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A Comparative Study of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights in Africa

Labor Rights Perspectives

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Furthermore, it is committed to delivering policy research and analysis, as well as fostering policy dialogues on issues relevant to the AU and Africa, all with the aim of providing valuable support to its partners, both regionally and globally.

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List of Abbreviations

BHR	Behaviour and Human Rights
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
COTU	Central Organization of Trade Unions
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
ILO	International Labour Organization
INCHR	Independent National Commission on Human Rights
KUDHEIHA	Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NAP BHR	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights
NBA	National Baseline Assessment
NHRI	National Human Rights Institutions
NSC	National Steering Committee
NWGBHR	National Working Group on Business and Human Rights
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UNGPs	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Executive Summary

This study examines the integration of labour rights considerations in the National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights (NAPs BHR) of five African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Uganda. As supply chain risks and business-related human rights breaches escalate globally, these pioneering African NAPs BHR represent critical policy instruments for advancing workers' rights and gender equality in business contexts. The assessment evaluates each NAP BHR across three dimensions—development process, content responsiveness, and implementation structures—using six discrete indicators that examine labour integration throughout the NAP BHR life cycle.

Key Findings

The analysis reveals significant variation in performance. Ghana and Kenya lead in labour stakeholder consultation during NAP BHR development, while Nigeria's consultation processes remain critically deficient. Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda have implemented strong gender consultation, demonstrating that the meaningful engagement of women workers and women's rights organisations is achievable. However, a critical regional pattern emerges: Strong consultation does not automatically translate into substantive NAP BHR content. Ghana's paradox—high gender consultation producing only moderate content responsiveness—exemplifies this systematic failure, as does Uganda's labour consultation-to-content gap. Only Kenya successfully maintains consistency between consultation quality and content substance in terms of gender dimensions.

Content analysis shows Ghana achieving the strongest labour integration, with Kenya and Liberia also demonstrating strong responsiveness to labour deficits. Uganda's moderate labour content represents a concerning decline from consultation levels, while Nigeria's moderate content, despite weak consultation, suggests technical standard incorporation without stakeholder grounding. For gender content, Kenya excels, while Ghana, Liberia, and Uganda

have achieved moderate responsiveness. Nigeria's weak gender content reflects comprehensive stakeholder engagement failures.

Implementation structures reveal universal weakness as the critical limiting factor across all countries. Ghana and Kenya maintain strong labour stakeholder involvement in implementation, but the engagement of gender stakeholder implementation lags behind the consultation level in other countries. Uganda and Liberia have achieved strong involvement in gender implementation, demonstrating that sustained stakeholder engagement is possible but requires deliberate institutional design. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks remain underdeveloped across the region, limiting accountability and adaptive management.

Cross-Cutting Challenges

Three fundamental challenges emerged across all five NAPs BHR. First, informal sector workers—constituting the majority of the workforce in these economies—remain inadequately acknowledged despite being the most vulnerable to business-related rights violations. Uganda's innovative National Social Security Fund, which allows for minimal contributions from informal workers, demonstrates what creative policy-making can achieve, yet this remains an exception. Second, gender-labour intersectionality receives insufficient attention, with only Kenya explicitly addressing how gender shapes labour experiences through provisions on wage gaps, sexual harassment, maternity protection, and unpaid care work. Third, the consultation-to-content translation gap reveals structural issues around power imbalances, technical capacity limitations, and inadequate validation mechanisms that prevent stakeholder voices from shaping policy substance even when they are heard.

Recommendations

The study recommends establishing regional peer-learning and monitoring mechanisms to enable African countries developing NAPs BHR to learn from pioneers' experiences. Countries must close consultation-to-content gaps through validation mechanisms that return draft NAPs BHR to stakeholders for verification, transparent documentation showing how input influences provisions, and technical assistance for drafting teams. NAPs BHR must include dedicated sections addressing informal sector realities, with context-appropriate interventions rather than merely extending formal sector frameworks. Gender-labour intersectionality requires explicit analysis in all NAPs BHR, with specific provisions on equal pay, gender-based violence prevention, maternity protection, and unpaid care work. Implementation demands sustained focus through multi-stakeholder bodies with real decision-making power, comprehensive monitoring frameworks with labour and gender indicators, adequate resource allocation, and periodic reviews enabling course correction.

In sum, the five African NAPs BHR represent important foundations despite incomplete progress. Uganda's social security innovations, Kenya's gender-labour integration, Ghana's labour stakeholder engagement, and Liberia's practical intervention design all provide models for regional learning. However, NAPs BHR will ultimately be measured not by consultation processes or document quality but by whether workers—especially informal sector and women workers—experience tangible improvements in rights, working conditions, and access to remedy. Success requires political will to prioritise labour and gender rights even when politically difficult, adequate resources beyond symbolic allocations, sustained stakeholder engagement throughout implementation, and genuine commitment to centring workers' voices in all their diversity. The path forward is clear, tools are available, and regional examples demonstrate what is possible. What remains is transforming policy commitments into lived improvements advancing labour and gender justice across Africa.

Introduction

In 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council endorsed the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), a set of guidelines for states and companies to prevent, address, and remedy the human rights abuses committed in business operations in their countries.¹ The guidelines recommend that countries adopt National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights (NAPs BHR) to implement the principles promoted by the UNGPs.

The UNGPs provide a comprehensive framework for the protection of the rights of workers. The framework aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in its promotion of decent work (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), responsible consumption (SDG 12), and peacebuilding (SDG 16).²

At the 46th Ordinary Session held in Banjul, The Gambia, from 11–25 November 2009, the African Union showed its commitment to upholding the UNGPs through Resolution ACHPR/Res.148 (XLVI) 09, which established the Working Group on Extractive Industries, Environment and Human Rights Violations. The working group has the responsibility to promote and protect BHR.³

African governments, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), civil society actors, and businesses have, in recent times, increased their focus on promoting BHR. In recent times, five African countries (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Nigeria, and Uganda) have adopted an NAP BHR or started implementing their own plans. Four African countries—Ethiopia, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Zambia—are currently in the latter stages of developing NAPs BHR.⁴

In this study, we review the five countries in Africa that have adopted NAPs BHR (i.e. Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nige-

ria, and Uganda) to examine the extent to which the BHR policy frameworks they adopt are sufficiently responsive to labour rights.⁵ Ultimately, it is hoped that the study will serve as a guide for countries in the process of—or are considering—developing a NAP BHR.⁶

Methodology

The methodology of this study evaluates how considerations for labour rights in general and female workers' rights in particular have been integrated into NAPs BHR across five African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Uganda.⁷ The assessment examines three interconnected dimensions: the NAP BHR development process, NAP BHR content responsiveness, and NAP BHR implementation structures.⁸ Each dimension addresses critical questions about stakeholder participation, substantive policy integration, and accountability mechanisms. Key interviews were conducted across the countries of study; a total of 12 interviewees⁹ from NHRIs, trade unions, and labour-inclined civil societies provided input to the study.

The Three-Dimensional Assessment Framework

Dimension One: The NAP BHR Development Process

This dimension examines who participated in NAP BHR development and how meaningfully they engaged. The analysis assesses whether labour stakeholders—including trade unions, workers' organisations, informal sector representatives, and labour rights civil society—participated substantively in baseline assessments, priority setting, and content drafting or whether engagement was merely symbolic.¹⁰ Similarly, it evaluates whether women workers and actors in the labour space—such as women's rights organisations and gender experts—were meaningfully involved from the beginning. The assessment considers both

1 UN guiding principles. (n.d.). Business and Human Rights Centre. <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/big-issues/governing-business-human-rights/un-guiding-principles/>

2 Buhmann, K., Jonsson, J., & Fisker, M. (2019). Do no harm and do more good too: Connecting the SDGs with business and human rights and political CSR theory. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 19(3), 389–403. <https://doi.org/10.1108/cg-01-2018-0030>

3 Abe, O. (2022). The state of business and human rights in Africa. The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung African Union Cooperation Office. <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/fes-ua/19589-20221107.pdf>

4 Country. (n.d.). National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights. <https://globalnaps.org/country/>

5 Buhmann, K., Roseberry, L., & Morsing, M. (2020). Determinants of national action plans on business and human rights: An exploratory analysis. *Business & Human Rights Journal*, 5(2), 294–317.

