

06/24

**Sustainability
Forward**
News from the IGS

DEAR READER,

In the past few months, we have been expanding our network and activities to foster responsible mineral supply chains. We want to share with you two highlights.

1

IGS hosted in partnership with the Responsible Business Alliance a high-level conference on due diligence in raw materials supply chains in Berlin.

Distinguished panellists from government, private sector, civil society and trade unions discussed how sustainability and resilience in the industry can be strengthened through multi-stakeholder collaboration. The presence of both, Mrs. Svenja Schulze, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, and Mr. Hubertus Heil, Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, underscored the growing importance of this issue on the global stage.



Pictures from the conference „From Policy to Action: Collaborative Approaches to Raw Materials Due Diligence“ on 11th April 2024.

2

At this year's OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains in Paris in May, IGS together with the GIZ Sector Programme "Extractives and Development" and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) hosted a partner session on effective grievance mechanisms.

More than 100 stakeholders from the public and private sector as well as civil society actors and trade unions took part in it. The session focussed on effective grievance mechanisms in mineral supply chains providing access to remedy for rightsholders in large-scale mining and included the presentation of a research study on this topic. A panel discussion brought together different perspectives from the the mining industry as well as workers and communities in mining regions.



Picture from the OECD Forum in Responsible Mineral Supply Chains in May.



Study on grievance mechanisms in mineral supply chains Exploring the Remedy Gap in the Large-Scale Mining Sector

We will continue our engagement with partners from the private and public sector to promote the work of multi-stakeholder initiatives and in particular strengthen grievance mechanisms and access to remedy across raw materials supply chains.



**YOU CAN
ONLY
IMPROVE
WHAT
YOU CAN
MEASURE!**

DATA & TRANSPARENCY

Credible and standardised data on environmental and social risks is a prerequisite for the implementation of due diligence.



OBJECTIVES OF THE IGS

- Coordinated standards for social and environmental data are in place
- Suppliers have access to capacity building for the collection of sustainability data
- Publicly accessible data on supplier networks make supply chains more transparent

ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY DATA MANAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH

In partnership with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), IGS trained personnel from around 70 textile factories on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) data management. Two participants talk about their experiences.



Md. Mir Moin Uddin, Product Safety Officer Laurels Fashion Ltd.

“... On the other day, our trainer, Mr. Shubhra Chanda, described the process of performing air leakage test. Subsequently, I shared new acquired knowledge with my supervisor and Maintenance Manager appointed in our facility. Applying Mr. Shubhra’s method taught earlier, we identified 46 % of air leakage in the entire facility. In spite of being a non-engineering professional, I was able to calculate and present to management personnel the financial loss and wastage of electrical energy every year due to air leakages. It is the biggest achievement of attending this training session.”



Fatima Khatun, Welfare Officer, Tex Tech Company Ltd.

“This has been an eye-opening session for us. We have learnt many different things which are relevant to our line of work. Previously, I had very limited knowledge on the environmental issues surrounding our facility. This session has enlightened me on the environmental aspects of our facility’s operations and the measures that can be taken to address the relevant issues.”

Background information

Reliable data on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts are the basis for effective human rights and environmental due diligence. In Bangladesh, IGS developed a Training of Trainers approach to capacitate textile and apparel manufacturers to better collect, analyze, and report on ESG indicators according to national and international standards.

Impact

Trough its trainings in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia and Serbia, IGS already capacitated almost 100 factories to collect data suitable for due diligence reporting along supply chains.

DISTRIBUTING RISKS FAIRLY!



SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The effective implementation of HREDD depends on cooperation between purchasing and manufacturing companies.



OBJECTIVES OF THE IGS

- International frameworks promote partnership-based implementation of HREDD
- Shared responsibility models reduce risks in supply chains
- Tools for responsible purchasing practices are available

BATTERY RECYCLING AND SECONDARY RAW MATERIAL RECOVERY IN NIGERIA

Following an inception workshop and first assessments of used lead-acid battery (ULAB) recycling facilities in Nigeria, regulatory authorities have committed to work with facility managers to continuously improve local industry standards and challenge the business model of polluting recyclers.

