



A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR COMPANIES TO BETTER MANAGE THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS RISKS

The New “Integration Process” Will Help Companies Integrate Human Rights Into Environmental and Social Impact Assessments

November 5, 2008— *A year after launching the Guide to Human Rights Impact Assessment and Management (HRIA), the International Business Leaders Forum, IFC and the UN Global Compact are now launching the “integration process”, as an alternative path to the formal road-testing process of the HRIA. This integration process has been developed specifically for companies that want to integrate human rights issues into their existing environmental and social impact assessments.*

In June 2007, the International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) and IFC – a member of the World Bank Group – in collaboration with the UN Global Compact released the [first draft of the HRIA](#). It is currently being road-tested with several companies from various sectors. The final version of the Guide to Human Rights Impact Assessment and Management (HRIA), which will include the lessons learned and best practices from the road-testing experiences, will be published in early 2010. This risk management, engagement and decision-making tool presents a comprehensive eight-step process, designed as a systematic methodology for identifying, evaluating and managing the human rights impacts and consequences of any business operation or project.

The need for the integration process became evident following discussions with a number of companies, who already carry out environmental and social impact assessments in their business operations. By comparing the company’s environmental and social impact assessment against the HRIA methodology, it is anticipated that unforeseen human rights risks may emerge that could be considered in the development of the company’s impact assessment. The integration of specific recommendations of the HRIA into their environmental and social impact assessments will ensure these companies that they have fully captured the human rights perspective of their projects’ impact.

“The launch of this integration process responds to specific needs expressed by businesses in their efforts to assess and address human rights risks and integrate them into their existing management systems” said Rachel Kyte, IFC Vice-President for Business Advisory Services.

Graham Baxter, Director of Responsible Business Solutions at IBLF said “As the final version of the Guide is intended to apply to all companies, irrespective of their level of experience in social and human rights policy and practice, it is important to understand how existing human rights and social due diligence systems will work alongside the Guide’s eight-step process.”

Georg Kell, Executive Director of the UN Global Compact said, "Impact assessments are a key way in which companies can operationalize their commitment to implement the UN Global Compact. We are excited about the next phase of this project, which will explore how to get human rights into every day business practices. It is our hope that this project will produce concrete insights on how to make human rights an integral part of commercial activities".

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Business and Human Rights, Professor John Ruggie's last report, *Protect, Respect and Remedy: A Framework for Business and Human Rights*, states that companies have a responsibility to respect human rights and underscores the need for companies to pursue due diligence processes. Undertaking a human rights impact assessment is an important way for a company to ensure effective due diligence in relation to human rights.

Want to test the integration process?

IFC and IBLF are always interested in hearing from companies that would like to road-test the Guide. If you are interested in learning more about the road-testing process and/or becoming a road-testing company of either the formal road-test or the integration process, please contact Yann Wyss, Projects Officer at IFC on YWyss@ifc.org, +1 202 458 21 38 or Désirée Abrahams, Human Rights Impact Assessment Project Manager at IBLF on Desiree.Abrahams@iblf.org, +44 207 467 36 08.

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