6 Bonnitca, J., & McCorquodale, R. (2017). The concept of 'due diligence' in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. *European Journal of International Law*, 28(3), 899–919.

7 *Doing business with respect for human rights: A guidance tool for companies* (2nd edition). (2016). Shift, Global Compact Network Netherlands, & Oxfam.

8 Mares, R. (Ed.). (2012). *The UN guiding principles on business and human rights: Foundations and implementation*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

9 These interviewees included representatives from the Uganda Building Construction Civil Engineering Cement and Allied Workers Union, the Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability, Industrial Global Union, Women & Youth Representative (Uganda), the Nigeria Trade Union, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Liberia Ministry of Justice, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, the Kenyan Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Justice [of which country?], the Uganda Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, Resource Rights Africa, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, and the Ghana Trades Union Congress.

10 Baumann-Pauly, D., & Nolan, J. (Eds.). (2016). *Business and human rights: From principles to practice*. Routledge.

breadth (how many stakeholder types participated) and depth (whether participation substantively influenced outcomes).¹¹ It also evaluates whether baseline assessments adequately examined labour rights situations and labour-related gender inequalities using relevant data sources and expertise.

Dimension Two: NAP BHR Content Responsiveness

This dimension assesses whether NAP BHR content substantively addresses labour and labour-related gender challenges, going beyond mere mentions to evaluate actionable provisions.¹² For labour, it examines whether the NAP BHR explicitly recognises challenges such as inadequate wages, unsafe conditions, barriers to collective bargaining, discrimination, precarious employment, and informal sector exclusion¹³ and whether they include specific commitments with clear responsibilities and timelines. For gender, it assesses whether the NAP BHR addresses gender wage gaps, occupational segregation, sexual harassment, maternity protection, barriers in male-dominated sectors, and unpaid care work's impact on labour participation.¹⁴ The analysis also evaluates whether the NAP BHR reflects international and regional labour and labour-related gender standards and includes adequate remedial mechanisms that enable workers to claim their rights.

Dimension Three: NAP BHR Implementation Structures

This dimension examines whether implementation structures sustain stakeholder engagement and ensure accountability.¹⁵ It assesses whether labour and gender stakeholders have meaningful roles in implementation bodies with genuine decision-making power, not merely advisory functions. The analysis evaluates if M&E frameworks include specific labour and gender indicators enabling progress tracking and course correction,¹⁶ monitoring is participatory rather than relying solely on government self-reporting, and resources support sustained stakeholder engagement. It also considers whether capacity-building enables stakeholders to understand NAP BHR content, engage effectively, and hold duty-bearers accountable.

This dimension also measures the **impact of the five NAPs BHR in their respective countries**. While some NAPs are new and have yet to be fully implemented, others have been in operation for some time. This indicator assesses

the impact on the NAP, where available, of policies, regulations, the ratification of labour conventions, and behavioural change by corporate actors.

Assessment Indicators and Rating System

The methodology employs seven discrete indicators organised in pairs examining each dimension for both labour and labour-related gender issues.¹⁷ A seventh indicator is added to the third dimension to measure the impact of each NAP BHR:

- **Indicator 1:** extent and quality of labour stakeholder consultation and input during NAP BHR development
- **Indicator 2:** extent and quality of gender stakeholder consultation and input during NAP BHR development
- **Indicator 3:** substantive responsiveness of NAP BHR content to labour rights deficits and challenges
- **Indicator 4:** substantive responsiveness of NAP BHR content to gender inequalities and challenges in labour contexts
- **Indicator 5:** extent and quality of labour stakeholder involvement in NAP BHR implementation structures and processes
- **Indicator 6:** extent and quality of gender stakeholder involvement in NAP BHR implementation structures and processes
- **Indicator 7:** extent of the positive impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors

Each indicator is evaluated using a three-tier rating system—**high**, **medium**, and **low**—reflecting qualitative assessments based on multiple criteria.¹⁸ **High** indicates exceptional performance with comprehensive, substantive attention: Diverse stakeholders are engaged meaningfully throughout development; NAPs BHR include specific, detailed commitments with clear responsibilities and timelines; and stakeholders have formal implementation roles

¹¹ Smit, L., Bright, C., McCorquodale, R., Bauer, M., Deringer, H., Baeza-Breinbauer, D., Torres-Cortés, F., Alleweldt, F., Kara, S., Salinier, C., and Tejero Tobed, H. (2020). Study on due diligence requirements through the supply chain. European Commission.

¹² Nolan, J. (2013). The corporate responsibility to respect human rights: Soft law or not law? In S. Deva & D. Bilchitz (Eds.), *Human rights obligations of business: Beyond the corporate responsibility to respect?* (pp. 138–161). Cambridge University Press.

¹³ Anner, M. (2012). Corporate social responsibility and freedom of association rights: The precarious quest for legitimacy and control in global supply chains. *Politics & Society*, 40(4), 609–644; Transitioning from the informal to the formal economy. (2015). International Labour Organization.

¹⁴ Anner, M. (2012); Transitioning from the informal to the formal economy. (2015)

¹⁵ Buhmann, K. (2016). Public regulators and CSR: The 'social licence to operate' in recent United Nations instruments on business and human rights and the juridification of CSR. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 136(4), 699–714.

¹⁶ Martin-Ortega, O. (2018). Human rights risks in global supply chains: Applying the UK Modern Slavery Act to the public sector. *Global Policy*, 9(4), 512–521.

¹⁷ Lund-Thomsen, P., Lindgreen, A., & Vanhamme, J. (2021). Industrial clusters and corporate social responsibility in developing countries: What we know, what we do not know, and what we need to know. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(1), 9–24.

¹⁸ Methven O'Brien, C., Mehra, A., Blackwell, S., & Bloch Poulsen, C. B. (2016). National action plans: Current status and future prospects for a new business and human rights governance tool. *Business and Human Rights Journal*, 1(1), 117–126.

with real decision-making power.^{19, 20} **Medium** indicates adequate but insufficient performance with significant gaps: Some stakeholders are consulted but engagement is limited in scope or depth; NAPs BHR acknowledge issues but lack specificity or leave significant deficits unaddressed; and stakeholders have advisory roles but limited decision-making power. **Low** indicates inadequate performance with minimal attention: Stakeholders are excluded from meaningful participation, NAPs BHR fail to recognise relevant deficits or lack specific commitments, and stakeholders are excluded from implementation structures.

Assessment Indicator Summary

Application and Interpretation

This methodology is applied through a document review of NAPs BHR, baseline assessments, consultation records, implementation plans, and monitoring reports, combined with stakeholder interviews and contextual analysis.²¹ Ratings should be interpreted as qualitative assessments rather than precise measurements; **high** indicates performance significantly exceeding typical regional practice, **low** may reflect capacity constraints or inadequate understanding rather than bad faith, and **medium** captures the reality that most NAPs BHR fall between excellence and failure.²² The framework's value lies in enabling structured analysis that identifies specific strengths and concrete gaps, revealing patterns such as consultation-to-content translation failures or implementation engagement weaknesses.²³ These insights inform actionable recommendations for strengthening NAPs BHR to better serve workers' rights and advance gender equality in business contexts across Africa.

¹⁹ Deva, S., & Bilchitz, D. (Eds.). (2013). *Human rights obligations of business: Beyond the corporate responsibility to respect?* Cambridge University Press.

²⁰ Cragg, W., Arnold, D. G., & Muchlinski, P. (2012). Guest editors' introduction: Human rights and business. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 22(1), 1–7.

²¹ Nieuwenkamp, R. (2016). The OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises on responsible business conduct. *Netherlands Yearbook of International Law*, 47, 213–247.

²² Cragg, W., Arnold, D. G., & Muchlinski, P. (2012)

²³ Fasterling, B., & Demuijnck, G. (2013). Human rights in the void? Due diligence in the UN guiding principles on business and human rights. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 116(4), 799–814.

