



Unilever

MARCH | 2023

# Human Rights Policy Statement

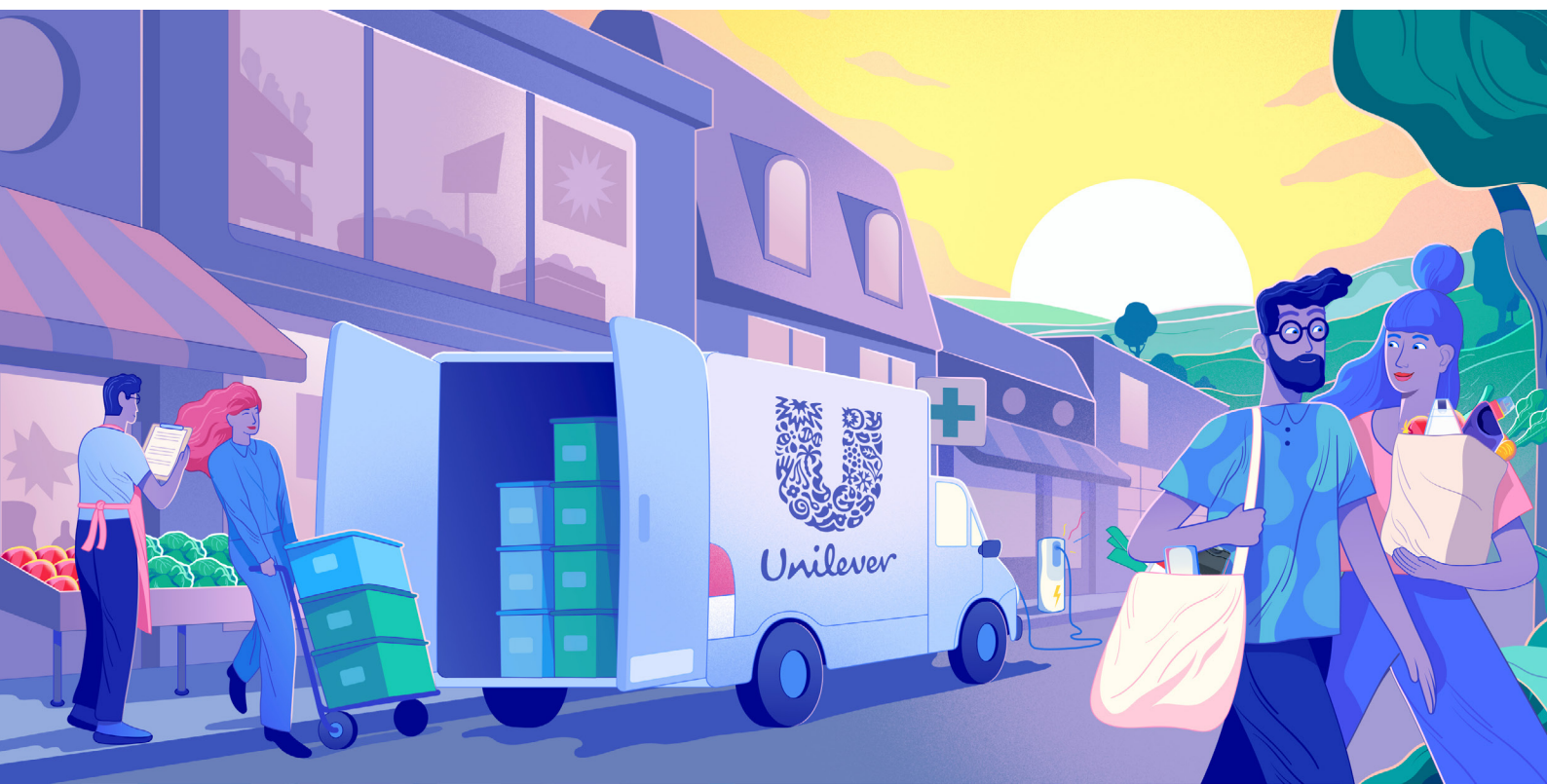


**At the heart of our business strategy is the vision of building a fairer, more socially inclusive world. We're determined to turn that vision into action – and that means everything we do through our business, our values and our brands must be underpinned by an absolute commitment to respect human rights in and throughout our operations.**

We believe that business can only flourish in societies where human rights are respected and protected. We recognise that business has the responsibility to respect internationally recognised human rights and the ability to contribute to positive human rights outcomes.

