

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

“Building Back Better” Business, Human Rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Pacific Online Capacity Building Program

October 2020

Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for the Pacific Region in partnership with Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), Citizens’ Constitutional Forum (CCF) and Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC)

SUMMARY

DTP and OHCHR, in collaboration with other partners, are calling for applications for a Pacific regional capacity building program for civil society, government and business on **Business, Human Rights and the SDGs in the Pacific** to be held online in October 2020.

This online program will build knowledge and capacity to apply Business and Human Rights (BHR) standards to promote business respect for human rights and corporate accountability in the Pacific. It will build practical skills for multi-stakeholder engagement to influence government policy making and business decisions. Participants will learn from leading experts and practitioners, share knowledge with each other, and build networks. This program is part of a wider sub-regional strategy of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and OHCHR that includes the first Pacific Forum on Business and Human Rights to be held in December 2020. It is also part of a longer-term capacity building strategy of PIANGO, BHRRC, CCF and DTP.

WHY THIS TRAINING?

As COVID-19 impacts the island nations of the Pacific, there is a new focus on inclusive development and “*building back better*”. Foreign direct investment and the private sector are seen as key drivers of economic development, along with loans to fund key infrastructure development. Ensuring that economic development is inclusive and economically and environmentally sustainable are major challenges. Extractive industries, including deep sea mining, forestry and fisheries, as well as infrastructure and tourism are impacting communities. Women, children, persons living with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to negative impacts.

Global frameworks and guidelines on responsible and sustainable business practices can help ensure that the Pacific region “builds back better” following the economic crisis caused by COVID-19. Under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), States have a duty to protect and businesses have a responsibility to respect human rights, and both have a role in access to effective remedy. Moreover, the SDGs emphasise partnership and the Paris Agreement mandates reductions in carbon and environmental impacts, including from extractive industries.

These frameworks provide governments, investors and business with concrete guidance to make decisions. This training is aimed at bridging the significant knowledge gap in civil society, government and business about the role of global standards on BHR and the SDGs to achieve inclusive, sustainable, equitable development consistent with the cultures of the Pacific. The program will foster dialogue between civil society, government and business and lay the ground for the development of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights in the Pacific region. The organisers envisage that selected participants from this program will participate in the First UN Pacific Forum on Business and Human Rights scheduled to be held on 1-2 December 2020.

WHAT WILL PARTICIPANTS LEARN?

The program will be run in an interactive mutual learning format, with participants strongly encouraged to share examples, case studies, concerns or good practices from the Pacific for discussion. The content will be finalised to meet the needs of the selected participants, and it will reflect the specific context of the Pacific. Program content will include the following:

- An introduction to Business and Human Rights and the UNGPs
- BHR during and post-COVID 19
- BHR and the SDGs - BHR and Climate Change – BHR, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
- BHR policy making and regulatory initiatives: National Action Plans, National Adaptation Plans, mandatory human rights due diligence, modern slavery legislation
- BHR advocacy and corporate accountability – use of various judicial and non-judicial mechanisms at the national and international levels

TRAINERS AND TRAINING METHODOLOGY

Trainers are experienced local, regional and international human rights practitioners, academics, and experts who believe in the philosophy of participatory training. **Professor Surya Deva, Member of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, Amy Sinclair and Joshua Cooper** will be among the program trainers. The organisers recognizes and values the experiences and skills that participants bring to such programs. The training will use an accessible and user-friendly online platform, and a combination of lectures, presentations, webinars, videos, exercises, and group activities between sessions. Interaction and sharing experiences and lessons with others is actively encouraged. There will be 2 x 1.5 hour online sessions per week, and an estimated 4 hours per week of offline-activities/assignments. If physical distancing norms allows, participants in some countries may be able to train together at local/national level. Participants completing the training will receive a certificate from DTP and UNSW Law Faculty.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

The program is aimed at CSOs, government officials and business representatives from Pacific Island nations who have the capacity to apply the training to their work related to BHR, the SDGs or climate change. Consideration will be given to ensuring a gender balance and other diversities amongst selected participants. A limited number of international organisation applicants may also be considered. Participant numbers will be between 30-50.

HOW TO APPLY

Application forms can be downloaded from the [DTP website](#) or can be requested from dtp@unsw.edu.au. Deadline for the application is **18 September 2020**. Applications will be acknowledged on receipt.

ABOUT ORGANISERS

The **Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)** is an independent NGO affiliated with the University of New South Wales, providing practical training in human rights and advocacy in the Asia-Pacific region. **The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – Regional Office for the Pacific (OHCHR-ROP)** aims to ensure that the protection and enjoyment of human rights is a reality in the lives of all people. It provides assistance in the form of technical expertise and capacity-development in order to support the implementation of international human rights standards on the ground. **Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO)** is the major regional non-governmental organization with membership in 23 countries and territories of the Pacific Islands. For over 25 years, PIANGO has served the Pacific through strengthening and building the capacity of the civil society sector. **Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF)** is a NGO based in Suva with more than 10 years' experience in community education and advocacy on democracy, human rights and multiculturalism. **Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC)** is a non-profit organisation that works to advance human rights in business through strengthening corporate accountability, building transparency, and helping empower advocates.