



## Concept Note

Webinar on Human Rights due Diligence and COVID-19

Introduction of the Rapid Self-Assessment for Business

28 October 2020

### Background

While Government has the duty to protect individuals against human rights abuses, business also has an important role to play in respecting and supporting human rights. The UN “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework taken as basis for developing the United Nations [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) (UNGPs), which was unanimously endorsed by the Human Rights Council in June 2011. In addition, responsibility of business to protect human rights and promote labour standards enshrined in the [ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy](#) (MNE Declaration) adopted in 1977 and revised in 2017. Since their endorsement, the Guiding Principles and the ILO MNE Declaration have driven a convergence in standards on business, human rights and labour standards across the international arena, reinforcing their position as the widely recognized global standards on business and human rights. As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the UN Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of [human rights](#), labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals.

Since December 2019, an outbreak of the disease COVID-19 has spread across the globe and in March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak had reached the level of a global pandemic. Across the globe, governments, NHRIs, businesses, industry associations, trade unions, CSOs, and academia are exploring how they should respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Companies of all sizes and operating contexts are now faced with a range of unprecedented and long-lasting challenges in the world and the Region. The UNGPs already offer guidance for government and business responses during COVID-19. As stated by the [UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights](#) the three pillars of the Guiding Principles – “Protect, Respect and Remedy” – provide a globally agreed baseline for conduct both during the ongoing crisis and for a post-COVID-19 world. Furthermore, International Labour Standards (ILS) provides a useful decent work compass in the context of the crisis response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Firstly, respecting key provisions of ILS relating to occupational safety and health, working arrangements, protection of specific categories of workers, nondiscrimination, social security or employment protection ensures that workers, employers and government can maintain decent work while adjusting to the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, a wide range of ILO labour standards on employment, social protection, wage protection, SMEs promotion or workplace cooperation contain specific guidance on policy measures that would encourage a human-centred approach to the crisis and to its recovery.

In response to these circumstances, UNDP has designed a simple and accessible tool, the [Human Rights Due Diligence and COVID-19: Rapid Self-Assessment for Business \(COVID-19 Rapid Self-Assessment\)](#) to help businesses consider and manage the human rights impacts of their operations. This non-exhaustive



list of potential actions allows for rapid but continuous reflection on the human rights risks and impacts common to many industries. The Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment is offered to companies as a partial but informative view of human rights actions in the specific context of Covid-19. The listed actions are based on relevant provisions of [UN Human Rights Treaties](#), [the ILO Fundamental Conventions](#), and the UNGPs. It is organized to present key actions or considerations along three stages of the COVID-19 crisis period: Prepare, Respond and Recover.

As part of the [ILO/UNDP Framework for Action](#), [UNDP Turkey Country Office](#) and [ILO Turkey Country Office](#) assessed human rights impact of the COVID-19 in business context and in cooperation with [Global Compact Network Turkey](#) and [Business for Goals \(B4G\)](#), the Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment has been studied and adjusted to Turkish context. The Turkish version has been tested with limited number of the business and based on the feedback of the business, it has been updated and finalized. The Covid-19 Self-Assessment tool will be shared with the business with the aim of helping businesses consider and manage the human rights impacts of their operations during COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Objectives:**

UNDP, ILO, Global Compact Network Turkey and B4G together organize this webinar to raise awareness on UNGP and launch Covid-19 the Self-Assessment to the Business in Turkey. Business for Goals Platform is eager to continue its advocacy efforts to promote human rights and related practices as well as to increase awareness in the private sector to create a more respectful work environment.

In this regard, the webinar has three objectives:

- Increase awareness on UNGPs and provide guidance for the businesses on how to implement UN Global Compact's Principles on Human Rights and Labor in times of COVID-19.
- Explore how businesses can build stronger, more sustainable, and more resilient response to COVID-19 with a focus on responsible business practices,
- Provide guidance on how to turn Global Compact principles on human rights and working rights into action in times of COVID 19.

