

Ongoing Human Rights Due Diligence Questions for Commodity Trading Companies

As companies continue their efforts to understand and apply the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights throughout their operations, they should be continually asking questions such as:

1. What are the potential adverse impacts of our operations, for example, in terms of the well-being of our employees, local communities or other stakeholder groups that may be affected?
2. How much do we know about our value chain, where the commodities we are trading are produced and under what conditions in terms of labour standards or community impacts?
3. What steps should we take to learn more about human rights issues in consultation with all relevant stakeholders and the obstacles we face when doing so?
4. Who are our main business relationships and how much do we raise questions relating to their own social and human rights related impacts when we enter into or renew contracts or review performance?
5. Do we have the right systems, responsibilities and personnel in place to prevent or mitigate negative human rights impacts?
6. Do we use our leverage to prevent or mitigate negative human rights impacts by our business partners?
7. What do we do to increase our leverage?
8. How can we work more proactively together with other firms in our industry and through our respective industry associations to take collective action where appropriate, strengthen industry standards and codes of conduct, deliver awareness raising for our peers and engage more effectively with our stakeholders on human rights challenges?