Country Analyses

Kenya

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The Kenyan government aimed for a multistakeholder approach when it developed its NAP BHR. The government's commitment to a multistakeholder approach involved the inclusion of organised labour in consultations for the NAP BHR development. The Kenyan NAP BHR development process was led by the Department of Justice under the Attorney General's Office, in collaboration with the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and the NGO Kenya Human Rights Commission, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was part of the steering committee. The Kenyan Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) was one of the members of the steering committee representing trade unions' voices.

In the first step of the development process, the national steering committee (NSC) established to lead the process commissioned a national baseline assessment (NBA) to evaluate the implementation status of the UNGPs and relevant BHR frameworks. This was augmented by the Kenya Human Rights and Business Country Guide, a compilation of publicly available information from international institutions, local NGOs, government agencies, businesses, media, and universities, aiming to provide a comprehensive overview of how businesses do or may impact human rights in a local context.

The NBA was followed by policy dialogue forums held in Nairobi in October 2016 with stakeholders from the government, businesses, and civil society organisations (CSOs). Following the Kenyan NAP BHR, between November 2016 and February 2018, regional stakeholder consultations were held in different parts of the country. In each region, those consulted included officials in the national and county government, business representatives, local CSOs, and community members impacted by business operations in their respective localities. Additional consultations encompassed a national forum with Indigenous people groups. There was due regard for the gendered impacts of businesses during the consultations, an examination of each theme, and in-policy action formulation.

In this statement, organised labour groups were not mentioned as a stand-alone stakeholder. However, in inter-

views, it was mentioned that trade unions were invited to these consultations and their inputs were collected for the NAP BHR development. For example, the COTU participated in these consultations as part of the NAP BHR steering committee. Similarly, some interviewees mentioned that the Federation of Kenyan Employers, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, and the National Commerce of Kenya participated in the NAP BHR consultations. Some organised labour groups also participated in the regional multistakeholder consultation forums organised to collect input for the NAP BHR.²⁴

As a result of these consultations and recommendations from the NBA, five priority thematic areas were identified by the Kenyan NAP BHR: land and natural resources, revenue transparency, environmental protection, labour rights, and access to remedy. Therefore, the extent of labour stakeholder participation and contributions to the NAP BHR development can be assessed as **high** given their representation at the highest governance body—the NSC. Being the main umbrella body of trade unions in Kenya, COTU represented Kenyan workers' interests on the NSC. It relied upon its countrywide branches to provide outreach on the NAP BHR development process and consolidated the views of constituent trade unions and mobilised their participation at the regional consultations. Moreover, the Kenyan NAP BHR development structure established an independent Labour Rights Thematic Working Group that benefited from the participation of COTU and its affiliate trade unions.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

In Kenya, gender groups were actively consulted and represented during the NAP BHR development process. Kenya also conducted an initial mapping of rights-holders and other stakeholders to participate in the NAP BHR process. Based on this mapping, women were identified as the most vulnerable group to the human rights impacts of businesses. As such, additional specific thematic consultations were organised for these special interest groups to ensure that their interests and issues were well captured in the NAP BHR. According to a case study on the lessons learnt from the Kenya NAP BHR development process, "Among the special interest groups that were most actively represented in the discussions of thematic working groups were Indigenous communities, workers, businesses, and women."

²⁴ The following are a list of organised labour groups and the county's consultation they participated in: Kitui – Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) and Kenya Union of Commercial Food and Allied Workers; Kakamega and Kisumu – Kenya National Union of Teachers; Kiambu (Thika) and Garissa Counties – Kenya Chemical Workers Union, Kenya Plantation and Allied Workers Union, KUDHEIHA, Kenya National Union of Teachers, and Security Workers Union; Turkana County – Teachers Association of Lodwar; and Mombasa and Kwale Counties – KUDHEIHA.

Hence, the extent of gender involvement, particularly among women workers, in the Kenyan NAP BHR development can be fairly assessed as **high**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Labour Rights Deficits and Challenges

The Kenya NAP BHR addresses labour and workers' rights extensively, recognising their critical role in ensuring a just and equitable society. As stated above, labour rights are one of the five thematic focus areas identified by the NAP BHR. While the NAP BHR acknowledges that Kenya has a progressive constitutional and statutory framework for the protection of labour rights, it also acknowledges the major challenges related to labour rights in business operations. To mitigate these challenges, the Kenyan NAP BHR outlines several policy actions and thematic focus areas to strengthen labour rights in alignment with international standards.

Textual analysis of the documented processes leading towards the NAP BHR and the NAP BHR itself highlights key concerns on labour rights. One is labour rights in the informal sector. According to the NAP BHR, a significant portion of the Kenyan workforce, up to 83%, is employed in the informal sector of the economy, where workers often have fewer protections regarding collective bargaining or paid leave. On top of the casualisation of labour, the level of awareness of labour rights also happens to be at its lowest level among both the employers and employees in this sector. This lack of awareness of labour rights creates a conducive environment for the violation of all kinds of labour rights with impunity.

Despite Kenya having an adequate constitutional and policy framework for the protection of labour rights, a lack of effective remedies for labour-related grievances, attributed to weak enforcement mechanisms, an inadequate number of state labour inspectors, and a lack of effective operational-level grievance mechanisms are some of the bottlenecks for the realisation of labour rights. For example, Article 41 of the Kenyan constitution guarantees fair labour practices, and Article 30 prohibits slavery, servitude, and forced labour, while Article 27 ensures equality and freedom from discrimination, including equal rights for women and men in the economic sphere. However, due to the weak enforcement of such laws, labour rights continue to be violated and abused with impunity in the private sector.

To address these challenges, the NAP BHR proposes policy actions structured around the three pillars of the UNGPs: the State Duty to Protect, the Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights, and Access to Remedy. Hence, the NAP BHR, among others, mandates the Kenyan government to:

→ Ensure continuous training for government agency workers involved in business promotion and regulation on human rights obligations and their mandates.

→ Strengthen the capacity of the labour inspection department to handle labour-related grievances.

→ Require businesses to conduct comprehensive and credible human rights impact assessments before commencing operations and continuously review them to prevent, address, and redress human rights violations. These assessments should involve meaningful consultation with affected groups and include gendered impacts.

→ Encourage recruitment agencies to provide repatriation, legal, and psychological support to migrant workers who suffer abuse abroad.

→ Promote the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for disputes between businesses and those harmed by their operations.

→ Prioritise access to legal aid for victims of business-related human rights abuses.

→ Sensitise businesses and affected individuals on the benefits of establishing and utilising operational-level grievance mechanisms.

→ Assist community-based organisations in building technical capacity to monitor the human rights impacts of businesses and advocate remedies.

Therefore, the extent of organised labour's influence on the contents of the NAP BHR could be assessed as **medium**:

→ First, because the study could not establish whether the good coverage of the labour issues in the NAP BHR is a direct contribution of organised labour groups.

→ Second is it cannot be low since labour issues are adequately discussed in the NAP BHR, and it can be assumed that organised labour groups contributed to this coverage.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Gender Inequalities and Challenges in Labour Contexts

The Kenyan NAP BHR explicitly takes into consideration gender issues, particularly women's rights. One of the major issues discussed during NAP BHR consultations is women's rights. During stakeholder consultations for the NAP BHR, a lack of maternity leave for private-sector workers was raised as a major concern for women, despite legal provisions that guarantee this right. Widespread sexual harassment, particularly affecting women in the horticulture industry, was also mentioned, with underreporting likely due to fear of job loss. These problems are compounded by a lack of publicly available statistics disaggregated by sex and other vulnerabilities, hindering efforts to address discrimination, especially towards women, in the workplace.

Moreover, the Kenyan NAP BHR takes into consideration women's issues in the proposed policy actions for the implementation and operationalization of the UNGPs. Some of them include:

- sensitising the public, especially women and marginalised groups, on labour laws and the rights of migrant workers;
- increasing the number of labour inspectors to monitor and enforce compliance with labour standards, with particular attention to preventing and addressing sexual harassment and violence, ensuring equal pay for work of equal value, and preventing discrimination against women, marginalised groups, and minority groups;
- requiring businesses to develop and disseminate guidance on their duty to respect human rights, including implications for gender, human rights defenders, minorities, persons with disabilities, and marginalised groups, to promote responsible labour practices and inclusivity; and
- developing and disseminating guidance for businesses on establishing credible operational-level grievance mechanisms consistent with international standards and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups including women, persons with disabilities, children, and Indigenous persons.