### **Programme**

The webinar will be held virtually via zoom platform on Wednesday, 28 October 2020 between 11.00-13.00. Turkish English simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

#### **11.00- 11.10 Opening Speeches**

- Mr. Claudio Tomasi, UNDP Turkey Resident Representative
- Mr. Numan Ozcan, Director of ILO Office for Turkey

#### **11.10-12.00 Leaders Panel: Private Sector and Human Rights amid Covid-19**

**Moderator: Melda Çele, Executive Director, Global Compact Network Turkey**

#### **Speakers:**

- Mr. Ozan Diren, Executive Board Member at the Business for Goals Platform and CEO of Dimes
- Ms. Aysun Sayin, Global Compact Turkey Working Group on Diversity and Inclusion (WPP, Chief People, Culture and Sustainability Officer)
- Ms. Ebru Şenel Erim, Global Compact Turkey Working Group on Diversity and Inclusion (Unilever Turkey, Sustainable Business & Communications Director& Board Member)



## Questions & Answers

### **12.00-12.45 Why and How? : Human Rights Rapid-Self Assessment amid Covid-19 Outbreak**

Moderator: Tuba Burcu Şenel (ILO), Zeliha Aydın (UNDP)

Speakers (15 mins for each presentation including 15 mins Q&A)

- Mr. Sean Lees, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, Business and Human Rights Specialist
- Ms. Emily Sims, ILO Headquarters, Senior Specialist and Manager ILO Helpdesk for Business

## Questions & Answers

### **12.45-13.00 Closing Remarks**

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## Annexes

### **Role of UNDP in promoting Business and Human Rights**

UNDP's ongoing work in support of the UNGPs is part of a broader Human Rights workstream and anchored in the framework of the *Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights for Sustaining Peace and Fostering Development* (implemented by the Rule of Law, Human Rights and Security team. Programming in this field is aligned with UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and with corporate's efforts to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNDP's business and human rights work is cross-cutting, providing inputs and aligning programming with other corporate priorities, in particular:

- It pursues access to justice for vulnerable groups, and the promotion and protection of human rights beyond the UNGPs.
- It looks at human rights abuses by corporations that can spark or exacerbate conflicts, while building on their potential to build and sustain peace.
- It helps to address human rights abuses by companies by strengthening key actors in national human rights systems such as NHRIs, which UNDP has supported through its strategic partnership with the Global Alliance for NHRIs and OHCHR.
- It works with companies to include environmental and climate change impact considerations when carrying out their HRDD
- It considers women's human rights a priority area, contributing to UNDP's work on countering gender discrimination and empowering women.

### **Role of ILO in promoting Business and Human Rights**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded in 1919, in the wake of a destructive war, to pursue a vision based on the premise that universal, lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice. The ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946 and remains the only tripartite UN agency, bringing together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States. The main aims of the ILO are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues. The ILO's main activities are to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. Find out more at [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org) and [www.ilo.org/ankara/lang--tr/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ankara/lang--tr/index.htm)



From an ILO perspective, the social responsibilities of business and their contribution to the decent work agenda is, and has always been, a central part of ILO efforts to promote economic and social progress. The [ILO Fundamental Conventions](#) are the baseline of labour related human rights principles in all CSR initiatives, including the UN Business and Human Rights Framework and Guiding Principles. Find out more on ILO works on business and human rights please visit [here](#).

### **Role of Global Compact Turkey in Promoting Business and Human Rights**

**Global Compact Turkey** localizes the work of the **UN Global Compact** by providing the necessary tools and resources to businesses to advance the SDGs. The Network guides its members to align their operations and strategies with ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The network serves as a meeting point for sharing good practices and a collaboration platform both locally and globally.

Global Compact Turkey Working Group on Diversity and Inclusion was founded in 2019 as an out of the CEO Roundtable Series of Human Rights (2018-2019). By taking Human Rights, UN Business and Human Rights Framework and Guiding Principles and SDG 10 as the baseline, The Working Group aims to support businesses to create diverse and inclusive workplaces for all identities and groups in all phases of operations and value chains. In addition to awareness raising activities on human rights in business, the Working Group currently composes a “Diversity and Inclusion Guide for the Business”

### **Role of Business for Goals Platform (B4G) in Promoting Business and Human Rights**

[Business for Goals Platform](#), established in 2019 by TÜRKONFED, TÜSİAD and UNDP in Turkey as a think-do-tank to strengthen the linkage between the SDG agenda and the private sector as well as to advocate the private sector’s active role in achieving the goals.

Business for Goals Platform works under three thematic pillars; Inclusive Growth, Strengthening SMEs to be Future Fit, and Climate Change and Disaster Resilience. Under the pillar of Inclusive Growth, the platform cooperates with the private sector actors to increase the inclusiveness of vulnerable groups, and to implement inclusive business models which will strengthen the economic participation of people from all walks of life. In line with this approach and as part of its working area “Climate Change and Disaster Resilience”, the platform has been organizing webinars, surveys, and launched tools and reports during the Covid-19 Crisis to decrease the effect of the crisis on disadvantaged groups in the business world.