



# How To...

## do Business and Human Rights at Post

Human Rights and Democracy Department

### WHAT

- The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) state that governments have a duty to protect against human rights abuses committed by business. All businesses have a responsibility to respect human rights. Both have duties to provide remedies.
- Companies can impact positively or negatively on all internationally recognised human rights. Certain sectors carry greater risks, e.g. oil, gas and mining, retail and manufacturing, ICT, cyber security and construction.

### WHY

- The UK is committed to the UNGPs. In 2013 we were the first to publish a National Action Plan (NAP) that sets out what we will do to put them into practice. Business and human rights (BHR) is one of our six human rights priorities.
- Ensuring respect for human rights is good for business.
- We want to maintain our position as a global leader on business and human rights.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Work in partnership with **UKTI** and London (Desk/ HRDD) colleagues to deliver objectives. Ensure BHR considered in Ministerial/ trade visits. Collaborate with OGDs offices (e.g. DIFID) and other missions/ embassies. Some ideas for action are set out below.

### YOUR HOST GOVERNMENT

- Encourage implementation of UNGPs via creation of robust NAPs. Offer to share UK expertise.
- Look for opportunities to influence, e.g. on initiatives strengthening rule of law and governance
- Consider collaboration with businesses/ industry associations to help you push your human rights objectives with government.
- Posts in fragile and conflict affected states, or weak governance, and/ or UK business investment in high risk sectors should be more proactive, e.g. integrate BHR objectives into CBPs/ human rights strategies.

### UK COMPANIES

- Engage with UK companies operating in your country. What are they doing to implement the UNGPs? Facilitate cross-business dialogue and good practice.
- Respond to queries from UK companies, e.g. on key human rights risks in country. Signpost to guidance and resources, e.g. [Overseas Business Risk Service](#)
- Consider how to respond to credible reports of UK companies undermining human rights in practice - seek guidance from HRDD.
- Support UK companies on difficult issues e.g. where they are bound by restrictive national laws but seeking to honour the spirit of international human rights; if facing protests/ campaigning/ litigation around their operations.

### CIVIL SOCIETY

- Engage and be receptive to CSOs/ HRDs working on corporate accountability issues, e.g. environmental NGOs, indigenous peoples groups, trade unions, land rights activists etc. See 'How to Note on HRDs.'
- Consider raising specific cases with your host government where there is potential to influence. Signpost potential victims to organisations that can help. Raise awareness of the UK National Contact point under [OECD Guidelines](#).
- Consider opportunities for project work - bilateral funds/ [HRDP fund](#). Speak to HRDD and see 'How to Note on Projects.'

### FURTHER INFORMATION

- HMG: [UK National Action Plan on BHR \(2013\)](#); [Business and Human Rights Toolkit \(2011\)](#); **Better Business Digtel No 1309447**
- Contact the BHR Team in HRDD, Desk Officer: [ruth.willis@fco.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.willis@fco.gov.uk)
- External: [Business and Human Rights Resource Centre](#)