Hence, the extent to which gender issues (narrowly defined as women's rights) are taken into consideration in the development of the contents of the NAP BHR could be assessed as **high** given the good coverage of women's rights in the NAP BHR and the active participation of women's rights advocates in the NAP BHR consultations as determined by both textual analysis and corroborated by interviews.

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

The Kenyan NAP BHR established the NSC to oversee the implementation of the NAP BHR and ensure that measures proposed in the NAP BHR are implemented. This 18-member NAP BHR NSC is chaired by the Department of Justice and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. Among the institutions selected for this committee, the COTU is one of them. Other institutions that are of interest for labour rights include the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, Kenya National Chambers of Commerce, and, from the government side, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Trade and Industrialization.

Even though the NAP BHR implementation has faced many challenges, the Kenya NAP BHR has helped embed labour rights within the BHR discourse in Kenya, elevating

state and corporate responsibilities, according to expert opinion familiar with the NAP BHR implementation. According to the Kenyan National Human Rights Commission, the NAP BHR has also furthered commitments to bolster the regulatory oversight (labour inspection, recruitment oversight, enforcement) of labour practices. For business owners, the NAP BHR has strengthened the expectation that businesses conduct human rights due diligence (HRDD) in their operations, particularly as they affect workers and improve the architecture for access to remedy for labour-related human rights violations, signalling stronger institutional support. Moreover, the NAP BHR has brought more focus on marginalised workers and gender issues within labour rights for business operations. In terms of policy changes, according to the Kenya Office of the Attorney General, Department of Justice, the NAP BHR has contributed to the revision of the procurement document to include human rights compliance as a requirement for the consideration for government tenders. The NAP BHR has also contributed to the strengthening and operationalisation of the High Court labour division, which was not active and less known before the NAP BHR was adopted.

Therefore, the extent of organised labour's involvement in the implementation of the NAP BHR can be assessed as **high** given the representation of COTU on the NAP BHR NSC and the level of awareness created on labour rights as consequences of the NAP BHR.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

Although the recognition of women workers' issues in the NAP BHR could be taken as a positive step, the NAP BHR implementation track record for tailored actions that advance the rights of women workers in business human rights contexts remains less well documented. For instance, though women's labour rights are highlighted as gender-sensitive risks, there is little evidence of specific implementation outcomes for women's rights organisations. Similarly, while organised labour gender groups may be more visible in policy spaces, at the local level, where implementation matters, their representation might be weaker or less formalised.

Therefore, the extent of the representation of organised labour gender groups in the implementation of Kenya's NAP BHR could be assessed as **medium**, because even though there is a formal inclusion of women workers, there is not much evidence to substantiate the quality, depth, and impact of their representation on the improvement of women's and gender rights in BHR contexts.

Extent of the Positive Impact of the NAP BHR on Policy, Legislation, International Convention Ratification, and Behavioural Change by Corporate Actors

Even though the Kenyan NAP BHR proposes clear legislations for enactment and amendments (e.g. the Companies Act 2015, Access to Information Act 2016, and credible operational-level grievance mechanisms),²⁵ there do not seem to be many policy and legal changes to show as outcomes of the NAP BHR development. However, the Kenya NAP BHR has clearly helped embed labour rights within the BHR discourse in the country, elevating state and corporate responsibilities. According to the Kenyan National Human Rights Commission, it has also furthered commitments to bolster regulatory oversight (labour inspection, recruitment oversight, enforcement) of labour practices. For business owners, the NAP BHR has strengthened the expectation that businesses conduct HRDD in their operations, particularly as they affect workers, and improved the architecture for access to remedy for labour-related human rights violations, signalling stronger institutional support.

Moreover, the NAP BHR has brought more focus on marginalised workers and gender issues within labour rights for business operations. In terms of policy changes, according to the Kenyan Office of the Attorney General, Department of Justice, the NAP BHR has contributed to the revision of the procurement document to include human rights compliance as a requirement for consideration of government tenders. However, the actual enjoyment of labour rights by workers remains dependent on how effectively the commitments in the NAP BHR are implemented, especially in informal work, casual employment, and sectors with weak oversight. For the above reasons, this is assessed as **medium**.

Uganda

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The Uganda NAP BHR development process involved extensive consultations across Uganda, engaging over 600 participants from 99 districts in 11 subregions. These consultations included dialogues with communities affected by business projects, persons with disabilities, women, older persons, and refugees, as well as specific meetings with the business community and women in the mining sector.

Examining the extent to which organised labour was involved in the consultation processes for the Ugandan NAP BHR, the evidence suggests some inclusion of labour/trade union actors but also gaps in the clarity and depth of their participation. According to the Ugandan NAP BHR, during

the stakeholder consultations (March–October 2019), 11 regional consultations were held, and “additional consultations ... with the business community (including business actors and trade unions) in Kampala” took place.

The National Baseline Assessment and the situation analysis, including output from the regional consultation, identified labour-rights issues (e.g., the casualisation of labour, poor remuneration, informal work, the absence of formal contracts) as a priority thematic area for the NAP BHR. According to one study on gender in NAPs BHR, trade unions are listed among recognised stakeholders for NAP BHR consultations in Uganda. Overall leadership in NAP BHR development was given to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) due to the close alignment of its mandate with BHR issues.

Nevertheless, while trade unions are mentioned in the consultation list, the sources do not provide detailed information on which unions took part, the depth of their participation (e.g., Were they able to shape the agenda? Did they represent grassroots labour concerns?), or whether informal-sector worker organisations were included. The consultations appear to have been broad and multistakeholder (communities, business actors, civil society) rather than specifically labour-organisation-led dialogues. Thus, while labour issues were covered, the labour constituency may not have had a dedicated stream or structured representation at the consultations. The NAP BHR preparatory documents emphasised consultations with “business actors and trade unions” in Kampala, but this suggests a primarily capital-level engagement rather than necessarily strong regional or grassroots trade union participation.

Similarly, there is limited publicly accessible information on whether organised labour actors were integrated into the technical working committee that drafted the NAP BHR, or whether they were part of thematic working groups focused on labour rights. The working committee membership list seems to emphasise government, civil society, and development partners and does not explicitly list labour unions. This is also substantiated by findings from interviews with two representatives of trade unions in Uganda, who stated that they were not actively included in the consultation process for the NAP BHR: “The national action plan did not consider trade unions as a partner. Trade unions were not included in the committees involved.”²⁶

Therefore, it can be concluded that organised labour in Uganda was only included in the consultation process for the NAP BHR to a moderate level. Even though trade union actors were explicitly invited and labour rights were identified as a thematic focus area, the extent of structured, meaningful, and inclusive involvement of labour or-

²⁵ National action plan on business and human rights: For the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights 2020–2025. (2020). Republic of Kenya.

²⁶ The trade unions are the Uganda Building Construction Civil Engineering Cement and Allied Workers Union and Industrial Global Union, Women & Youth Representative (Uganda).

rganisations (especially from informal sectors or regional branches) appears limited. Based on this assessment, the extent to which organised labour was involved in the consultations that were undertaken prior to the drafting of the NAP BHR could be classified as **medium**.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The development of the Uganda NAP BHR shows that gender groups (e.g., women, women’s rights organisations, vulnerable gender-related constituencies) were included to a significant extent in the consultation process. According to the NAP BHR, the consultation process was broad and included a focus on “women, vulnerable, and marginalised groups” as a priority thematic area. For example, among the over 600 participants consulted from 99 districts across 11 subregions in Uganda, women and older persons were mentioned as specific stakeholders targeted for these consultations. To ensure that women’s issues were captured in the NAP BHR, specific meetings were held with women in mining regions (for example, in the districts of Kaabong and Moroto) to capture gendered risks in extractive and related business operations.