Our efforts are grounded in the **UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights** – which we are committed to implement. We believe that respecting human rights also helps our business grow responsibly.

This Human Rights Policy Statement contains our overarching commitment to respect human rights, which is also echoed in other company statements. We take steps to actively embed this commitment and its overarching principles into the policies and processes throughout our business.



## Our Policy

In line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, we base our human rights policy commitment on the **International Bill of Human Rights** (consisting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and the principles concerning fundamental rights set out in the **International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work**. We follow the **OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises** and are a founding signatory to the **United Nations Global Compact**. We are committed to respecting all internationally recognised human rights throughout our operations, while placing specific efforts on those rights that are at risk of the most severe negative impact through our activities and business relationships – **our salient human rights issues**.

Where national law and international human rights standards differ, we will follow the higher standard; when faced with conflicting requirements, we will adhere to national law, while seeking ways to honour the principles of internationally recognised human rights.

## Our Vision

Unilever’s vision is to deliver growth by serving society and the planet.

Our **Code of Business Principles** makes clear that we “conduct our operations with honesty, integrity and openness, and with respect for the human rights and interests of our employees and that we shall similarly respect the legitimate interests of those with whom we have relationships”. We expect all our partners and third parties to adhere to business principles consistent with our own, including respecting all internationally recognised human rights.



## Responsible Business

We have a large and diverse value chain and we recognise the critical role our business partners play in helping us to do business responsibly and sustainably. Our **Responsible Partner Policy** embodies our commitment to conduct business with integrity and openness whilst embedding human rights, fighting corruption and protecting and preserving the planet. It includes seventeen Fundamental Principles setting out mandatory requirements that business partners must achieve to do business with Unilever; future mandatory requirements and examples of leading practices. Business partners are expected to cascade requirements through their supply chains including clear requirements and guidance relating to grievance mechanisms.

For agricultural commodities linked to the risk of deforestation and conversion, our **People and Nature Policy** sets out clear requirements for our own business, suppliers and partners, including respecting and promoting human rights and protecting natural ecosystems from deforestation and conversion.

We will only work with business partners who are committed to meet the requirements of our Policies and mandatory requirements to do business with us. They must agree to ensure transparency, to remedy any shortcomings, and to drive continuous improvement. We also understand that in order to continue to drive systemic solutions, we need to address our own purchasing practices and pricing models. Governments also have an important role in creating an enabling environment to address supply chain impacts.



## Identifying and Addressing Human Rights Impacts

Our business has impacts on millions of people's lives, every day. While it creates opportunity, we know that human rights risks and issues exist in global value chains including our own and that they are often deep-rooted and endemic.

We recognise that we must take steps to identify and address any actual or potential adverse impacts which we may cause or contribute to through our own activities or which may be directly linked to our operations, products or services or by our business relationships.

We manage these risks by integrating the results of our due diligence into our policies and internal systems. We identify and assess impacts, act on findings including remediation where needed, track and work to measure our actions, and communicate with our stakeholders.

We understand that human rights due diligence is an ongoing process that requires particular attention at certain stages in our business activities, such as when we form new partnerships or our operating conditions change, as these changes may create new potential or actual impacts on human rights.

This is also the case relating to particular parts of our business operations; for example we conduct security activities in alignment with our Group Security Framework and national legal requirements, and informed by international standards such as the **Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights**.

In certain countries where we operate, there are particularly high, systemic risks of human rights impacts. We understand that this means that we must put in place additional due diligence to assess these risks and address them effectively, where appropriate,

building and using our leverage, for example in one-to-one relationships or in broad-based partnerships.

We recognise the importance of dialogue with employees, workers and other rights-holders who are or could potentially be affected by our conduct. We pay particular attention to individuals or groups who may be at greater risk of negative human rights impacts for reasons such as their marginalisation. We recognise that women and men may face different risks and that certain rights-holders (including migrant workers and those from under-represented communities) may be particularly at risk.

