

# RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM

12-13 June 2019  
UN Conference Centre  
Bangkok, Thailand

## DRAFT AGENDA

Wednesday, 12 June 2019

08:00 - 09:00 *Registration*

**09:00 – 09:15** **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**09:15 – 10:45** **The 2030 Agenda and the role of business in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals**

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outline priority actions needed to ensure adequate resources and a healthy planet for the next generation, while also attending to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable of the current generation. Businesses should leverage their expertise and resources to help achieve the SDGs. This includes examining and reforming their operations to ensure - at a minimum - doing no harm to the environment and human rights. This session will discuss how governments can promote business engagement on the SDGs and how businesses can secure their license to operate through concrete commitments to human rights and environment.

10:45 – 11:00 *Coffee break*

**11:00 – 12:30** **Governments Taking Action: Deepening Policy Coherence**

Governments are using creative ways to ensure departments, agencies and other State-based institutions that shape business practices are aware of responsible business and human rights obligations. This session will discuss how vertical and horizontal policy coherence can be achieved, including through National Action Plans, multi-stakeholder approaches involving local government and CSOs, and integration of due diligence expectations in various policies governing business conduct.

12:30 - 14:00 *Lunch break*

**14:00 - 15:30** **Tools to address climate change and human rights impacts**

The transition to a low carbon economy is leading to the development of new policies and business tools, such as enhanced disclosure of climate-related risks, impact measurement, incentives for board members linked to GHG emission reductions, and targeted engagement with suppliers. This session will discuss how the experience gained in the development and implementation of these policies and tools can help address issues in other areas of corporate responsibility, such as human rights issues.

**Due diligence in global supply chains: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

The food and agriculture industries present some of the highest risks to human rights in Asia and have been the focus of reform efforts in several food exporting countries. What changes have taken root and what successes can now be celebrated? In this session, representatives from the food and agriculture industries, regulatory bodies, and civil society will exchange views on progress and ongoing challenges, with particular reference to promoting responsible business due diligence efforts.

**Due diligence in global supply chains: INFRASTRUCTURE**

Infrastructure is a critical input for development. It is both an explicit SDG as well as a factor in achieving other SDGs. However, infrastructure projects are complex, with long supply chains and many stakeholders. Obtaining and maintaining the social license to operate is often an underestimated and under-priced risk that threatens the success of projects, while costs for communities are often higher and more serious than contemplated at the start of project implementation. This session will discuss how integrating and carrying out due diligence in the infrastructure project life-cycle can lead to better project outcomes.

15:30 - 16:00 *Coffee break*

**16:00 - 17:30** **Decent Work in Global Supply Chains: Trends, Practical Tools and Experiences in the Region**

Global supply chains have become a common way of organising investment, production and trade in the global economy. In many countries, particularly developing countries, they have created employment and opportunities for economic and social development. However, there are also examples where global supply chains lead to deficits in decent work with negative impacts on development and the society as a whole. This session will showcase how socially responsible labour practices help businesses to become more competitive, productive and to ease the access to new markets.

**Due diligence in global supply chains: ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING**

Asian firms hold a strong market position in consumer and non-consumer electronics products globally. This is and has been a key sector for development. However, environmental and social risks, such as for example migrant and labor rights or human rights risks, are present in the sector and along the supply chain. These impacts and risks can occur in companies' manufacturing operations, business relationships (i.e. suppliers) as well as companies' raw materials sourcing. This session will explore opportunities and challenges related to supply chain due diligence in this context.

**Due diligence in global supply chains: FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Financial service providers play an important role in promoting responsible business conduct amongst the companies they provide financing to. Responsible consideration is not only an ethical consideration but also relevant to managing risks, as often environmental and social risks will also represent commercial risks. This session will explore the latest developments in global financial markets and will discuss practical ways that the sector is contributing to strengthening respect for human rights and the SDGs.

**Thursday, 13 June 2019**

**08:30 – 10:00** **Promoting Responsible Business and Human Rights in Global Trade and Investment**

The focus of international trade and investment policy has been broadening in recent years beyond “more is better” to place greater emphasis on the quality of investment that countries receive and how this impacts domestic conditions. A critical dimension of this shift concerns expectations around better business practices. The objective of this session is to discuss the trends and practical ways that governments and business are reflecting responsible business conduct and human rights concerns in trade and investment strategies and policy action.

