

# Company Operations in Complex Environments: Developing Tools to Implement the Responsibility to Respect Human Rights

Over the past ten years, there have been significant developments on the intersection of business, security and human rights. The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights highlights these developments and the need for heightened Human Rights Due Diligence in complex environments in its most recent report on [business operations in conflict and post-conflict contexts](#) (September 2020). Most importantly, the UN emphasises the need for practical tools that enable companies to put the report's core recommendations into practice.

The Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are partnering with the Geneva Center for Business and Human Rights (GCBHR) to develop practical guidance for companies.

## Background to the Project

In 2012, DCAF and the ICRC developed a *Toolkit on Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments* (the Toolkit) and a Knowledge Hub ([www.securityhumanrightshub.org](http://www.securityhumanrightshub.org)) to address the needs for practical guidance and support expressed by companies, governments and civil society organisations. The Toolkit and Knowledge Hub have had a major impact on the policies and practices of international companies and other stakeholders by contributing to the implementation of multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. The Toolkit was translated into French, Spanish and Chinese to support companies across different regions.



The Toolkit offers practical guidance to improve security practices on the ground, in line with international standards and human rights. It is used by companies such as mining, oil and gas industries as well as other actors facing security and human rights challenges in complex environments.



The Knowledge Hub is an interactive online platform that brings together practical guidance for governments, civil society and companies on business, security and human rights.



The primary audience for the Toolkit and Knowledge Hub is company staff working as security managers, government relations representatives, business and human rights officers, corporate social responsibility staff, community relations officers, and legal departments.

## Ensuring Guidance is Fit for Purpose: Adapting the DCAF-ICRC Toolkit to Support Companies in Changing and Challenging Contexts

In the context of human rights and security, new operational challenges have emerged; company approaches have evolved; capacities and priorities of civil society have shifted; new risks and impacts to communities have been highlighted. The project partners will consult with a large range of stakeholders - companies, civil society and other experts - to reflect on the developments in the area of security and human rights. We will also collect feedback from current users and non-users of the Toolkit to better understand its current strengths and gaps. Based on this input, the toolkit will be revised and updated with new good practices, tools and resources.

**DCAF, ICRC and the GCBHR will be reaching out to companies for feedback and inputs on how companies have used the Toolkit and for other reflections on how the Toolkit could be improved to better support addressing security and human rights challenges in complex environments.**