



Responsible Supply Chains in Asia – Japan

Global supply chains have rapidly expanded in recent decades. They are an integral feature of international production, trade and investment, and contribute to economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction. Japan and its multinational enterprises play a crucial role in many global supply chains including those within Asia.

The Responsible Supply Chains in Asia Programme aims to address decent work and environmental challenges through promoting responsible business practices in the operations of enterprises, including multinational enterprises, and their supply chains.

Japanese enterprises play an increasingly important role in fostering regional efforts to incorporate human rights, and social and environmental considerations and practices into their operations in Japan and overseas. The programme aims to support Japanese engagement in this regard; working with industry, government, workers organisations, universities and think tanks.

Responsible Business Practices in Japan

Domestically, Japan has built many environmentally sustainable businesses in which labour and human rights are respected. Japanese enterprises are working to further align their practices and policies with international expectations and standards. With its central role in a number of global supply chains, Japan is well placed to positively influence the implementation of responsible business practices in the region.

About the Programme

A partnership between the European Union (EU), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with 9 million EUR funding by the European Union, the programme works with partners in Asia to promote respect for human rights, including labour rights, and responsible business standards in global supply chains.

The three year programme (2018-2020) in Japan has two broad objectives:

- promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by ensuring that investors and businesses have a better understanding of internationally accepted responsible business practices.
- support an enabling policy environment conducive to promoting responsible business conduct and increase opportunities for dialogue.

The Programme in action

The programme in Japan is making an impact in a number of areas, including through:

- **Engaging with industry bodies**, including Keidanren and the Japan Electronics and Information Technology Industries Association (JEITA), to survey awareness and implementation of responsible business practices in the business supply chains.
- **Presenting the programme's aims and tools** to key Japanese Union bodies and cooperatives, including workshops with the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO), and the Japanese Consumers' Cooperative Union (JCCU) as well as industry groups and research institutions.
- **Partnering with leading institutions** for joint collaboration in Japan as well as in countries with Japanese MNEs, including with IDE –JETRO for research and outreach as well as the translation of key materials and guidance on responsible business practices into Japanese.
- **Working with Universities** in order to influence the professional development of future leaders on responsible business practices.
- **Holding dialogues** with groups such as the Global Compact Network Japan and the CSO Network Japan to include the perspective of business and civil society in policy formulation and training curricula.

Who benefits?

The programme aims to directly improve the welfare of people working in supply chains operated by multinational enterprises through the sharing of best practices on labour and environmental standards.

Companies benefit from improved risk management and more stable sourcing environments. The programme promotes sustainable development at the enterprise, national and global levels, thereby contributing to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Target sectors

In Japan, the programme focuses on the **electronics and vehicle parts** sectors, both of which are important drivers of the Japanese economy and are characterised by extensive supply chains across Asia. Emphasis will be given to the identification and sharing of best practices of European and Japanese firms to lay the groundwork for knowledge sharing and active engagement with other countries under this programme. The programme will also work to integrate supply chain approaches through sharing experiences between Japanese and European businesses.



A unique collaboration

The programme represents the first time that the ILO, OECD and the EU have joined forces to promote responsible supply chains on a large scale. Each organisation contributes their expertise and tools to the programme.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

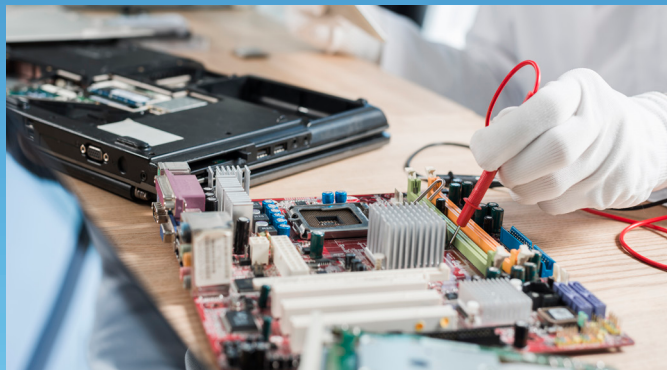
The UN's first specialised agency, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work and social justice for all women and men.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD is an intergovernmental organisation with a mission to promote better policies for better lives of people around the world. Its member countries span the globe and include many of the world's advanced and emerging economies. The goal of the OECD is to build a stronger, cleaner and fairer world.

European Union (EU)

This initiative is a part of the EU's long-standing commitment to promote human rights, decent work and sustainable development, a pledge underpinned by EU Treaties and reinforced in the European Commission's trade policy strategy of 2015 "Trade for All", under the Commission's commitment to identify opportunities for responsible supply chain partnerships.



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