



▶ Operationalizing RBC for Decent Work

Sharing of experience from automotive sector enterprises in India

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Key points

- ▶ This brief brings together three examples from India's automotive sector to illustrate how enterprises can turn Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) and human rights due diligence (HRDD) commitments into meaningful practice. The cases range from (i) a multinational enterprise HQ-led governance model adapted to local contexts, (ii) community-based worker support initiatives, to (iii) factory-level approaches that provide equal safety and labour protections for all categories of workers.
- ▶ Some practical lessons emerge. Multinational enterprises can benefit from combining corporate policies in home countries to be adapted and applied in host countries, supported by leadership engagement. Enterprises can also extend RBC beyond direct employees, by leveraging partnerships with stakeholders at community level. Finally, by ensuring equal safety and labour protections for all workers, enterprises can foster greater respect for workers' rights. Together, these examples demonstrate complementary pathways to strengthen labour outcomes.

Governance-Anchored HRDD with Localised Implementation

Yazaki India operationalises HRDD through a structured governance framework set by its global headquarters (HQ), which has formulated the Human Rights Policy, Supplier Sustainability Guidelines, and implementation tools. In India, these global commitments are adapted to better fit local needs and context through human rights risk assessments, supplier audits, and collaboration with external experts. Regular HQ engagements and site visits (including by Sustainability Director), alongside the country-level adaptations of policies and procedures, reinforce alignment, grow internal buy-in, secure budget for high-risk areas, and make the company's HRDD more robust by coupling leadership oversight with context-specific actions.

- **Assessment tools:** Yazaki India combines self-assessments, on-site audits, and expert-supported ESG evaluations to identify labour and human rights risks across supplier operations. The company is actively upgrading these tools by engaging external experts and incorporating their inputs (e.g., stronger confidentiality protocols for worker interviews to avoid retaliation).
- **Scope expansion:** Due diligence now covers not only suppliers in the automotive sector, but also service providers (e.g., canteen, transport, logistics) where vulnerabilities often concentrate.

A webinar organized for 80+ suppliers, including service providers, clarified expectations on RBC and human rights standards and signposted next step actions.

- **Internal capability:** Responsibilities are embedded across different functions (e.g., procurement, HR, and legal) of local staff in host countries, supported by training and periodic HQ engagement. This cross-functional set-up integrates risk identification, supplier follow-up, and dialogue into routine business operations, rather than ad-hoc projects.

Key takeaway: By adapting HQ-led policies and guidelines to local context, strengthening assessment tools with external expertise, and embedding responsibilities across functions, Yazaki India shows how combining strong central governance with country-level implementation can reinforce HRDD, extend coverage of due diligence, and support non-discrimination, safe working conditions, and workers' voice.

Extending RBC to Informal and Migrant Workers

Recognizing that many vulnerabilities lie outside direct employment, Tata AutoComp plays a pivotal role in the "Social Compact" - a partnership with civil society organizations (including Dasra, Aajeevika Bureau, and Centre for Social Justice) - that addresses everyday barriers existing for informal and migrant workers. This includes lack of awareness on the linkage with social

protection schemes and documentation needed for registration, as well as limited access to grievance channels and skills trainings.

As part of the Social Compact partnership, Tata AutoComp co-established a Worker Facilitation Centre that serves as a permanent, community-facing hub in the Chakan industrial belt on the outskirts of Pune, one of the largest automotive industrial cities in India. In FY25 alone, the centre assisted over 4,500 workers (out of 11,300 workers supported since 2021). Through the centre, legal-aid provided to the workers has enabled the recovery of INR31.5 lakh (approx. US\$38,000) in unpaid wages and retirement savings and a settlement of INR24.95 lakh (approx. US\$30,000) for 83 workers under the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), India's retirement-savings scheme. The key functions of the Worker Facilitation Centre are:

- **Walk-in gateway:** Open six days a week as first-stop support for creation of government ID documents (such as Aadhaar, PAN, and ration cards), enabling access to banking and welfare programmes.
- **Last-mile outreach:** Mobile vans travel 50 km daily to reach workers who cannot visit due to shifts or distance. *Shramik Sarthis* (worker ambassadors) share information, identify cases early, and accompany workers to services.
- **Rights and redress:** Helpline and paralegal/lawyer network for wage disputes, EPF claims, and safety concerns.
- **Skills pathways:** On-the-job training (e.g., masonry, motor winding, accounts tallying, two-wheeler mechanics) with certificates and toolkits.
- **Women's inclusion:** Focused sessions on rights, safety, and financial literacy; 25 per cent of beneficiaries are women.

Key takeaway: This example shows how enterprises can support decent work for informal and migrant workers in the supply chains through partnering with stakeholders at community level, enabling the cluster level support for accessing government schemes on social protection and skilling, while providing grievance redress and legal aid.

Equal Safety and Labour Protections for All Workers

Rane Group sees occupational safety and health (OSH) as one of core management responsibilities. The company ensures that not only regular workers but also contract workers, including migrant workers, receive same set of trainings and equal access to protections to ensure safe and healthy working environment for all. These are promoted through measures such as:

- a formal ISO 45001 system; mechanism for near-miss reporting
- monthly safety campaigns, allowing awareness-raising on various risks in workplace
- frontline engagement through "safety ambassadors" who promote peer-to-peer engagement across shifts
- onboarding and safety training in worker's preferred language to ensure comprehension across a multilingual workforce

These mechanisms aim to identify risks early, promote worker participation, and sustain a preventive safety culture. Rane Group also ensures statutory social security coverage for all eligible workers, including Employees' Provident Fund retirement savings, gratuity, and Employees' State Insurance (public health insurance).

Furthermore, workers can raise concerns through grievance mechanism in their preferred language. Anti-retaliation protections are included in the company's code of conduct, and no complaints were pending at the close of FY25, indicating timely resolution. Rane Group also offers pathways toward regularization for long-serving contract workers in core roles, supporting predictability and equal treatment.

Key takeaway: This example shows practical ideas in embedding OSH, non-discrimination and grievance mechanism in routine plant governance to raise safety performance and worker confidence across employment types. This levels the playing field on core protections and reduce risks for the most vulnerable tiers.

For guidance on aligning business practices with international labour standards, please check the ILO Helpdesk for Business (www.ilo.org/business) that provides free, direct and confidential assistance. This document was developed with funding from the Government of Japan through the Building Responsible Value Chains in Asia through the Promotion of Decent Work in Business Operations (Phase II) project.

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