International Labour Organization

Addressing Forced Labour and the Labour Dimension of Responsible Business Conduct

Through Human Rights Due Diligence in Agriculture and Mining

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Fair Recruitment Toolbox for Costa Rica's sugar industry

The Responsible Business Conduct in Latin America and the Caribbean Project (RBC-LAC) is implemented jointly by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with funding from the European Union's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA).

In Costa Rica, the ILO developed the Fair Recruitment Toolbox for the sugar industry that included guidelines for preventing and addressing forced labour risks hence ensuring alignment with the local context related to labour recruitment practices and existing regulatory frameworks. The toolbox was developed as part of a wider technical assistance and capacity development process in Human Rights with the sugar industry by the ILO's Responsible Business Conduct in Latin America and the Caribbean (RBC-LAC) project.

LAICA (the Agricultural and Industrial Sugarcane League) engaged its members in a training program consisting of several sessions on human rights due diligence (HRDD), delivered jointly by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the ILO as part of the RBCLAC project in Costa Rica. The program combined technical training with practical implementation of tools, including the Fair Recruitment Toolbox for the Sugar Industry. The training and Toolbox translate broader Due Diligence frameworks into concrete, sector, and subject specific guidance for LAICA and its members.

As a result, participating sugar mills developed:

- Complete matrices for identifying, assessing and prioritising human rights impacts through a common technical exercise using the project's tools
- A sector-wide political commitment on business and human rights is scheduled for review and publication in 2026.
- The design of specific prevention, mitigation and follow-up actions to address prioritised risks according to their nature and severity.
- Internal capacity for using the matrix, allocating internal responsibilities, and gradually integrating Human Rights Due Diligence elements into management systems.

Responsible Business Conduct in Mexico's mining sector

In **Mexico**, the Cámara Minera de México (CAMIMEX or Mexico's Mining Chamber of Commerce) is the employers' organization representing the formal mining industry, which accounts for over 90 per cent of the national mining and metallurgical production and is a key pillar of the country's industrial economy. The OECD, OHCHR and ILO, in collaboration with CAMIMEX, developed a national sectoral roadmap through the RBCLAC to improve environmental and labour standards in the mining sector. Eighty members participated in a technical assistance programme combining in-person and virtual workshops focused on responsible business conduct and human rights due diligence, including the labour dimension. Based on relevant instruments such as the ILO MNE Declaration, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the training programme comprised theoretical and practical sessions and sector discussions aimed at aligning mining practices with global RBC expectations. The project also supported the development of a human rights policy framework, which will guide the application of a sectoral impact identification matrix in 2026.

This process was complemented by ILO technical assistance in developing a forced labour self-assessment tool. This tool is grounded in the ILO's 11 indicators of forced labour and is tailored to the realities of mining operations and labour conditions of their supply chains. The self-assessment tool is designed to help companies systematically identify and assess risks related to forced labour, such as restrictions on freedom of movement, retention of identity documents, debt bondage, excessive overtime, intimidation, and abuse of vulnerability, both in direct operations and through labour intermediaries. The tool informs the Human Rights Due Diligence process, enabling mining companies to detect early warning signs, prioritise preventive actions and strengthen internal controls to reinforce respect for international labour standards. The self-assessment will be introduced in 2026 as part of the project's ongoing support for the sector.

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