

Strengthening Grievance Mechanisms and Access to Remedy

The **Initiative for Global Solidarity (IGS)** is promoting a holistic ecosystem for workers to report violations of human rights and to seek remedy in case of violations. The focus lies on strengthening local structures and capacities and supporting external safety nets for workers. In line with the BMZ's feminist development policy, IGS activities particularly strive to increase legal empowerment and equal opportunities for women, girls and LGBTQI+ persons.

A holistic grievance mechanism ecosystem consisting of local and global stakeholders



What are Grievance Mechanisms and why are they needed?

Human rights and environmental due diligence (HREDD) is an internationally established process to identify, prevent, mitigate and remediate potential and actual adverse social and environmental impacts of business activities in global supply chains. This due diligence process identifies operational grievance mechanisms as a crucial step for enterprises to address business-related human rights abuses.

Operational grievance mechanisms are designed to supplement and complement other existing grievance mechanisms, which are established along judicial or state avenues. Besides in-factory grievance mechanisms, back-up grievance mechanisms – accessible i.e. through Multistakeholder or sectoral initiatives – act as external safety net for workers to raise their complaints and access remedy.

Effective grievance mechanisms need to be accessible, among other criteria, and resolve complaints by providing remedies that address the harm caused, such as compensation, mitigation measures, or changes to policies and practices¹. The inclusion of workers and their representatives (trade unions and civil society) in the planning and implementation of grievance mechanisms is essential to ensure their effectiveness.

¹ The 31st principle of the **United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights** sets out criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of **non-judicial grievance mechanisms**. The criteria are designed to ensure that those for whom the mechanism is intended are aware of it, have confidence in it and are able to use it.

Operational grievance mechanisms should serve two purposes along global supply chains

Act as an early **warning system** for enterprises to **identify systemic issues** in matters of **human rights** and the **environment** in their **supply chain**

Act as a vehicle for workers to **seek remedy** when their **human** or **labor rights** have been **violated**

What the IGS wants to achieve

500,000 workers, of which **300,000** are **women**, have access to **effective grievance mechanisms**

1,000 stakeholders within the ecosystem have successfully been trained on the **implementation of local grievance mechanisms**

2 cooperation agreements promote the **harmonisation of external safety nets for workers**

How the IGS is achieving that



Through the cooperation with ILO in Serbia, Better Work in Vietnam and Bangladesh and Better Factories in Cambodia, the IGS empowers local workers, worker representatives and employers in their crucial roles within the grievance mechanism ecosystem. The IGS and its partners do this through trainings, social dialogue and implementation of IT solutions.



The IGS and Electronics Watch (EW) partner up in Vietnam, Malaysia and China to strengthen the Electronics Watch grievance mechanism and improve access to remedy for workers. The IGS does this by further developing the capacities of EW and their monitoring partners and by supporting EW's meaningful engagement with industry in their role to facilitate access to remedy for workers.



The IGS supports the expansion of the Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry to Pakistan. It is a legally binding agreement between factory owners, global unions and brands to make textile and garment factories safe. The IGS contributes to capacitybuilding of local governments as well as training of factory managers and safety committees, an effective grievance mechanism and the development of models for financing remediation.

The **Initiative for Global Solidarity (IGS)** promotes the implementation of **human rights** and **environmental due diligence** in **global supply chains** by scaling and harmonising **proven approaches**. The **IGS** enables buying and supplying companies, particularly in the garment and electronics sector, to exercise **shared responsibility** for the impacts of their business practices on **people and the planet**.

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