A wide range of individuals and organisations are engaged in the global effort to advance human rights. Recognising the increasingly difficult environment in which they operate, we do not tolerate abuse, threats, intimidation, physical or legal attacks or reprisals against environmental and human rights defenders. We support the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders that both states and businesses should actively support and promote the role of human rights defenders working in their sectors; and speak out when human rights defenders are targeted by reason of their carrying out vital work. We will address adverse impacts on human rights defenders with which we are involved either through our own operations or as a result of our business relationships.

We will continue to build and use our scale and collaborate with other companies, civil society, worker representatives and trade associations as well as governments and other stakeholders so that we address the root causes of human rights issues and are able to influence systemic and lasting change.

## Remedy

We recognise the critical importance of enabling effective remedy wherever we are directly linked to or have caused or contributed to human rights impact. Access to effective grievance mechanisms, including our company-based grievance mechanisms, helps us achieve this. We continue to build the awareness and knowledge of employees and workers on human rights, including labour rights, encouraging them to speak up, without retribution, about any concerns they may have, including through our grievance channels.

We are committed to continue increasing our capability to effectively identify and respond to concerns. We strongly support dialogue and open communication channels and encourage individuals and communities

to raise any concerns with us directly. We also recognise that state-based judicial or non-judicial mechanisms for those who feel human rights have been impacted is an important pathway for raising human rights grievances. We will not impede access to these established mechanisms and we aim to co-operate as required with competent authorities in investigating or adjudicating alleged human rights impacts. We require the provision of transparent, fair and confidential grievance mechanisms by our suppliers for workers and for them to provide remedy where they have caused or contributed to an impact.



## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We want our entire business to work towards the transformations in society that will tackle social inequality and unfairness, and end the marginalisation of individuals and groups who are under-represented. We have identified four focus areas for our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy: gender, race and ethnicity, people with disabilities and LGBTQI+ communities – both in our own operations and working with our business partners and other stakeholders.

Around the world many women face discrimination and disadvantage, lack access to skills and training, and face roadblocks to their active participation in the economy. They often lack the protection of basic rights and laws. Poverty, discrimination and violence against women are major barriers to opportunity.

The economic empowerment of women and girls is a critical and highly impactful catalyst to unlock progress in human development and economic growth. To be a truly inclusive business, we need to make sure women, especially women from under-represented groups, have the same access as men to opportunities.



## Our Governance

Our human rights governance is led from the top, overseen by our CEO and supported by our **Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE)**, the most senior leaders of our business. As well as providing strategic direction, the ULE is consulted on human rights issues when the severity of an actual or potential impact is high, where a business-critical decision needs to be taken, or where substantial financial investment may be needed to address an impact. Additional Board-level oversight is provided by the **Corporate Responsibility Committee**.

Our approach to human rights is to embed it in all parts of our business, with areas of global expertise to provide guidance and support, including within the Sustainability Function; Business Operations; and Responsible Business (Business Integrity). The Global Head of Sustainability (Human Rights) reports to the Chief Sustainability Officer who reports to the Chief Executive Officer. Teams work together to create action plans to respond to our salient human rights issues including capability building and remediation where needed. They work both bilaterally and more widely to prevent their re-occurrence while engaging internally and externally to help identify emerging human rights risks.

## Going Forward

We continually evaluate and review how best to strengthen our approach to addressing human rights, including labour rights. We believe that working through external initiatives and partnerships (for example with other industries, civil society, trade unions, suppliers and other business partners) is often the best way to address shared challenges.

We increasingly see the impact on human rights resulting from environmental and climate change and understand that we can only resolve the challenges facing our world by addressing them together.

While continuing to work to identify, reduce and avoid these impacts, we also recognise that some mitigation measures taken to reduce environmental impacts may adversely affect people's human rights. We aim to address this by taking a human rights lens to our environmental commitments.

The principles of this Policy continue to be implemented across our operations and value chain. Leveraging the power of our purposeful brands to create a positive social impact is a core part of the **Unilever Compass**, the foundation of which is the respect for human rights.

