mechanisms by businesses	OC-customised-non-matched 1: number of partners engaged	0	70	28	Partnerships and topics covered by national partners	Countries will not perceive NAP processes as simply public relations exercises, which then leads to ineffective NAPs, or to a failure to follow-up on implementation after drafting NAPs UNDP Country Offices will closely coordinate with government counterparts to ensure national ownership of the B&HR agenda
		OC7: Number of processes related to partner country practices beneficial to the achievement of Europe 2020 strategy which have been influenced	0	5	3	Review of NAPs, and relevant mechanisms, external evaluations of the country context on Human Rights and environment protection.	UNDP will bring together regional actors to discuss opportunities and challenges and facilitate peer learning. Dialogue events will also help increase interest among states by providing visibility on progress.

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline (2018)	2023 Actual ⁵⁷ Value	Targets	Source of Verification	Assumptions
<p>OUTPUT 1.1: To set up actions enhancing common understanding and policy convergence with implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights</p> <p>OUTPUT 1.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments)</p> <p>(Better understanding & enhanced capacity on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – standards & compliance – UNGPs & trade – preparation of NAPs) 	OP1: Number of participants in an event	0	10,495	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Conference programme Attendance lists Outcome documents	<p>Partner countries will not create obstacles including bureaucratic or political interference in establishing appropriate platforms for discussions and knowledge sharing internally and externally</p> <p>UNDP will raise awareness of the UNGPs, provide technical assistance and host bilateral peer learning events in close partnership with national counterparts to ensure support</p> <p>UNDP will leverage its voice and convening role in different national contexts to make the business and normative case. It will stoke positive competition between states to outdo the other in terms of progress through regional forums</p>
	OP2: Percentage of participants who report having benefited from an event	0	89	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Satisfaction Survey – based on 20% response rate	
	OP6: Number of knowledge-based products developed	0	18	7	Knowledge-based products produced and published	
<p>OUTPUT 2.1: To support the development of research and policy pieces furthering public discourse and greater appreciation of the UNGPs and its positive impact on human rights, including women's rights</p> <p>OUTPUT 2.2: To set up actions enhancing discussion and awareness of the human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy</p> <p>(Increased availability of materials on topics and raised awareness on UNGPs and benefits of HR and SD provisions in trade and investor agreements)</p>	OP6: Number of knowledge-based products developed	0	5	14	Knowledge-based products produced and published	<p>UNDP will also deploy its own technical capacities and CSO partner expertise where necessary. It will convene stakeholder consultations and validation exercises. Importantly, it will bring human rights and environmental rights defenders to the table to voice their challenges in a safe space. UNDP will also actively deploy technical assistance and advice to help relevant NHRIs monitor, report, and investigate human rights abuses more effectively and in a timely manner</p>
	OP7: Number of communication products developed	0	664	28	Social Media Outreach, Media statements, Consultant Reports	
<p>OUTPUT 3.1: To set up actions relating to greater awareness and access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts</p> <p>OUTPUT 3.2: To reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms</p> <p>OUTPUT 3.3: To set up actions that strengthen capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations)</p> <p>(Better understanding & enhanced capacity on remedies, DD, grievance mechanisms and to address HR abuses in the context of business operations)</p>	OP1: Number of participants in an event	0	11,433	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Conference programme Attendance lists Outcome documents	<p>Partner countries will support access to remedies discussions and the role of human rights and environmental rights defenders in identifying and addressing adverse human rights impacts</p> <p>UNDP will invest in advocacy and awareness raising on the UN Guiding Principles to ensure constructive dialogue and peer learning event between judicial institutions, NHRIs, NCPs, and CSOs/human rights and environmental rights defenders.</p>
	OP2: Percentage of participants who report having benefited from an event	0	89	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Satisfaction Survey	
	OP6: Number of knowledge-based products developed	0	14	12	Knowledge-based products produced and published	
	OP-customised-non-matched 1: number of grants provided to civil society actors working with human rights and environmental rights defenders and women's rights activists	0	29	18	Grants report	