The multistakeholder initiative Partnership for Responsible Battery and Metal Recycling (ProBaMet) supports the upgrading of the recycling sector through three intervention levels:

1. Providing training on environmental health and safety to recycling facilities;
2. Supporting Nigerian regulators in the introduction and enforcement of standards;
3. Creating business opportunities for high-standard recycling through a coalition of solar companies looking for responsible battery disposal solutions and international companies sourcing secondary raw materials from approved facilities.



ProBaMet inception workshop with local authorities, regulators, community leaders and recyclers.



More information
[Partnership for Responsible Battery and Metal Recycling](#)

Background information

Lead-acid batteries are used in cars, off-grid solar applications and backup power systems. They can be recycled in an environmentally sound and safe way, recovering most of all contained materials. However, in many world regions recycling takes place under substandard and highly dangerous conditions, which has serious consequences for the health of workers and for the environment.

Impact

With this partnership, IGS is contributing to improving social and environmental standards in the secondary lead, tin, and antimony value chain. In addition, the project supports responsible sourcing approaches of these important raw materials. Through this, 10,000 workers benefit from safer working conditions.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE LEARNING AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMUNITY (LIC)

Q&A with Brita Beresford

– Production Manager at LIC participant Norwegian Concept

(1) What have you been putting into practice as a result of the LIC?

A key change has been increased direct engagement with suppliers – including more meetings and gathering feedback from them on the impact of our purchasing practices, to guide our actions. We have developed a standard agenda for those meetings that includes time for open discussion about challenges. Giving space for that helps in detecting potential issues earlier and finding solutions together.

(2) Do you have an example of a situation where you found a partnership-based solution?

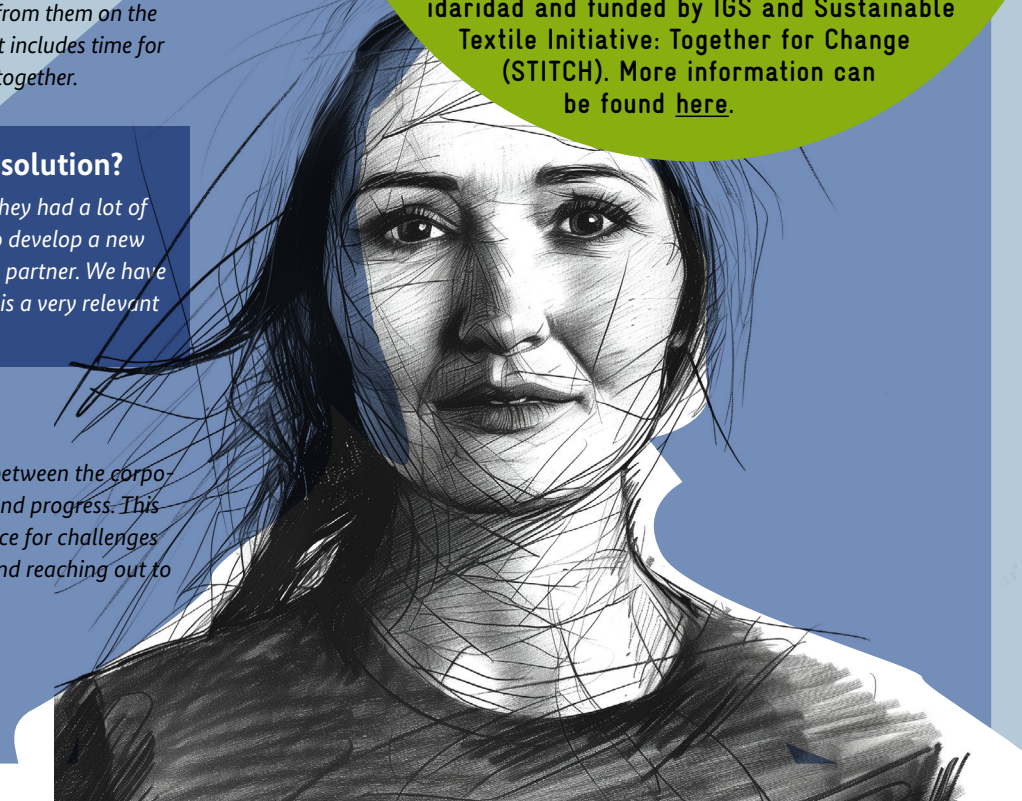
In one of the meetings with a supplier, where we gave them an open opportunity to share any challenges, they said they had a lot of excess fabric from our salesman sample orders. We discussed this internally and worked together with the supplier to develop a new product using the fabric – a padded seat cushion for hiking. The supplier told us that this made them really feel like a partner. We have also done the same with a different supplier who had excess fleece material. We made neck warmers out of it, which is a very relevant product for the market. This reduced the financial burden on the supplier of unused fabric they'd already paid for.

