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Response to the COVID-19 crisis: protecting human rights

The COVID-19 shows the need for sustainable, inclusive development and provides the opportunity to 'build back better': making society and the economy more resilient by protecting fundamental human rights, aligning short-term economic interests with long-term needs, and ensuring continued momentum on the SDGs.

The companies are expected to put adequate measures in place to make sure that they manage human rights risks connected to the pandemic. This should include at a minimum:

- A commitment from the company to respect human rights in this crisis and a clear allocation of responsibility inside the company to ensure this is achieved in practice
- Human Rights Due Diligence: companies should ensure that they identify, assess, manage and track the human rights risks that may be emphasised or appear due to COVID-19 in their own operations and supply chains.
- Due to the nature of the crisis, health and safety and the protection of workers' livelihood should be at the heart of companies' response
- Adopting responsible purchasing practices to protect suppliers
- The provision of effective remedy, including the availability of grievance mechanisms through which complaints related to COVID-19 issues can be made without the fear of retaliation.