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline (2018)	2023 Actual ⁵⁷ Value	Targets	Source of Verification	Assumptions
OUTPUT 4.1: To encourage the uptake of actions that address the adverse role of business operations on the environment, climate and human rights	OP1: Number of participants in an event	0	1,177	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Conference programme Attendance lists Outcome documents	
	OP2: Percentage of participants who report having benefited from an event	0	93	Due to C19 circumstances this remains unclear.	Satisfaction Survey	
	OP6: Number of knowledge-based products developed	0	7	6	Knowledge-based products produced and published	
	OP7: Number of communication products developed	0	8	12	Social Media Outreach, Media statements, Consultant Reports	
Workstream 1: Awareness raising to build knowledge and political will including training and peer-to-peer exchange to further policy convergence and compliance						Shifting levels of political will not lead to undue delays in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles or related actions. UNDP B+HR Asia project will work closely with B&HR national champions and trusted, but independent advisors to government with strong connections to policy makers to ensure the uptake of National Action Plans and other strategic policy documents in support of UNGP implementation. UNDP will link national champions to ongoing programming efforts at UNDP Country Offices to maximize advocacy and technical support efforts UNDP Country Offices will ensure close coordination with government counterparts to ensure national ownership of the B&HR agenda Partner countries will support access to remedies discussions and the role of human rights and environmental rights defenders in identifying and addressing adverse human rights impacts UNDP will invest in advocacy and awareness raising on the UN Guiding Principles to ensure constructive dialogue and peer learning event between judicial institutions, NHRIs, NCPs, and CSOs/human rights and environmental rights defenders.
(OP1.1) Tripartite high-level meeting (business, CSOs & gvt)	A1 (for high level meeting & trainings): Number of events organised or supported	0	93	14	Reports – Group events (conferences, debates, workshops, seminars)	
Awareness raising on the UN Guiding Principles and the importance of National Action Plans on B&HR	A1: Number of events organised or supported	0	318	14	Reports and attendance sheets – Group events (conferences, debates, workshops, seminars)	
Prepare publications	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	0	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
(OP1.2) Raise awareness and host peer learning events on best practices on UNGP implementation	A1 (for outreach & advocacy events and for peer learning events): Number of events organised or supported	0	62	12	Social Media Outreach Media statements, Consultant Reports	
Provide TA on UNGPs (gvt is the target)	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	1,514	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
Workstream 2: Communication and Public Diplomacy						
(OP2.1 & 2.2) Preparation of relevant publications & materials on Business and Human Rights agenda	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	610	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
Communication and awareness raising products and campaigns in Europe and Asia	A3: Number of public/media/communication products and campaigns designed and implemented	0	664 (disseminated through 99 campaigns)	28	Social Media Outreach Media statements, Consultant Reports	