(3) What is your advice for other companies wanting to take action?

Getting support from the management team and engaging them in the process is essential, as well as coordination between the corporate social responsibility unit and commercial teams. Involving supply chain partners has been key for our learning and progress. This includes gaining their honest feedback and having more regular conversations. We found it so helpful to provide space for challenges to be raised, and then building trust by acting on this and being flexible to find solutions together. We also recommend reaching out to other brands to share experiences and learn together.

Background information

The purchasing practices of buying companies/brands can help to make relationships in supply chains fairer and enable improved working conditions, for example working hours or giving leeway for wage increases. Therefore, IGS is supporting the Responsible Purchasing Practices 'Learning and Implementation Community' (LIC). The Community consists of 36 garment brands and retailers committed to improving purchasing practices and working together with supply chain partners over a two-year period to practically implement changes. The LIC is led by the Ethical Trading Initiative, Ethical Trade Norway, Fair Wear, the German Partnership for Sustainable Textiles (PST), Solidaridad and funded by IGS and Sustainable Textile Initiative: Together for Change (STITCH). More information can be found [here](#).



Workers need a holistic ecosystem to report violations of human rights and to seek remedy in case of violations.

**SEE,
UNDER-
STAND,
IMPROVE!**



OBJECTIVES OF THE IGS

- Workers have access to effective grievance mechanisms
- Stakeholders are trained in the implementation of local grievance mechanisms
- Cooperation agreements promote the harmonisation of external safety nets for workers

GRIEVANCE MECHANISM OF THE GERMAN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN MEXICO

The launch of the cross-company grievance mechanism marks a key step towards a fair automotive supply chain in Mexico. Developed by diverse stakeholders from Mexico and Germany, this unified platform enhances access to remedies and addresses human rights risks within the industry.

The launch of the cross-company grievance mechanism (MRDH for its Spanish acronym) is a significant step towards ensuring a fair automotive supply chain in Mexico. Developed collaboratively by businesses, trade unions, civil society, and national human rights institutes from Mexico and Germany, the MRDH aims to address and mitigate human rights risks within the sector.

This unified platform complements existing grievance mechanisms, enhances access to remedies and helps to identify systemic risks. Supported by the German Federal Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS), and Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the MRDH is now an international multi-stakeholder-led pilot project in Mexico.



Press release on the launch of the MRDH

[Partnership for Responsible Battery and Metal Recycling](#)

Background information

The IGS supports this effort to ensure consistent and effective reporting mechanisms, promoting due diligence and accountability across global supply chains. Its footing is based on conceptual work from partners of the Sector Dialogue Automotive Industry, hosted by the BMAS. In an effort of cooperation, the BMZ took over to support its implementation in Mexico through IGS.

Impact

Through supporting the MRDH, the IGS is achieving greater harmonization and effectiveness of grievance mechanisms. Thereby, 50,000 people have access to an effective platform for addressing and resolving human rights and environmental violations. And more than 30,000 people in surrounding communities benefit from improved environmental standards.

MONITORING SNAPSHOTS FROM THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY

Q&A Aykut Kazanci

– Monitoring Capacity Manager at Electronics Watch

(1) What is special about the Electronics Watch grievance mechanism?