Therefore, overall, the representation of gender groups in consultations for Uganda’s NAP BHR can be assessed as **high**, not only because of the recognition and coverage of gender issues in the NAP BHR, but also because women’s rights organisations had a seat at the table.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Labour Rights Deficits and Challenges

The role of labour rights cannot be underestimated in the initiation of Uganda’s NAP BHR. According to the MGLSD, even though the UPR recommendation was the immediate reason for the launch of the NAP BHR, there were underlying factors that compelled the government of Uganda to accept and act upon that recommendation.²⁷ The government’s development plan—Uganda National Development III—already attaches greater importance to the private sector as an engine for the socioeconomic transformation of the country, as reflected in the theme of the plan, which is: “Sustainable industrialisation for inclusive growth, employment, and wealth creation.”²⁸ To realise this objective, “There is a need to foster a dynamic and well-functioning business sector, while protecting labour rights and environmental and health standards in accordance with relevant international standards,”²⁹ according to the MGLSD. Hence, issues pertinent to respect for labour rights could be con-

sidered as one of the top priorities that necessitated the development of a NAP BHR in Uganda.³⁰

Among the eight focus areas identified by the Uganda NAP BHR, one is labour rights. Under labour rights, the NAP BHR lists key challenges, including the occupational health and safety of women in manufacturing and production industries; workers being employed without formal contracts, hence no job security; limited access to remedy for human rights abuses by business operations; delays or lack of compensations in case of workplace accidents; lack of company management support for workers joining trade unions; exploitation of employees by companies to work for long hours and with poor remuneration, especially in plantation and construction companies; lack of compliance among employers in the business sector with the laws guaranteeing labour rights; and the trafficking of persons abroad for work, with women and youth making up the majority of victims. Subsequently, such victims can experience an abuse of rights, physical and psychological violence, and a lack of protection while abroad. Child labour is also identified as a serious issue in Uganda. According to the NAP BHR, at least two million children aged 5–17 are engaged in child labour, with 1.7 million below 14 years of age and 507,000 involved in hazardous work. This includes children working in the agriculture sector, domestic services, and extractive industry (including children involved in artisanal and small-scale mining) and victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

To mitigate the above challenges, the NAP BHR outlines several strategies and interventions to address labour and workers’ rights. Some of these key strategies pertinent to labour and workers’ rights include empowering vulnerable persons to claim their rights, promoting compliance with human rights observance by business actors, and enhancing access to remedies for victims of business-related human rights abuses. For instance, the NAP BHR aims to strengthen the capacity of human resource functions in businesses to observe workers’ rights, popularise existing labour laws and occupational health and safety standards, and ensure helplines are available for reporting unsafe working conditions and other labour complaints. The NAP BHR also includes provisions for strengthening the capacity of judicial and quasijudicial institutions to provide remedies for business-related human rights violations, as well as to provide government-supported legal aid services to vulnerable groups, including workers. Moreover, the designation of the MGLSD as the coordinating body for the NAP BHR’s development further emphasises the focus on labour-related issues.

²⁷ Interview-7, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda, conducted 19 September 2025.

²⁸ Interview-7

²⁹ Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. (2021). The national action plan on business and human rights. The Republic of Uganda. https://globalNAPBHRs.org/wpcontent/uploads/2025/03/uganda_approved-national-action-plan-on-business-and-human-rights_august-2021.pdf

³⁰ Interview-2, Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability, 18 August 2025.

Although labour rights are one of the themes, the NAP BHR does not have dedicated substantive sections that explicitly outline union- or worker-organisation-led drafting influence. For instance, the document does not contain detailed annexes outlining how unions shaped specific action points or indicators. The theme “freedom of association” is noted as not explicitly addressed in the NAP BHR’s situational analysis for the labour rights section, which suggests that key union concerns (such as the right to organise) are not fully incorporated into the NAP BHR. While broad stakeholder consultations were held, the specifics of how organised labour was integrated into the technical working groups, the thematic working groups, or the drafting committee are unclear from public sources and interviews. For example, the membership list of the NAP BHR governance structure focuses on government ministries, CSOs, and development partners rather than naming trade unions.

Therefore, in a nutshell, the extent of organised labour’s influence on the NAP BHR in Uganda can be assessed as **low**, because even though labour concerns are adequately embedded in the NAP BHR and labour organisations were consulted, the depth of organised labour’s structural influence over the NAP BHR content appears to be modest. One of the major gaps in this regard is that, while labour issues are extensively discussed in the NAP BHR, the plan does not strongly foreground union priorities, such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, and union representation with union-led governance mechanisms. In other words, while organised labour’s voice is heard and captured in the outcomes to some degree, it does not appear to have primary control or dominance over the drafting of the NAP BHR’s content. All in all, there is no strong, publicly documented evidence that organised labour had parity in agenda setting, indicator development, budgeting, or monitoring frameworks compared to other stakeholders (government, business, and civil society).

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Gender Inequalities and Challenges in Labour Contexts

In the process of developing the Ugandan NAP BHR, significant consideration was given to gender issues. One of the eight priority thematic areas of the Uganda NAP BHR involves women, vulnerable, and marginalised groups. A dedicated section in the situational analysis discusses women’s labour market issues and other gendered dimensions of business-related human rights abuses. The NAP BHR acknowledges that in sectors such as extractives (mining), agriculture, and value chains, women often bear the “disproportionate share of social, economic and environmental risks,” while men capture more benefits. For example, during stakeholder consultations, women working in mining are reported to face unsafe conditions, sexual

harassment, poor sanitation, and exposure to hazardous substances (e.g., mercury). Women workers in agriculture and informal sectors (the majority of whom are women) are noted as among the lowest-paid and least protected workers. The NBA and situational analysis have flagged sexual harassment, discrimination, pay gaps, lack of maternity protection, and informal sector risks for women. Moreover, the Uganda NAP BHR also recognises gender as a cross-cutting issue across thematic areas (environment, land and natural resources, and labour rights). In the action framework of the NAP BHR, there are outputs such as “advocate for gender equality through ensuring equal opportunity to both men and women in business operations and promotion of the gender equality seal.” The NAP BHR also includes actions such as the “elimination of sexual harassment in business operations” and specifies that due diligence by businesses should include “meaningful consultation with potentially affected groups, including consideration of gendered impacts of operations and covering value and supply chains.

Therefore, putting the above together, it can be argued that the Uganda NAP BHR incorporates issues affecting female workers to a considerable extent. The document shows a clear awareness of the gendered impacts of business operations, includes women workers and vulnerable groups as a thematic priority, and embeds gender references in both situational analysis and strategic objectives. However, the depth of integration into all aspects of content (action points and monitoring across sectors), and the comprehensiveness (especially of intersectional gender issues and nonbinary gender identities) can be assessed as **medium** rather than high.

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

There is moderate involvement of organised labour in the implementation of the Uganda NAP BHR. As stated earlier, the NAP BHR assigns leadership for implementation to the MGLSD, meaning that labour issues are institutionally placed within the coordinating ministry. The NAP BHR’s strategic implementation framework includes explicit actions relevant to labour functions, for example: “Review and strengthen the capacity and function of ... labour officers ... to handle labour-related grievances.”³¹ Since the adoption of the NAP BHR, concrete activities related to labour rights implementation have been conducted, such as the training of recruitment companies by the Uganda Human Rights Commission on rights in labour externalisation.³² Similarly, the M&E mechanisms are defined such that “key stakeholders at all levels will undertake monitoring and evaluation” of the NAP BHR. This means labour

³¹ Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. (2021)

³² Interview-4, Uganda Human Rights Commission, 21 August 2025.

actors (through the MGLSD) have a defined place in the system.

However, some gaps remain in the involvement of organised labour in the implementation of the NAP BHR. For example, there is only meagre evidence that organised labour (e.g., trade unions, workers' associations) have structured seats on the implementation coordinating bodies (e.g., on the Multisectoral Technical Committee) beyond the government ministry role. The NAP BHR lists senior technical staff from key line ministries and agencies but does not clearly list labour union representatives. In Uganda, the NAP BHR was adopted at the cabinet level without parliamentary scrutiny, and no national budget allocation is clearly earmarked for implementation. This limits resourcing and the capacity of labour stakeholders to engage fully. Moreover, implementation actions appear more oriented to raising capacity and awareness (e.g., strengthening labour officers, awareness of labour rights) than transformational or union-driven governance change (e.g., union participation in business due diligence, collective bargaining in supply chains, etc.). Even though there is an M&E framework in place, there is limited reporting showing how labour rights indicators (e.g., for decent work, freedom of association) are being tracked and how labour organisations are participating in the M&E. Compared to civil society and business actors, organised labour appears less visible in the public discourse about the NAP BHR's implementation in Uganda, which suggests that labour organisations may not be leveraging implementation structures to their full potential.