Results Chain	Indicators	Baseline (2018)	2023 Actual ⁵⁷ Value	Targets	Source of Verification	Assumptions	
Workstream 3: Solutions through access to remedies, thought leadership and innovation							
(OP3.1) Provision of grants to civil society actors working on environmental rights, with human rights defenders, and women's rights activists	A1: Number of grants provided	0	29	18	Reports and attendance sheets – Group events (conferences, debates, workshops, seminars)	<p>Shifting levels of political will not lead to undue delays in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles or related actions.</p> <p>UNDP B+HR Asia project will work closely with B&HR national champions and trusted, but independent advisors to government with strong connections to policy makers to ensure the uptake of National Action Plans and other strategic policy documents in support of UNGP implementation. UNDP will link national champions to ongoing programming efforts at UNDP Country Offices to maximize advocacy and technical support efforts</p> <p>UNDP Country Offices will ensure close coordination with government counterparts to ensure national ownership of the B&HR agenda</p> <p>Partner countries will support access to remedies discussions and the role of human rights and environmental rights defenders in identifying and addressing adverse human rights impacts</p> <p>UNDP will invest in advocacy and awareness raising on the UN Guiding Principles to ensure constructive dialogue and peer learning event between judicial institutions, NHRIs, NCPs, and CSOs/human rights and environmental rights defenders.</p>	
Preparation of materials on various topics related to remedy provision, human rights impact assessments, and grievance mechanisms	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	1,373	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports		
Organisation of events	A1: Number of events organised or supported;	0	344	10	As above		
	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided		–		As above		
(OP3.2) Trainings on DD, HRIA, grievance mechanisms and other elements of business obligations under UNGPs	A1: Number of events organised or supported;	0	113	10	As above		
	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided		–		As above		
(OP3.3) Trainings with NHRIs, judiciaries, ministries of justice on legal issues linked to UNGPs	A1: Number of events organised or supported;	0	13	10	As above		
	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided		–		As above		
Workstream 4: Strengthening efforts to mitigate the adverse impact of business operations on climate and the environment							
Outputs	Preparation of knowledge products addressing the intersection of human rights, environmental degradation, and climate change in Asia	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	–	–		Consultant time-sheets and reports
	Awareness raising on how to mitigate the impact of business operations and supply chains on the environment	A1: Number of events organised or supported;	0	–	3	Reports and attendance sheets – Group events (conferences, debates, workshops, seminars)	
		A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	–	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
		A3: Number of public/media/communication products and campaigns designed and implemented	0	2	14	Social Media Outreach Media statements, Consultant Reports	
	Engage in multi-stakeholders' dialogue on the impact of business operations and supply chains on the environment and climate on multi-stakeholder events	A1: Number of events organised or supported;	0	6	3	Reports and attendance sheets – Group events (conferences, debates, workshops, seminars)	
		A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	–	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
	Create communications products on the impact of business operations on the environment and climate	A2: Person days of expertise or technical assistance provided	0	–	–	Consultant time-sheets and reports	
		A3: Number of public/media/communication products and campaigns designed and implemented	0	7	12	Social Media Outreach Media statements, Consultant Reports	

ANNEX 7: UNDP RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Expected Outputs	Output Indicators	Data Source	Baseline		Year 4		Data Collection Methods & Risks
			Value	Year	Target ⁵⁸	Achieved	
Output 1 Policy convergence and compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights increased	1. Number of National Actions Plans or their equivalent developed	Published National Action Plans or Policy documents	0	2019	4	3	Elections and other political circumstances may stall or bring processes on NAPs to a premature end.
Output 2 Public awareness of the Business and Human Rights Agenda enhanced	2.1 Number of communications products shared with the public (Enhanced social media products, articles in periodicals, and short videos. Viewing numbers and ratings of public/media/ communication products and campaigns will be registered)	Published reports, social media messaging, videos, news articles	0	2019	24	99 campaigns (a total of 664 products)	Availability of researchers and data may hinder output of research findings. Political circumstances may hinder social media campaigning and messaging. Trade negotiations can disrupt efforts at communications.
	2.2 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public	Training reports, workshop reports, roundtable reports	0	2019	20	23	Availability of materials on topics and raised awareness on UNGPs and benefits of HR and sustainable development provisions in trade and investment agreements dependent on EU DG Trade cooperation
Output 3 Access to remedy and other rights-based solutions increased	3.1 Number of beneficiaries in pursuit of access to remedy supported by civil society actors (Support or engagement can include legal aid provision, legal advice or mediation support, training in rights, and other levels of support depending upon country circumstances)	CSO partner reports, surveys	0	2019	70	4,514	CSO capacity to support human rights defenders, individuals seeking remedies, and communities opposing business operations will be determined by political circumstances, and safety concerns for stakeholders seeking remedy.
	3.2 Number of training and events organized or supported to reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms	Training reports, workshop reports, event reports	0	2019	16	110	Decreasing appetite of companies to invest in responsible business practices and human rights due diligence processes due to economic challenges.
Output 4 Interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations is better understood so that policy action is more clearly articulated	4.1 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public	Training reports, workshop reports, roundtable reports, other knowledge publications	0	2020	5	18	Availability of researchers and data may hinder output of research findings. Political circumstances may hinder social media campaigning and messaging. Trade negotiations can disrupt efforts at communications.
	4.2 Number of events organized or supported to enhance multi-stakeholder dialogues on the impact of Asian business operations and supply chains on the human rights and environment nexus	Training reports, workshop reports, event reports	0	2020	5	6	Online events-fatigue through travel restriction periods could affect attendance. Appetite from different sectors might be affected by economic difficulties and changing priorities in the post-COVID context.
	4.3 Number of communications products shared with the public (Enhanced social media products, articles in periodicals, and short videos. Viewing numbers and ratings of public/media/ communication products and campaigns will be registered)	Published reports, social media messaging, videos, news articles	0	2020	12	13	Availability of researchers and data may hinder output of research findings. Political circumstances may hinder social media campaigning and messaging. Trade negotiations can disrupt efforts at communications.