We use public procurement leverage to defend workers' rights and have approachable contact points for workers. Our monitoring partners are local civil society organizations located near workers' communities and have relationships of trust with them. They are able to meet with workers in conditions that minimize their fear of reprisals. Workers therefore often report serious problems to them that social audits might not be able to reveal. Our affiliated public buyers then use their leverage with suppliers to demand change.

(2) Can you share insights from your work on the ground?

In Malaysia, migrant workers from Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, and Myanmar travel far from home with the hope of earning decent incomes in electronics factories. But they face discrimination, high recruitment fees they must pay back, and exposure to toxic chemicals. On our recent visit, workers told us that low-wage, precarious jobs push many to work excessive overtime to maximize their earnings, despite the impact on their mental and physical health. Those who complain or try to form trade unions to tackle rights violations are often sanctioned or fired.

(3) What solutions can you offer workers?

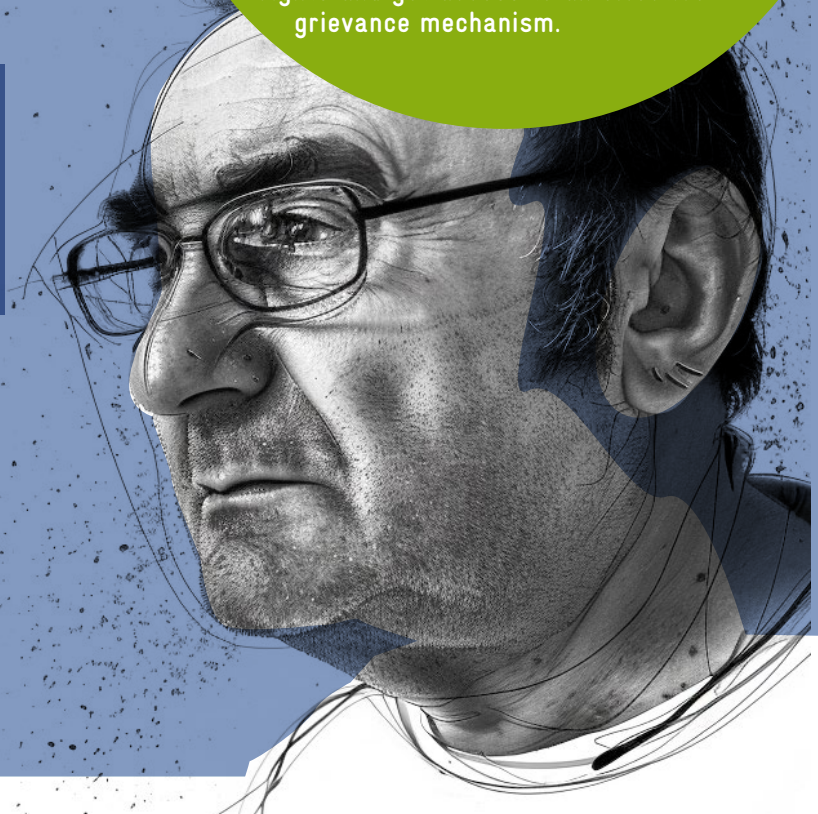
The collective leverage of public buyers means we can offer worker-driven remedy. Workers are kept informed and consulted on how to proceed throughout the remediation process which follows their grievances. In a recent case in Malaysia, we brought together trade union representatives and buyers to agree on actions and a follow-up process on forced labour and chemical safety. In another case, thanks to public buyer pressure, we finally succeeded in getting workers repaid the recruitment fees they were owed. While there is still a long way to go in securing consistent remedy, with meaningful worker involvement, these cases show progress in getting workers' demands heard. You can get more insights [here](#).

Background information

Electronics Watch is an NGO that uses public procurement leverage to protect the rights of workers in global electronics supply chains. Trusted partners in production countries monitor conditions in mines and factories, guided by workers' rights and priorities. The IGS is supporting the scaling of the Electronics Watch grievance mechanism in Vietnam, China, Taiwan, and Malaysia to improve the work and health environment for local and migrant workers.

