



United Nations Responsible
Business and Human Rights
Forum, Asia-Pacific

NAVIGATING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN ASIA'S AGRIBUSINESS

United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok
16 SEPTEMBER 2025

Background and Rationale

Agribusiness drives Asia's economy, employing millions and driving exports across diverse supply chains. But engaging stakeholders and rights holders across the sector's complex web of relationships and actors remains a challenge – marked by fragmented governance, power imbalances, and rising regulatory demands. New regulations such as the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, and Deforestation Regulation are reshaping buyer requirements in key markets, demanding meaningful stakeholder engagement, safe and inclusive participation, and evidence that feedback informs action and reporting. These intersect with national measures like Japan's METI Human Rights Guidelines, Korea's K-ESG roadmap, sustainable palm oil standards in Indonesia and Malaysia, and ASEAN's guidelines on responsible investment in agriculture and forestry.

Global regulations are reshaping agribusiness, demanding inclusive engagement and alignment with evolving human rights standards.

Companies face significant hurdles: identifying and differentiating stakeholders from rights holders across complex, multi-tier supply chains; ensuring vulnerable groups have equitable opportunities to engage; and balancing regulatory expectations, commercial priorities, and operational realities across diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic contexts.

Why Join?

- Gain insight into evolving global and regional requirements shaping stakeholder engagement.
- Benchmark against peers facing similar challenges in complex supply chains.
- Build approaches that enhance both compliance and long-term trust with communities and workers.

APPLY TO JOIN

About the Opportunity

This closed-door roundtable, organized during the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, offers agribusiness leaders a safe space to share practical solutions for stakeholder engagement challenges. Under Chatham House Rules, participants will exchange proven strategies, regional innovations, and lessons learned from engaging vulnerable groups in multi-tier supply chains.

Key Objectives

- **Understand the landscape:** Clarify the regulatory and voluntary frameworks shaping stakeholder and rights holder engagement in agribusiness supply chains.
- **Strengthen strategies:** Identify practical, scalable approaches that balance compliance requirements, commercial priorities, and rightsholder needs.
- **Learn from peers:** Exchange regional examples and tools that can improve efficiency, reduce duplication, and strengthen engagement outcomes.
- **Shape next steps:** Define priority actions and opportunities for continued collaboration beyond the Forum.

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Guiding Questions

- ▶ How can agribusinesses effectively map their stakeholder and rights holder ecosystem, and why does this matter for business outcomes?
- ▶ What approaches work best to engage rightsholders, particularly vulnerable groups, meaningfully despite structural or practical barriers?
- ▶ How can companies meet regulatory requirements in ways that strengthen long-term trust across their value chains?
- ▶ What trends in global and regional regulations, voluntary standards, and buyer requirements are most relevant — and how can businesses design engagement strategies that satisfy multiple expectations efficiently?

Format

A 90-minute closed-door, peer-led discussion under Chatham House Rule with anonymized notetaking to protect confidentiality. Senior representatives from agribusiness companies and industry associations will drive the conversation, supported by UNDP facilitators and sector experts who will provide examples, tools, and case studies to prompt exchange.

Session Partners



Agenda

Time	Session Segment	Particulars
15 mins	Welcome & Framing the Conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks • Quick participant introductions
10 mins	Setting the Context: Regulatory & Market Trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief overview of evolving regulatory and voluntary frameworks, including EU CSDDD, CSRD, and Deforestation Regulation, national standards in Asia, and buyer requirements. • Explore convergence on traceability, deforestation, labour rights, and smallholder inclusion.
20 mins	Peer Case Snapshots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected participants share short case examples on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practical engagement in multi-tier supply chains – Balancing regulatory expectations with commercial realities – Lessons from involving vulnerable rights holders
25 mins	Peer Exchange: Challenges & Solutions	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do companies distinguish between stakeholders and rights holders in practice? 2. What's working to engage vulnerable groups meaningfully? 3. How can one approach meet multiple regulatory and buyer requirements?
10 mins	Synthesis & Key Takeaways	<p>Summary of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common challenges • Emerging good practices • Opportunities for alignment and efficiency
5 mins	Next Steps & Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline options for post-Forum exchange (network, follow-up session, resources)

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About the Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum

The 2025 UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum will convene stakeholders from across Asia and the Pacific to advance business and human rights in a time of compounding crises. Under the theme “Anchoring Progress and Strengthening Regional Leadership on Human Rights through Crisis,” the Forum will focus on accelerating implementation of BHR standards, strengthening cross-border cooperation, and centering rights-holder leadership. Sessions will be organized around four thematic tracks: Policy Coherence and Regulatory Evolution; Markets, Finance and Supply Chains; Inclusion,

Protection and Participation; and Sustainability and Transitions. With an emphasis on peer learning and practical solutions, the Forum will create space for governments, businesses, NHRIs, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and others to share tools, align on priorities, and shape responses grounded in regional realities.

The Forum is co-organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), and the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights (UNWG).



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