ANNEX 8: COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2023

2023 Communication Plan Summary: Strategic Objectives and Key Actions

Theme	Objective	Communication tactics	Platforms/tools
Thought leadership for business and human rights in Asia (mainly through country offices and regional forums)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Raise the profile of UNDP B+HR Asia among key stakeholders (donors, governments and CSOs) and go beyond business and human rights (BHR) community, to increase numbers of stakeholders seized of the BHR agenda. 2 Foresight enhanced to raise profile of UNDP B+HR Asia as a driver for responsible business acceleration. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Going local – adapting communication to country context, working in close partnership with local authorities, communities, and community-based media organizations. Connecting local communities to national networks to expand communication efforts 2 Amplify the voice of senior leadership at UNDP and the EU positioning them as thought leaders at the forefront of B+HR insights and analysis. 3 Position UNDP as an organization driven by evidence-based insights, and programming at CO levels as at the forefront of the international development debate 4 Expand digital reach to promote our thought leadership and visibility through both national and regional accounts 5 Strategic partnerships with think tanks and UN agencies and other platforms for specific topics. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Mainstream local media 2 Social media platforms 3 Direct communication with Government/Ministries/Donors 4 Blogs 5 Newsletters 6 Outreach and events (on-site) 7 Op-eds by senior leadership 8 Joint op-eds: UNDP and EU
Systems transformation and portfolio approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Position UNDP B+HR Asia as a player on the discourse of Business, Human Rights and Environment. 2 Adopt portfolio approach to design communication messages and activities targeting various groups. (1. HRDDI 2. BHR+EI 3. EU & programming countries' policy updates) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Build stories that are relevant, impactful, so that they are featured on various communication outlets 2 Promote collaboration and integration with other UNDP workstreams. Partners with sister UN Agencies to curate a pipeline of stories and campaigns. 3 Mine and harvest project activities that can be turned into compelling and impactful content, to be featured on the website, shared on social media, and potentially pitched to mainstream media 4 Ensure that all strategic communications are gender-sensitive -Use strategic communications to advance mandates specifically related to gender 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Media activities (Webinar; On-site event) 2 Short videos 3 Regional Social Media Campaigns 4 Blog
Diverse and focused partnership networks	Establishing a network of non-regular partners both on the national and regional level to cultivate new programming opportunities	<p>Highlight achievements of B+HR Asia project and share credit widely</p> <p>Raise awareness of a new initiative or programme</p> <p>Cross pollinates and activate website, social media, and knowledge management platform with relevant, tailored content for consistency</p>	Build a list of communication focal points at UNDP Country Offices, a list of partners focusses on environmental issues both at national and regional level, a list of partners in business and human rights community and a list of national and regional media to be engaged with.