Impact

Thousands of workers are trained on their rights and get access to an effective grievance mechanism.



STRENGTHENING LOCAL CAPACITIES!

THE RBH NETWORK

Suppliers and stakeholders in producing countries need support in implementing due diligence obligations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE IGS

- Responsible Business Helpdesks in producing countries offer information, networking and advisory services for companies and other stakeholders to perform due diligence
- The capacities of companies and other stakeholders to perform due diligence are strengthened and they are increasingly implementing them

MORE MEMBERS, MORE CONNECTIONS, MORE SUPPORT

With the CSDDD's recent adoption, the importance of supporting companies on due diligence has risen even more. Therefore, IGS is thrilled to announce that the Responsible Business Helpdesk (RBH) Network is keeping on growing with host partners in Türkiye, Mexico and Tunisia joining as new members.

While RBH Serbia celebrated its first anniversary, two RBH launched in April 2024: The RBH Tunisia, hosted by Union Tunisienne de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'artisanat (UTICA) and the RBH Mexico, hosted by Consejo Coordinador Empresarial (CCE). Just one month later RBH Türkiye, hosted by Türkonfed was launched as the 7th Helpdesk in Istanbul. The network's expansion enables more companies to seek support and fosters greater knowledge exchange between network members. The next RBH will be opened in Pakistan.

Background information

The Responsible Business Helpdesks (RBH) assist local businesses to step up their sustainability performance and meet the growing requirements deriving from Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence legislation. IGS provides technical support to the organisational development of the RBH and capacity building of the RBH hosts.

Impact

1,000 companies have already benefited from the advice services offered by the RBH.



RBH Launch Event in Türkiye.



RBH Launch Event in Mexico.



RBH Launch Event in Tunisia.



DRIVING FORWARD DUE DILIGENCE IN MOROCCO'S AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Through a collaborative engagement between IGS, UNIDO, the Moroccan Ministry of Industry and Trade and AMICA, local stakeholders will be supported in identifying, preventing and mitigating human rights and environmental risks in their operations and supply chains.

This project will include:

1. Developing training formats for industry stakeholders and professionals on due diligence practices and managing supply chain risks effectively.
2. Creating and identifying tools to help companies track, analyze, and report their due diligence efforts.
3. Raising awareness on legislative developments in the EU, identifying best practices and fostering collaboration between stakeholders to address human rights and environmental risks.



Launch event of the joint Due Diligence project in Morocco



More information about the project

[Due diligence monitoring and reporting in Morocco's automotive industry](#)

Background information

The Moroccan automotive industry has grown considerably in recent years, with hundreds of suppliers to global carmakers including companies like BMW and Volkswagen. It accounts for around 10% of Moroccan exports, mainly to Europe. Therefore, Moroccan suppliers need to be aware of up-coming due diligence legislation and equip themselves with the right skills. The activities in Morocco are part of the capacity building program of IGS running mainly through the network of Responsible Business Helpdesks.

Impact

Producing companies in the Moroccan automotive sector are better equipped to conduct due diligence in their supply chains and meet the requirements of international customers with respect to the implementation of HREDD and related reporting.

Our Objectives

The Initiative for Global Solidarity strives to achieve tangible improvements for people and the environment in producing countries.

425,000

Workers are exposed to fewer risks in the workplace.

 Already achieved: 558,719



350

Companies take advantage of the RBH services

 Already achieved: 1,000



500,000

Workers have access to grievance mechanisms

 Already achieved: 375,425



150

Companies integrate sustainability indicators in their data management

 Already achieved: 92



1,000

Stakeholders are trained in the implementation of grievance mechanisms

 Already achieved: 1,629



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Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36
53113 Bonn

✉ igs@giz.de

🔗 www.giz.de

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On behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

IGS INITIATIVE FOR GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

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 supports stakeholders along global supply chains to exercise shared responsibility for the impacts of business practices on people and the planet.

The IGS is working on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Further information about the IGS can be found [here](#)

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