**10:00 – 11:15** **Learning from Practice: Accountability and Access to Remedy**

This session will explore the access to remedy landscape in Asia and the world and the role of non-judicial mechanisms, such as the National Contact Points (NCPs) and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), in providing access to effective remedy. The session will present real-life cases from non-judicial mechanisms and will discuss how to enhance the roles and functions of these mechanisms, including through collaboration.

11:15 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

**DEEP DIVE SESSIONS**

**11:30 – 12:30** **Human Rights Defenders and Responsible Business**

Growing international concern over the ill-treatment of environmental and human rights defenders (HRDs) is now recognized as a priority issue for States, and a reputational and operational risk to businesses. Recognizing the State duty to protect and remedy, some governments in Asia are

**Applying a Gender Lens to Global Supply Chains**

Persistent gender inequalities mean that men and women can be impacted in very different ways by company operations across global supply chains. Although participation in global supply chains can bring economic empowerment, it may also lead to greater risks of precarious work and harassment. This session will

**Measuring and Communicating Impact**

Enterprises need to account for how they identify and addresses actual or potential adverse impacts in their company and supply chains. Sustainability reporting and due diligence are key tools for monitoring and improving responsible business practices and ensuring accountability. Communicating information on due

reviewing laws and enforcement practices to protect HRDs. How are HRDs enabling responsible business practices? And what more must be done to protect them?

discuss experience in building a gender perspective into corporate RBC policies and practices, in line with the UN Working Group report to the Human Rights Council on “Gender Lens to the UN Guiding Principles on business and Human Rights”.

diligence processes, findings and plans is part of this. It enables the enterprise to build trust in its actions and decision-making, and demonstrate good faith. This session will discuss company experiences with measuring and communicating the impact of its actions to ensure responsible business conduct, including in its supply chains.

12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch break*

**14:00 - 15:30** **New Technologies and New Norms: A.I., privacy protection, cyber security and beyond**

New technologies are being examined for their potential role in realizing sustainable development. Their enhanced capacities at data collection, risk analysis, and policy and program evaluation, shows much promise in “ensuring that no one is left behind.” Yet, troubling events related to the misuse, misapplication and failure of new technologies are giving pause to the enthusiasm of many. Accounts are increasing of the human rights risks and impacts of new technologies in military applications and related to biodata privacy, surveillance, discrimination and sexual exploitation. This session will focus on the urgent need to build norms and take next steps around the use of technology as related to AI, IOT, robotics, digital communication, as well as policies related to cyber security.

**Migrant workers and responsible business conduct**

Foreign-born workers play an intrinsic role in many sectors and economies. However, they are often marginalised economically, socially and geographically and therefore are particularly vulnerable to exploitation (including low wages, precarious work, harassment, coercion and forced labour, and restrictions on the right to freedom of association). The conditions in which migrant workers are recruited and hired can heighten the above risks. This session will explore the main elements of a regulatory framework that protects migrant workers and the role of company due diligence in ensuring that risks are identified and rights protected.

15:30 - 15:45 *Coffee break*

**15:45 - 17:00** **The Future of Work**

The rapid changes in the world of work and the global degree of impact call for decisive action by governments, private sector, workers, think-tanks, academia and the civil society to ensure that the transformative changes create a brighter future and deliver economic security, equal opportunity and social justice. This session will promote a better understanding of the impact that technologies, demographics and climate change are posing in the world of work. It will discuss the recommendations of the pillars needed for building a human-centred agenda for a decent future of work proposed in the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work. Particular attention will be paid to the role of stakeholders to reshaping business incentives for longer-term investment approaches and establishing an enabling environment for increased job creation and decent work.

**17:00 - 17:30** **“Take-aways” session**

## About this event

The *Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum (#RBHR Forum)* is a multi-stakeholder event addressing an array of priority issues under the Responsible Business Conduct and Business and Human Rights agendas. The *#RBHR Forum* will take place during the *Bangkok Business and Human Rights Week*, 10-14 June. The *#RBHR Forum* is co-organized by the Royal Thai Government, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Labour Organization (ILO), and with the participation of the Working Group on Business and Human Rights. The *#RBHR Forum* includes the OECD Global Forum on Responsible Business Conduct.