2023 Social Media Strategy

Timeframe	Social Media Goals and Brief Strategy	Performance Review
3 Months	<p>Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Double the number of followers (1200) on LinkedIn – Increase by 20% the audience growth on Twitter – Double the views of Asia in Focus webcast series (in total around 7000) – Ensure 10% more subscribers to B+HR newsletter <p>To achieve the target above, a content plan will be developed to ensure regular posting on both Twitter and LinkedIn through 1) recycling of relevant knowledge products and Asia in Focus webcast series; 2) campaigns to promote BHR+E agenda which will be carried out by the end of March and 3) monthly promotion of 2022 Progress Report;</p>	<p>Social Media Accounts:</p> <p>Throughout the year, the B + HR Asia X account (Twitter) had 4057 followers and generated a total of 317.4K impressions and gained 607 new followers which equates to an 18 percent increase in the account's followers. For more detailed analysis of the growth rate, please refer to the chapter of Communication and Visibility.</p> <p>Compared to the performance of X (Twitter), LinkedIn surpassed the expectation. The platform created a new field for B+HR team to enhance the engagement with new groups of audiences. To date, the page has gained 2787 followers.</p>
6 Months	<p>Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase the number of followers on LinkedIn and Twitter – 400 downloads of Climate Change Report and 8000 visits to the content hub (two months and launch it in April) – 200 downloads of the progress report (baseline from 2021 progress report, average 60-70 downloads) – 1K views of Asia in Focus Episode on climate justice (3-month period) <p>In this period, the target above will be mainly achieved through partnership driven campaigns. Activities related to the Asia in Focus portfolio will consider engaging with influential, media-savvy organizations. Progress Report will be promoted through social media and newsletter as well as being featured on the top of every issue of trending in Asia.</p>	<p>YouTube Channel:</p> <p>In 2023, 378 new subscribers joined the channel. The account currently enjoys 1044 subscribers and has garnered a substantial 16,768 views and the series of Asia in Focus webcast contributed 5765 views.</p> <p>Mailchimp:</p> <p>Email marketing keeps performing strongly in the audience engagement. The program account has more than 9,000 subscribers and the average open rate is above 33 percent which surpasses the average benchmark of the international development sector.</p>
12 Months	<p>Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 30 percent of growth of number of followers on Twitter – By the end of year, LinkedIn is envisioned to be another essential platform for B+HR communication and outreach, number of followers on LinkedIn shall be equal to Twitter. – 500 downloads of Climate Change Report and 10K visits to the content hub. – 1000 downloads of the progress report and keep as the top 10 publication in the UNDP regional hub. – 7K views of Asia in Focus Episodes <p>Regular social media posts will be published throughout the year. B+HR Asia expects to receive rapid increase on engagement and number of followers across different regional channels for the BHR+E forum.</p> <p>To achieve the targets above, strategy will be focusing on 1) partnership driven campaigns to tag into new communities 2) enhance the engagement with UNDP COs and influencers in the system 3) Increase engagement through media partners</p>	<p>Knowledge Product:</p> <p>Dissemination of knowledge products play a key role in informing potential users of the research evidence which contributes to policy coordination and advocacy for certain discourses.</p> <p>In the year, a multimedia approach was employed to promote 4 regional documents comprising progress reports, flagship studies, and brief notes. Collectively, the downloads for these documents totaled 2,952.</p>

ANNEX 9: EVIDENCE

The below endnotes provide links to evidence supporting the narrative of the annual report. Those pieces of evidence that have been shared publicly are directly accessible. Some of the documents, however, are of a confidential nature (e.g. presentations from closed-door meetings, attendance sheets, satisfactions surveys, detailed event reports). These documents are stored on UNDP's document management system and can be shared with evaluators on request.

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- 57 Actual figures are cumulative (over the course of the project period)
- 58 Targets for UNDP Results Framework calculated cumulatively as per Project Document.

