

# Human Rights Dilemmas for Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) in Emerging Markets

Duration: December 2008 to December 2010

Partners: United Nations Global Compact and Maplecroft (implementing partner)

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A collaborative project to advance how business addresses human rights dilemmas

This project aims to enhance understanding of human rights dilemmas for responsible business as well as contribute to thought leadership and best practice. While human rights issues can arise in any country, this project focuses especially on human rights dilemmas for companies operating in emerging markets, in weak governance zones including zones of conflicts, or in countries with substantial human rights challenges. Key deliverables include an online “solutions forum” as well as a report on MNCs and their management of human rights dilemmas in emerging markets.

A multi-stakeholder forum to “discuss” dilemmas and case studies and provide solutions

The project investigates a set of extensively researched human rights dilemmas from across the four areas of: human security, civil and political rights, labour rights and protection, and other economic and social rights. Each dilemma explores the different actions of business through practical case studies and presents the considered viewpoints of different stakeholder groups as part of an online solutions forum. The sharing of these different perspectives is expected to enhance collective awareness of the challenges of meeting human rights responsibilities, as well as identify a set of practical solutions to each of the dilemmas.

The following key activities will be progressively implemented between December 2008 and December 2010:

- An invitation to stakeholders to help identify key human rights dilemmas and the initial development of relevant case studies for each dilemma. This will build on previous United Nations, Maplecroft and other leading-edge research and publications to ensure alignment with existing and emerging approaches to human rights management for business.
- The development of a rights-focused approach to each dilemma, that explains and aligns each right and dilemma with the protect, respect, remedy framework established by John Ruggie in his April 2008 report to the United Nations Human Rights Council. Each dilemma will systematically explore:
  - The state’s duty to protect the right in question
  - The role of business in respecting each right
  - Access to formal and informal mechanisms for remedy
- The focus on company case studies within each dilemma will be used to articulate and understand how each right can be respected and supported in a dynamic “real-world” context. This will draw on Maplecroft’s Human Rights Risk Report 2009, indices and GIS-derived world maps to further understand the risks of infringement for each of the approximately 30-plus rights and dilemmas in different geographies – within countries, and at a sector level.
- The establishment and convening of a moderated discussion and solutions forum of human rights dilemmas and solutions amongst different stakeholder groups. The solutions forum will actively engage and invite feedback and solutions from different stakeholders worldwide – including MNCs, international organizations as well as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and academics. Access to the “solutions forum” and dilemmas will be available online through [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org).
- The collation and publication of a landmark report including multi-stakeholder reviewed dilemmas, case studies and best practice solutions, augmented with viewpoints and quotes from a selection of stakeholder groups and organizations.

Launched on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The project was launched with a press release, project introduction and invitation to participate on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10th December 2008. Dilemmas, associated case studies and potential solutions will be progressively added until the end of December 2009. Interim results of all work will be presented at UN Global Compact and other public events throughout the 2008, 2009 and 2010 calendar years. The final report, due by December 2010, will be available to all in the public domain, including international organizations, NGOs, academics, and the general population, through the GE Foundation, the UN Global Compact and Maplecroft.

[Click here](#) to participate by proposing a human rights dilemma for business or view the project [press release](#).

Further information

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