According to an interview with a trade union representative, their union has attended two consultations on NAP BHR implementation through one of their partners but not through direct invitation from the organisers.³³ Another trade union representative stated that they were only exposed to the Uganda NAP BHR through their participation in the 2nd Africa Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights held in Addis Ababa.³⁴ This being said, it is also important to recognise the challenges within trade unions related to not speaking with one voice, internal disagreements, competitions, and efforts by businesses to keep them weak, disorganised, and divided.³⁵

Therefore, one might judge labour's involvement in the NAP BHR's implementation in Uganda as moderate but still emerging, since they are included by virtue of the labour ministry's leadership and relevant labour actions in the framework, but organised labour's voice, participation, and influence appear not yet fully institutionalised or robust in the implementation phase. As stated in the NAP BHR, labour issues are clearly prioritised on the agenda and part of the action plan. However, organised labour is

not clearly documented as a key decision-making partner in implementation governance (at least based on public documents). Many of the labour-related actions focus on capacity building rather than core structural labour rights reform (from a union perspective). For labour organisations to have stronger involvement, one would expect formalised roles (e.g., seats on committees), dedicated budget lines, the union-led monitoring of business practices, and union engagement in corporate due diligence. These seem less visible so far based on this assessment. Hence, the extent of organised labour involvement in the NAP BHR implementation could be assessed as **medium**.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and s

The representation of organised gender groups in the implementation of Uganda's NAP BHR appears to be strong. As stated earlier, the NAP BHR identifies the MGLSD as the lead coordinating agency for the implementation. This already places gender issues at the centre of NAP BHR implementation. The NAP BHR implementation institutional framework assigns CSOs as key stakeholders in the implementation, including women's groups and organisations representing vulnerable women, such as:

- the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FI-DA-Uganda), which is listed among the members of the Technical Working Committee guiding NAP BHR development;
- the Uganda Equal Opportunities Commission, though not strictly a women's rights NGO but has a gender equality mandate and was involved in the NAP BHR development process; and
- the Uganda Women's Network, which contributed to ensuring gender equality processes in Uganda.

Given the strong participation of organised women's rights group in the NAP BHR implementation processes and adequate coverage of women's rights issues in the NAP BHR, the representation of women's rights groups (not necessarily gender groups broadly defined) in the implementation of the NAP BHR can be assessed as **high**.

Extent of the Positive Impact of the NAP BHR on Policy, Legislation, International Convention Ratification, and Behavioural Change by Corporate Actors

All in all, the Ugandan NAP BHR contributed to the strengthening of the framework for improving labour rights within the business context in Uganda, making it more likely that labour rights (such as safe working conditions,

³³ Interview-1, Uganda Building Construction Civil Engineering Cement and Allied Workers Union, 15 August 2025.

³⁴ Interview-3, Industrial Global Union, Women & Youth Representative (Uganda), 19 August 2025.

³⁵ Interview-7

nondiscrimination, decent contracts, and access to remedy) will receive more systematic attention in business operations. For workers in formal employment or in business operations subject to oversight, the NAP BHR may incrementally improve their enjoyment of labour rights (through better inspection, improved employer practices, and greater avenues to redress). Based on in-depth interviews, the Uganda NAP BHR also contributed to the following policy/legal amendments and discussions:

- The occupational health and safety reform was passed.
- The employment amendment act was reviewed but not signed by the president because of a minimum wage issue. The Office of the President is proposing a sectoral minimum wage than a general minimum wage.
- The pension scheme was reformed to include civil servants' contribution (5% from civil servants and 10% from the government) and therefore contributing to the sustainability of the scheme and improved social protection.
- A National Social Security Fund was created allowing informal workers to contribute \$1.2 dollars per year to their security fund. Before the NAP BHR, they used to be locked out of the social security fund.

However, for large segments of workers—especially in informal, casual, or vulnerable work (agriculture, women's labour, mining, youth labour abroad)—the actual enjoyment of improved labour rights remains contingent on substantial implementation progress. Without strong enforcement, resources, awareness, and business uptake, the promises of the NAP BHR may not fully translate into improved conditions. In other words, the NAP BHR has positive potential, but the real-world impact on the enjoyment of labour rights will depend heavily on how the measures are operationalised, resourced, and enforced. For the above reasons, the impact of the Ugandan NAP BHR is assessed as **medium**.

Ghana

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The Ghana NAP BHR was developed through a collaborative, consultative, and evidence-based process led by the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Office of the Attorney General. A multi-stakeholder steering committee comprising government ministries, civil society, business associations, and labour groups oversaw the drafting of the plan. The Trades Union

Congress (TUC) was consulted in the validation of the baseline assessment. Furthermore, there was a TUC representative on the steering committee appointed for the development of the NAP BHR. The Ministry of Labour and Employment was also represented on the NAP BHR.

Additionally, the steering committee received additional written input from some labour groups.³⁶ Consultations were conducted nationwide across five zones. A special consultation was organised for the labour and employment rights community, and a broad representation of labour groups attended. These included the following:

- Public Services Workers' Union
- Trades Union Congress
- Timber and Woodworkers Union
- Communication Workers Union
- General Construction, Manufacturing and Quarries Workers Union
- Railway Workers Union
- Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
- Union of Industry, Commerce and Finance Workers
- Public Utility Workers Union
- Health Services Workers' Union
- National Association of Registered Midwives
- Ghana Federation of the Disabled
- National Union of Seamen, Ports and Allied Workers
- Teachers' and Educational Workers Union
- Ghana Private Road Transport Union

The Ghana Agricultural Workers Union was tasked to represent the TUC and labour in general on the NAP BHR steering committee.

In addition, the labour representatives ensured that labour- and employment-related issues were incorporated into all the feedback sessions during the nationwide stakeholder consultations.³⁷ On the whole, the extent of labour stakeholder consultation in the development of the NAP BHR can be assessed as **high**.

³⁶ These groups included the Timber and Wood Workers Union of TUC, the Ghana Mine Workers Union of TUC, the Public Utilities Workers Union of TUC, the General Construction, Manufacturing and Quarries Workers Union of TUC, and the Health Services Workers Union of TUC.

³⁷ Interview with the co-chairperson of the Ghana NAP BHR steering committee.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

Women workers were actively consulted during the creation of the NAP BHR. Targeted stakeholder consultative workshops were conducted specifically for women workers from both formal and informal sectors to ensure their participation and input. Additionally, the development process involved broader national stakeholder participation, including women workers from various sector unions at every given location.

In addition to this, there were a number of questions on gender issues built into the questionnaire administered to stakeholders. On the whole, the extent of gender involvement in the development of the NAP BHR can be fairly assessed as **high**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Labour Rights Deficits and Challenges

The final NAP BHR set out a detailed strategy for addressing BHR challenges facing labour in Ghana. The contents are a reflection of the challenges faced by Ghana's workforce and were heavily influenced by organised labour representatives. The TUC and affiliates were consulted for the baseline assessment, and after the consultations, the steering committee received input from sector unions and the TUC to be considered in the NAP BHR.

