

Human Rights Matrix

Mapping Responsibilities in Business

Translating general human rights standards into concrete, company-specific responsibilities – as a basis for gap analysis, prioritization, and strategy development.



What is the Human Rights Matrix?

Systematic integration of human rights responsibilities within companies

Why a Human Rights Matrix?

- The matrix translates abstract human rights standards systematically into company-specific responsibilities
- The matrix provides the basic human rights vocabulary in an easily accessible form
- The matrix forms the basis of a human rights strategy, of processes and tools
- The matrix illustrates both the human rights risks and the human rights potential of companies
- The matrix helps build internal know-how.

Mapping

Overview of all human rights responsibilities in relation to concrete business activities

Gap Analysis

- Structured comparison of target and actual status
- Gap-Analysis
- Identification of potentials

Prioritization

Prioritization of the resulting action areas into three levels:

- essential
- expected
- desirable

Communication

Basis for the stakeholder process internally and externally

The matrix makes concrete what human rights mean for a specific company – making the abstract normative system manageable in everyday business.

Structure of the Matrix

Human Rights (horizontal) × Priorities (vertical) = concrete obligations

Responsibilities by 3 Priority Levels (vertical axis)

1 „shall...”	Essential Duties arising from legal standards or strong moral-ethical responsibility. Relates to the core sphere of influence – not interfering, not becoming complicit, protecting.
2 „should...”	Expected Positive measures in the wider sphere of influence – extended supply chain, business partners, immediate environment. Expected of a company committed to human rights.
3 „could...”	Desired Contributions to the realization of human rights in the wider society – sponsorship, NGO support, social engagement.

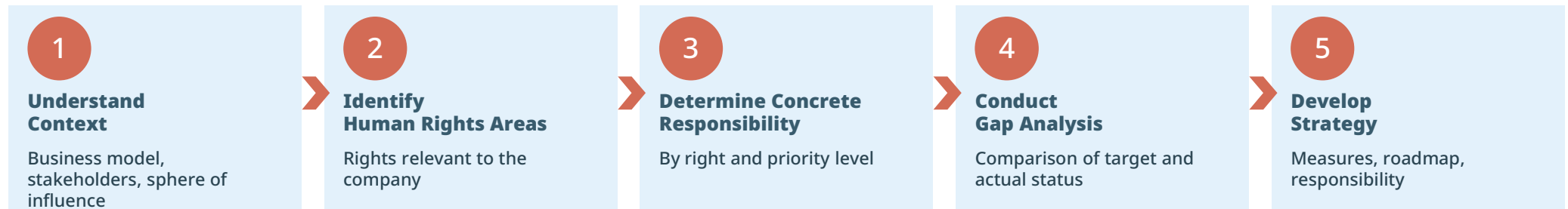
Human Rights Areas (horizontal axis)

1 All Rights <i>Policy, Management, Process of Due Diligence</i>	2 Non-Discrimination <i>Equal Treatment, Diversity, Harassment</i>
3 Working Conditions <i>Working Hours, Health, Safety</i>	4 Labor & Social Security <i>Hiring, Termination, Social Benefits</i>
5 Freedom of Association <i>Co-determination, Collective Bargaining</i>	6 Privacy & Data Protection <i>Personal Rights, Freedom of Information</i>
7 Property & Security <i>Protection of Assets, Procedural Rights</i>	8 Industry-Specific Rights <i>e.g., FPIC, Security, Consumer Protection</i>

Approach & Example

From the norm to a concrete action area – in five steps

Methodological Approach



The matrix is developed specifically for each company – in dialogue with management, departments, and relevant stakeholders.

Example: one matrix field in detail – Non-Discrimination × Essential

Responsibility	Explanation	Level of Implementation (Actual)	Recommended Measures
The company shall develop a comprehensive equal treatment policy that protects all employees from discrimination – on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and others.	Discrimination is often structurally and unconsciously embedded. An effective equal treatment policy requires a broad range of measures: action plans, training, analysis of communication structures, clear complaint channels.	Partially implemented: the Code of Conduct references the prohibition of discrimination. Individual measures exist, but there is no comprehensive equal treatment policy.	Development of a comprehensive equal treatment policy with training measures and a systematic review of HR processes for discrimination risks.