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BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS TANZANIA (BHRT) PROFILE

Business and Human Rights Tanzania (BHRT) is a Tanzanian non-governmental organization that operates as a private, non-partisan, and not-for-profit entity. It is registered under the NGO Act of 2002 with registration number 008358 and has been active since January 2016.

BHRT is unique in Tanzania, as it is the only NGO dedicated to addressing the legal jurisprudence comprehensively surrounding business and human rights. Despite the various interventions and efforts undertaken by stakeholders to promote the respect and protection of human rights within the corporate sector, significant corporate harms persist in Tanzania. This reality necessitates the implementation of more strategic interventions, one of which involves advocating for the integration of the United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, established in 2011, into the national policy, legal, and institutional frameworks governing the business sector.

Kinds of Corporate Harms

The awareness of workers' rights has historically been low, and this situation persists to the present day. Consequently, various corporate malpractices have emerged, including the denial of written contracts, failure to provide statutory leave, non-payment of minimum wages, inadequate compensation, and overtime payment. Other violations by the Companies are; land grabbing, unlawful evictions, environmental pollution, and violations of consumer rights due to a lack of protective measures. Additionally, gender-based violations, including incidents of gender-based violence (GBV), have occurred without proper documentation or remedial action. As a result, although the business sector has experienced progressive growth, this advancement has often come at the expense of workers and the local communities affected by these investments.

BHRT was established to address critical gaps in the corporate responsibility framework, particularly the duty to respect human rights and the associated duty to protect vulnerable communities. The organization implements awareness-raising initiatives, stakeholder dialogues, and targeted advocacy programs designed to push for reform of the existing practices and policies at local, regional, and national levels. By fostering partnerships with

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stakeholders, including governmental bodies, non-profit organizations, and affected communities, BHRT aims to create a more informed public and accountable institution. Additionally, the organization is committed to empowering victims of human rights violations by providing them with the necessary information, and support to access effective remedies and seek justice for the harms they have endured.

The Business and Human Rights Trust (BHRT) is committed to fostering collaboration among stakeholders involved in the intersection of business and human rights, to advance this vital agenda. By aligning its initiatives with the three fundamental principles established in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights—protection, respect, and remedy—BHRT aspires to cultivate a collaborative environment for all stakeholders.

The BHRT argues for the proper establishment and implementation of the National Plan of Action on business and human rights per the UN principles, the public is empowered to assert their rights, and Companies can thrive while acting responsibly. This collaborative approach enhances the responsiveness and accountability of the corporate sector in Tanzania to both the state—through taxation—and the community, particularly in areas such as employment, corporate social responsibility, land rights, environmental justice, and support for the informal sector.

VISION

The Business and Human Rights in Tanzania envisage a human rights-sensitive business in Tanzania.

The ultimate goal is to contribute to the realization of a responsive and accountable business sector in which the rights of community members including informal sector actors are effectively protected, respected, and remedied once violated or abused.

MISSION

The BHRT strives to empower business enterprises, government, judiciary, legislature, and academia to reinforce BHR-related principles in their operations; to raise awareness and build the competency of local communities in demanding legal redress; empower the community in the investment world to understand international human rights and business principle, standards; and, influence corporate entities to observe business and human rights (BHR) standards.

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The objectives (and functions) for which the organization is established are: -

- a) To empower the community on BHR for sustainable development that respects the role of local communities.
- b) To influence legal and policy reforms on business and corporate to enhance accountability.
- c) To promote the uptake of UNGPBHR of 2011 (duty to respect, protect, and access to remedy).
- d) To monitor government and corporate companies' compliance with the code of conduct, and regional and international human rights standards concerning labour rights, land rights, consumer rights protection, gender, and environmental rights protection.
- e) To provide legal assistance to community members deprived of their rights on BHR.
- f) To influence corporate companies to have human rights strategies at workplaces.
- g) To advocate for corporate accountability, government accountability, and good governance in the extractive sector and other big investments.
- h) To conduct research and fact-finding missions on the extractive industry and other big investments.
- i) To empower and promote small-scale mining.
- j) To advocate for gender equity in extractive and other economic sectors.
- k) To promote and advocate for grievance mechanisms and access to remedies for the community living adjacent to the investment areas
- l) To collaborate with the government to ensure that companies take reasonable steps to ensure compliance with human rights standards

OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Despite its age, BHRT has a sound institutional or governance structure guided by the Constitution and several operational policies (standard operating procedures). The operational policies available and in force include the financial and procurement manual; human resource policy; and, action plans made under specific projects it has been implementing. BHRT's governance structure consists of the General Assembly (GA); the Board of Directors (BODs); and, the Secretariat (Management Team). The GA is, constitutionally, a supreme organ of the organization formed by all members of

BHRT's Complies with Corporate Good Governance Principles
The three level of governance forms a chain of command for overseeing implementation of BHRT's planned activities. In this way, corporate good governance principles of transparency and accountability are effectively adhered to and implemented. Presence of these sound structures and policies have attracted a number of development partners who have already sought and work with BHRT in a number of projects and activities

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BHRT. The BODs is an advisory organ, that guides the Management Team on proper strategic direction to take. Currently, the BODs are comprised of seven (7) members, of whom three (43%) are women. The BODs' members are persons of different professional backgrounds including lawyers; human rights experts; economists; sociologists; and, financiers.

The Management Team is headed by the Executive Director (CEO), who is assisted by legal officers, researchers, an administrator, and an accountant. The team size is now eight (8) persons, all being university graduates with first, second, and Ph.D degrees.

The BHRT expects to use this goodwill or positive gesture to solicit more partnerships and other forms of support from various stakeholders in order to finance its implementation.

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