

HRDD4DW

Human Rights Due Diligence in support of Decent Work

AT A GLANCE

Key areas of work

- Human rights due diligence (HRDD)
- Responsible business conduct/ Promotion of the MNE Declaration
- International labour standards and decent work in the context of HRDD

Donor European Commission

Duration January 2024 – December 2028 (5 years)

Target beneficiaries

- Enterprises
- Employers and business membership organisations
- Workers' organisations
- Governments and policy makers
- Due diligence practitioners

Geographical & sectoral focus Global, cross-sectoral

The ILO “**Human Rights Due Diligence in support of Decent Work**” (HRDD4DW) project, in partnership with the European Commission, aims to support governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and enterprises in conducting and engaging in HRDD processes in a way that effectively advances labour rights and fosters decent working conditions.

Enterprises are the driving force of our economies and contribute to social progress. At the same time, their activities can have adverse impacts on people, the environment and society. To achieve and maintain sustainability across economic, social and environmental dimensions, enterprises need a conducive policy environment. At the same time by actively pursuing sustainability, businesses regardless of their size, location, sector or ownership structure, are better positioned to achieve their own competitiveness and their contribution to sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Integrating principles of responsible business conduct (RBC) allows business to ensure that their activities do not have an adverse impact on people and the planet, but on the contrary contribute to more sustainable economies and societies and their own long-term sustainability.

A central element of RBC is Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD), a process through which enterprises identify, prevent, and mitigate their actual and potential adverse impacts on human rights and account for how they address such impacts.

This encompasses internationally recognized human rights at work including ILO fundamental principles and rights at work, the free choice of employment, the right to just and favourable conditions of work, the right to social security or the right to rest and leisure. Respecting these rights in business operations is key to HRDD, enabling businesses to enhance their contribution to decent work for all, as emphasized in Sustainable Development Goal 8.

HRDD is included in the three main international instruments that jointly form the international guidance on RBC, namely:

- the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)¹, which introduced the concept of HRDD,
- the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO MNE Declaration)², and
- the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct (OECD MNE Guidelines)³.

¹ The UNGPs focus on avoiding and addressing the negative consequences on human rights related to business Activities. They consist of three distinct but complementary pillars: 1) the State Duty to Protect Human Rights, 2) the Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights, and 3) Access to Remedy. The Guiding Principles reflect the different, but complementary responsibilities of States and companies when it comes to preventing and addressing business impact on human rights.

² The ILO MNE Declaration provides guidance to encourage positive contributions that companies can make to economic and social progress, and to minimize and resolve difficulties in their operations. Its principles are addressed to multinational and national enterprises, governments of home and host countries, and employers’ and workers’ organizations providing guidance in such areas as employment, training, conditions of work and life, industrial relations as well as general policies. The guidance is founded substantially on principles contained in international labour standards.

³ The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct are recommendations addressed by governments to multinational enterprises. They aim to encourage positive contributions enterprises can make to economic, environmental and social progress, and to minimise adverse impacts on matters covered by the Guidelines that may be associated with an enterprise’s operations, products and services. The Guidelines cover all key areas of business responsibility, including human rights, labour rights, environment, bribery and corruption, consumer interests, disclosure, science and technology, competition, and taxation.

In recent years, many public and private initiatives have focused on enhancing respect for human rights and working conditions in global supply chains. The landscape now includes a range of voluntary and mandatory due diligence initiatives included in different policy areas.

These initiatives are part of a conducive environment for RBC — one where governments, companies, and social partners understand and carry out their respective roles and responsibilities to foster responsible business practices. HRDD can be perceived as complex due to the variety of regulations, standards and initiatives as well as the increased number of

guidance materials and tools on the topic itself and in relation to specific human rights, sectors or groups of rights-holders.

However, the core objectives of HRDD remain consistent: enhance respect for human rights in business operations by ensuring enterprises better know the impact of their operations and take appropriate actions to mitigate and prevent adverse impact. These measures ultimately aim to support businesses in advancing decent work—whether their operations are global, national or local in scope.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The main objective of the HRDD4DW project is to **ensure that HRDD policies and processes effectively support the realisation of labour rights and decent work.**

A key focus of the project is to support ILO constituents and businesses in navigating the complex and evolving HRDD landscape by facilitating access to ILO data, resources and tools, and making these more practical and accessible for HRDD processes.

Throughout the project, ILO constituents and businesses will engage in targeted capacity-building activities and trainings, enhancing their knowledge and engagement on the labour dimensions of HRDD, and ensuring that they are better equipped to address related challenges and opportunities.

Social dialogue is central to the project's approach. Meaningful consultations with potentially affected groups and other relevant stakeholders, including workers' organizations, is an essential part of HRDD, helping to identify and assess challenges, address real concerns and promote constructive and effective solutions. The project also focuses on developing global resources, tools, and training materials that can be adapted for use in interventions at regional, national, and sectoral levels.

OUTPUTS

Improved Information Accessibility: Improved and user-friendly access to information from ILO sources to support effective HRDD policies and practices.

→ ILO will assess existing ILO data and systems useful for HRDD, and use these insights to design, pilot, and implement an online data platform to inform HRDD processes.

Strengthened Capacity: Increased capacity of ILO tripartite constituents (governments, employers and workers) and businesses to effectively address the labour dimension of HRDD, leading to more inclusive and robust due diligence processes.

→ Compilation, adaptation, and enhancement of relevant ILO tools and training resources on the labour dimension of HRDD. Activities will also include training courses for employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs) and workers' organizations, annual Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on HRDD in support of decent work, and developing sector-specific analytical products and capacity-building workshops.

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