Consequently, the NAP BHR outlines issues relating to occupational safety and health, the unionisation of workers, the enforcement of minimum wage standards, and challenges relating to discrimination in the workplace.³⁸ The Ghana NAP BHR includes several interventions that address these concerns. These responses are predicated on the UNGPs.³⁹

In addition to this, the Ghana NAP BHR aligns with several International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and principles. Ghana has ratified key ILO conventions and adheres to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The NAP BHR emphasises compliance with labour rights, occupational safety, and health standards, which are central to ILO conventions. The Ghana NAP BHR also acknowledges gaps in compliance with certain ILO conventions. For example, Ghana has not ratified some relevant ILO conventions, such as the Employment Policy Convention (No. 122), Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention (No. 129), and others listed in Appendix 4 of the document. The NAP BHR includes strategies to address these gaps, such as signing and ratifying relevant ILO conventions and strengthening institutional capacity to en-

force labour rights. These were largely at the instance of the labour stakeholders on the committee and in attendance at stakeholder meetings. The content of the NAP BHR is therefore rated as **high**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Gender Inequalities and Challenges in Labour Contexts

The Ghana NAP BHR explicitly seeks to address Ghana's most egregious gender-related labour BHR issues. It highlights the fact that women continue to suffer overt and subtle discrimination in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of life. A number of interventions are proposed to address these gaps. The NAP BHR emphasises empowering women and promoting their inclusion in business operations. These are stated as including the following:

- Sexual relations for employment were frequently raised as a concern in the stakeholder consultations. This was raised as an issue in Ghana's services sector in particular.
- Gender wage/pay gaps were observed in Ghana's private sector.
- Sexual and gender-based workplace violence was reported.
- Inadequate maternity leave or maternity leave without pay continued to be an issue.
- Businesswomen also faced sexual abuse and exploitation at borders.
- Women were inadequately consulted on programmes and projects affecting them.

It also advocates protecting women's rights and their active participation in decision-making processes. These points demonstrate the NAP BHR's focus on addressing challenges faced by women and promoting their rights and inclusion in BHR practices.⁴⁰ This is therefore assessed as **high**.

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

Ghana's plan outlines activities to build the capacity of stakeholders, including employers and employees, on labour rights and social protection laws. It also includes sen-

³⁸ See pp. 18, 43, 44, and 96 of Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice & Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. (2025). Ghana national action plan on business and human rights. Republic of Ghana.

³⁹ The Ghana AIDS Commission's ongoing review of its HIV/TB Human Rights Strategy adopts some insights from the Ghana NAP BHR.

⁴⁰ Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice & Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. (2025)

sitisation programmes to promote compliance with minimum wage arrangements and social security contributions.

Ghana's NAP BHR proposes mechanisms to monitor and enforce compliance with labour laws and collective agreements, ensuring accountability by business actors. Labour groups, including the TUC, are actively involved in the implementation and M&E of the Ghana NAP BHR. The TUC is expected to:

- advocate the effective implementation of the NAP BHR;
- build partnerships and networks with government and other actors to implement the NAP BHR;
- promote and disseminate the NAP BHR to create awareness;
- report violations and abuses of BHR to relevant institutions for redress; and
- organise sensitisation programmes for workers on labour rights and social protection laws.

Organised labour is also given an important role in the M&E process of the NAP BHR. The TUC is a member of the NAP BHR Monitoring Committee, which is responsible for tracking the progress of the NAP BHR implementation. Organised labour is also expected to collaborate with the CHRAJ and other stakeholders in monitoring compliance with labour rights and human rights standards, as well as provide input and feedback during periodic review meetings and reporting processes.

The involvement of organised labour ensures that workers' perspectives and concerns are integrated into the implementation and monitoring of the NAP BHR, promoting accountability and effective protection of labour rights. Nevertheless, there are challenges. It is unclear which financing mechanisms will be available for the implementation stage of the process. Implementing the plan will require a significant financial commitment from the state and from the CHRAJ. There will be challenges in integrating the plan's indicators and objectives into the state's existing reporting and monitoring mechanisms. Finally, the NAP BHR document underscores the need for robust enforcement mechanisms and stakeholder collaboration to address these labour rights violations effectively. It does not fully specify how this is to occur. Nevertheless, we assess the involvement of labour in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR to be **high**.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

There are adequate levels of gender representation in the implementation of Ghana's NAP BHR, though there could be improvements in the extent of formal female worker involvement during the implementation stage.⁴¹ The NAP BHR implementation stage promotes the active participation of women workers in BHR activities and includes targets for sensitising informal-sector women's worker groups to BHR norms and practices. The NAP BHR also has strategies and interventions that seek to review policies to curtail child labour in the mining, fishing, and farming sectors.

The NAP BHR recommends developing a gender-sensitive stakeholder manual on compulsory land acquisition for female workers. It also requires the development of gender-responsive BHR policies that comply with standards for state-owned enterprises. Indicators for implementing some of these policies include monitoring the number of women in leadership positions for BHR roles. It also envisages the development of gender-sensitive policies and manuals to address land acquisition issues. These interventions will be supported by a communication strategy that aims to promote gender equity among vulnerable groups, especially women, to increase access to remedies. The NAP BHR also references the goals of Ghana's National Gender Policy. However, the NAP BHR is silent on how these processes are to be financed. The NAP BHR's implementation institutions are also not designed to guarantee equitable gender representation among their personnel. For the above reasons, we assess the level of gender involvement in the implementation of Ghana's NAP BHR as **medium**.

Extent of the Positive Impact of the NAP BHR on Policy, Legislation, International Convention Ratification, and Behavioural Change by Corporate Actors

Ghana's NAP BHR is still relatively new. It was launched in 2025, and it is still in the process of obtaining parliamentary ratification. However, it has begun to have some policy impact on the country. The recently promulgated Gender Equity Act,⁴² for example, has some provisions that take their impetus, if not their inspiration, from the Ghana NAP BHR. In addition to this, ongoing legislative and policy initiatives relating to labour,⁴³ as well as human rights for persons living with HIV and TB,⁴⁴ took the Ghana NAP BHR into consideration. It is hoped that as full implementation of the NAP BHR is begun and the Ghana NAP BHR monitoring strategy and communication strategy are implemented, the NAP BHR will have a greater impact. Currently, the impact of the NAP is assessed as **low**.

⁴¹ Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice & Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. (2025)

⁴² Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act 2024; interview with a representative from the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection on the NAP BHR steering committee

⁴³ See the ongoing revisions to The Labour Act 2003; interview with representative from the Ministry of Labour and Employment on the Ghana NAP BHR steering committee

⁴⁴ The Ghana AIDS Commission's ongoing review of its HIV/TB Human Rights Strategy adopts some insights from the Ghana NAP BHR.

Nigeria

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The NAP BHR for Nigeria is contained in chapter eight of the broader NAP for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria (2024–2028).⁴⁵ It has been developed to deepen the promotion and protection of human rights following the expiration of an earlier NAP BHR on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in 2013. The general NAP BHR was developed in response to human rights violations and abuses that occurred in Nigeria, especially in the '90s. The National Human Rights Commission led consultations between ministries, departments, agencies, and civil society groups to review the implementation of the previous NAP BHR on human rights and document lessons learnt.

The development of the NAP for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria and, by extension, the NAP BHR was led by a steering committee and a coordinating committee. However, there is no evidence of organised labour representation on these committees for the development of the NAP BHR. Neither is there any compelling evidence of attempts to consult with organised labour to obtain their inputs on the contents of the NAP BHR. However, in an interview with a trade unionist from Nigeria, he stated that the Petroleum Sector Union (NUPENG) and Aviation Sector Union (NUATE) participated in developing the NAP BHR for Nigeria.⁴⁶ In addition to this, due to the circumstances surrounding the development of the NAP BHR, there was no national baseline assessment of BHR conducted before the NAP BHR was developed. Thus, we assess the extent of labour stakeholder consultation in the development of the NAP BHR as **low**.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

There was no mention of women workers being consulted for the NAP BHR. This is partly because of the NAP BHR not being a stand-alone plan. The consultations that took place were therefore not very specific to BHR in our estimation.

We therefore conclude that the extent of gender involvement in the development of the NAP BHR is also **low**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Labour Rights Deficits and Challenges

Since there is no concrete evidence of labour's active involvement in the consultations and development of the

NAP BHR, we infer that the influence of labour on the contents of the NAP BHR is minimal at best.

