

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASIA

OUR WORK



Technical and advisory support to governments



Regional peer learning and capacity building on the UNGPs



Development of human rights policies, due diligence processes and remedies for business sector



Support to civil society and national human rights institutions to improve accountability

OUR IMPACT



Peace, justice and strong institutions



Climate action and environmental protection



Advancement in gender equality



Reduced inequalities



Decent work and economic growth



Responsible trade and investment

WHERE WE WORK

South Asia

India - Bangladesh - Sri Lanka

Southeast Asia

Thailand - Indonesia - Malaysia - Viet Nam



REGIONAL CHALLENGE

The Asia-Pacific region has long been synonymous with economic dynamism. Over the last few decades, pro-growth economic policies, increased foreign direct investment, and international trade flows have combined to lift millions out of poverty. Employment has risen significantly, industrial production has ballooned, education and healthcare have expanded, and technology and innovation have been pushed to the forefront.

Yet, rapid economic development has resulted in human rights abuses related to forced labour, deforestation and environmental degradation, sexual harassment, and forced displacement. Many companies operating within the region have been rocked by scandals involving rights violations in their operations and supply chains, impacting their reputation and future growth.

AREAS OF FOCUS

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

UNDP convenes leveraging initiatives and provides advisory to governments on the development of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. UNDP facilitates forums during which CSOs and human rights defenders encourage governments to act on the business and human rights agenda.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

UNDP works with States to ensure they fulfill their duty to protect human rights, including environmental rights. We support businesses in conducting human rights and environmental impact assessments to prevent adverse impacts on the environment.

RESPONSIBLE TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Through public events and publications, UNDP works to strengthen policy coherence between regional Trade Agreements, International Investor Agreements, and the UNGPs to enhance the region's competitive positioning in attracting investment and increasing trade flows.

GENDER EQUALITY

UNDP guides States and businesses on how to integrate gender perspectives into UNGPs implementation and to ensure the realization of the rights of women. UNDP also supports businesses in conducting human rights impact assessments to prevent gender-based discrimination.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

UNDP assists NHRIs and CSOs working with human rights defenders to provide legal assistance in furtherance of adequate remedies. For example, UNDP has launched a small grants support to CSOs working on legal aid provision to HRDs, with a focus on environmental rights defenders.

SUSTAINING PEACE

UNDP works with businesses to set up grievance mechanisms and complaint systems leading to greater access to justice and effective remedies. We advocate for businesses to apply a do-no-harm approach when engaging with conflict-affected communities.

UN GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The UN Guiding Principles, unanimously approved in 2011 by the Human Rights Council, represent the most authoritative normative framework to identify, address, and remedy human rights abuses in business operations. Its three pillars lay out the State duty to protect, corporate responsibility to respect, and the need for both to provide effective remedy when violations do occur.

While awareness is growing among governments, business, and civil society organisations on how the UNGPs can mitigate these human rights abuses in business operations, efforts need to be intensified by all to ensure that violations do not derail Asia's progress towards the SDGs.

PROTECT

Clarifies the legal duty of States to protect individuals from adverse corporate related human rights impacts and outlines a set of operational principles through which States should implement this duty.

RESPECT

Identifies the responsibility of business enterprises to respect human rights and delineates a due diligence process through which companies should give effect to this responsibility.

REMEDY

Stresses and specifies the need to ensure better access to effective remedy for victims as a joint responsibility of States and business enterprises.

Get in touch

E-mail: rbap.businessandhumanrights@undp.org

 @BizHRAAsia_UNDP

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