



INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

PRESS STATEMENT

Kampala, 28th October, 2021

ISER applauds the Government of Uganda on launching the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights

Uganda has become the 2nd country in Africa, and 30th globally to publish a National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights; a sign of commitment by the state to mitigate and remedy adverse business-related human rights impacts. The National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights seeks to promote a harmonious relationship in which both businesses and communities can thrive by providing a comprehensive framework for coordination of multi-sectoral efforts to ensure respect for human rights in business operations. The goal of the plan is elimination of human rights violations and abuses in business activities by any person or entity.

For years, the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) has been doing advocacy around the state's duty to protect people from human rights abuses perpetrated by businesses, the responsibility of businesses to respect human rights and access to effective remedy for victims of business-related human rights violations. It is against that background that ISER and its partners advocated for the NAP on Business and Human Rights during Uganda's second Universal Periodic Review¹ (UPR) in 2016. In a 2016 UPR factsheet on business and human rights, ISER highlighted the issue and it was one of the recommendations to Uganda; to develop an action plan on business and human rights in order to implement the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on business and human rights.

Consequently, the Government of Uganda accepted the recommendation and embarked on the process of developing a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. This process was led and coordinated by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in conjunction

¹ The UPR is a State to State review mechanism where peer states assess other states' effectiveness in fulfilling their human rights obligations.



INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

with a resource team of stakeholders including the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER), the Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability (UCCA), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) and the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA Uganda).

“The launch of the NAP on Business and Human Rights is a critical step in the promotion and protection of human rights by our government. It is also a major success story for us human rights defenders working on issues of business and human rights,” said Ms. Salima Namusoby, Executive Director - ISER. “Some of the eight priority areas of focus of the NAP include social service delivery by private actors, access to remedy, women, vulnerable and marginalised groups; these issues are at the core of our programming and I would like to call upon all stakeholders to ensure coordination in implementation of the NAP,” she added.

The adoption of the NAP on Business and Human Rights will go a long way in addressing challenges faced by communities while interacting with businesses in Uganda. “Considering that Uganda’s National Development Plan envisages a private sector led economy, the adoption of this NAP is very timely,” said Mr. Joseph Byomuhangyi, Project Coordinator of the Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability (UCCA).

Read the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights here: <https://ucca-uganda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/881081698.pdf>

A short documentary of the journey leading up to the adoption of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKIPQBRZ3Ws>

For more information, please email info@iser-uganda.org or call Joseph Byomuhangyi on 0780248692