However, the NAP BHR did identify a number of challenges relative to labour, including:

- the casualisation of employment, especially in the oil and gas sector, as well as the telecommunications, banking, and financial services sectors;
- contradictions in the provisions of the Nigerian Labour Act about freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex at the place of employment; as provided by Section 42 of the Nigerian Constitution;
- the cost of litigation as a major impediment to access to remedies for victims of business human rights abuses;
- the enforcement of the judgement of the court for successful litigants in labour rights matters;
- the ratification of ILO Convention 176 (Safety and Health in Mines 1995);
- challenges regarding freedom of association under the Trade Union (Amendment) Act 2005;
- the limitation of the Freedom of Information Act 2011 to only public institutions, including a lack of whistleblower protection law;
- a lack of adequate human rights, conflict, and environmental impact assessment when land is being acquired for development or business purposes;
- a lack of effective, transparent, and sustainable grievance mechanisms for businesses to address conflicts with communities, including the documenting and reporting of activities of settlement;
- businesses not taking the Local Content Act 2010 into consideration in their employment process;
- certain laws on business and employment being obsolete and not aligned with international standards;
- a lack of inclusive security coverage for every entity in the business value chain, including business facilities, employees, suppliers, contractors, infrastructure, and the community;
- a lack of a realistic, implementable BHR reporting mechanism for businesses to report on their BHR situation; and

⁴⁵ See the National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Nigeria (2024–2028), available at <https://www.nigeriarights.gov.ng/activities/nap/458-national-action-plan-for-the-promotion-and-protection-of-human-rights-2024-2028.html>.

⁴⁶ All the five except one of the labour union representatives that the research team contacted were unwilling to grant interviews on the Nigerian NAP BHR.

- a lack of a clear policy and guidance note developed by the government on the exit strategy of businesses when their operations come to an end.⁴⁷

The Nigeria NAP BHR proposes to deal with the challenges broadly through legislation and policies. The following are some of the specific interventions proposed in the NAP BHR:

- Enforce and review existing laws or enact new legislation that require businesses to respect human rights in their operations.
- Ensure that all businesses carry out a human rights impact assessment before the commencement of business, while those already in business should do so within two years.
- Mandate businesses to communicate how they address the human rights impact of their operations.
- Review the Trade Union Act (2005) to address the challenges of freedom of association, the rights to collective bargaining, and the right to strike actions.
- Enact whistleblower protection laws at the federal and state levels to protect whistleblowers from any form of victimisation or retaliation and encourage employees of both public and private sectors to report cases of human rights abuses and violations without fear of losing their jobs.
- The Federal Government of Nigeria and all state governments should include in all contracts, memoranda of understanding, and other business-related policy documents a clause that clearly spells out the human rights obligations of the parties, including possible sanctions for violations.

Lead agencies should realise that this includes the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Budget and National Planning, the Corporate Affairs Commission, and the Nigerian Investment Promotion Council.⁴⁸

With specific reference to employment, the NAP BHR proposes that the National Working Group on BHR develop guidance notes for companies to manage their employment processes in compliance with human rights standards, ensuring nondiscrimination and preventing child labour. In doing so, gender and disability concerns will be taken into consideration in accordance with the relevant provisions of labour laws.

In light of the above, we assess the content of labour-focused interventions in the NAP BHR as **medium**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Gender Inequalities and Challenges in Labour Contexts

On gender, the NAP BHR mentions that there will be deliberate measures to mainstream gender considerations in BHR. However, there is, on the whole, insufficient specific references to gender challenges in the NAP BHR in relation to labour. Our assessment of the extent to which gender issues were taken into consideration is therefore **low**.

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

In terms of implementation arrangements, the NAP BHR proposes that the government establish a National Working Group on Business and Human Rights (NWGBHR) to coordinate all activities of agencies involved in addressing human rights and business-related issues.

It is noted in the NAP BHR that the government, through its agencies, will engage in the mobilisation, sensitisation, and awareness creation in the NAP BHR. The awareness-raising will be strategic and involve all three tiers of government. The NWGBHR will enter into negotiations with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria and related bodies to ensure compliance with this plan. It will also carry out robust sensitisation of the public to empower them to demand a letter of contract/engagement from employers, irrespective of the nature or duration of the engagement.

Considering the importance of education in human rights protection, the NAP BHR states that governments at all levels will develop policies to advance BHR education.

This may include introducing courses on BHR in tertiary institutions and offering scholarships, fellowships, and research grants to advance knowledge in the field of human rights and business. The NWGBHR is responsible for liaising with the Ministry of Education and relevant parastatals to advance human rights education as a channel to enhance government protection obligations.

In all these implementation arrangements, no specific mention is made of the role of organised labour. We therefore assess labour's involvement in the implementation of the NAP BHR as **low**.

⁴⁷ National Human Rights Commission. (2024). National action plan for the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria 2024–2028. Federal Republic of Nigeria.

⁴⁸ National Human Rights Commission. (2024)

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

Here, too, the NAP BHR does not mention the role of organised gender groups in its implementation arrangement. Neither are there specific references nor interventions to address the gender challenges in the NAP BHR. Again, there is no reference to women workers' representation among the admittedly scant groups consulted for the development of the NAP BHR. We therefore rank the extent of organised labour gender group representation in the implementation of the NAP BHR as **low**.

Extent of the Positive Impact of the NAP BHR on Policy, Legislation, International Convention Ratification, and Behavioural Change by Corporate Actors

Given that the Nigerian NAP BHR is fairly new and no 'significant' labour consultations were held during its drafting, it remains challenging to measure any real impacts at this time. We, however, recognise the efforts of various stakeholders to develop the NAP BHR and hope that, by the time this NAP BHR expires, significant impacts will be felt in the country regarding labour rights. We currently assess the impact of the Nigerian NAP BHR as **low**.

Liberia

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The NAP BHR of Liberia was developed by the National Steering Committee on Business and Human Rights to guide the implementation of the UNGPs in Liberia. The Ministry of Justice led the process of developing the NAP BHR, with the Ministry of Labour as the co-lead. The Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR), CSOs, and the private sector were part of the process, with technical and financial support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).⁴⁹

Several consultations were held, including the following:

- In November 2019, over 30 stakeholders, including government institutions, CSOs, the INCHR, and the business community, gathered in Ganta, Nimba County, to review and validate a draft road map and work plan for the NAP BHR. Participants also agreed to the conduct of a baseline assessment and nationwide consultations to raise awareness and collect inputs from locals and affected communities to be included in the NAP BHR.

- In 2021, other consultations were held in Grand Bassa and Nimba Counties, where more than 100 participants, including representatives from relevant government institutions, the National Commission on Disability, CSOs, the business community, youth groups, and women groups, participated.

- In May 2022, a cross-section of more than 30 stakeholders convened in Monrovia to build on the NAP BHR framework document previously developed during the 2019 and 2021 technical working retreats. This was facilitated by the Ministry of Justice, OHCHR, and a national consultant.⁵⁰

- In June 2022, the Ministry of Justice, with support from OHCHR, held a nationwide awareness and media outreach initiative aimed at bolstering the knowledge and comprehension of citizens and residents regarding the development of the NAP BHR. The campaign covered three regions: the South-Eastern, Western, and Central Regions.

However, the document does not specifically mention representation from organised labour on the steering committee for the development of the NAP BHR. In an interview with an official of the Ministry of Justice of Liberia, he indicated that trade unions were consulted in drawing up the NAP BHR, but he could not immediately mention the trade unions that were consulted.⁵¹

Our assessment of the extent of labour stakeholder consultation in the development of the NAP BHR can be assessed as **medium**. Despite insufficient consultation with organised labour, the role of the Ministry of Labour in pre-NAP BHR consultations suggests some incipient attempts to take labour concerns into account.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Consultation and Input During NAP BHR Development

The Liberia NAP BHR notes that between 2019 and 2022, several stakeholder consultations were held including representatives from relevant government institutions, the National Commission on Disability, CSOs, the business community, youth groups, and women groups, among others.

Our assessment of the extent of gender groups' involvement in the development of the NAP BHR is ranked as **medium**, as there is some evidence of gender-focused consultations occurring prior to the development of the NAP BHR.

⁴⁹ The Republic of Liberia. (2025). National action plan on business and human rights 2024–2028. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

⁵⁰ The Republic of Liberia. (2025)

⁵¹ Interview with a senior official of the Liberian Ministry of Justice held on 14 August 2025.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Labour Rights Deficits and Challenges

Even though we could not independently assess how many labour groups played a role in the development of the NAP BHR, we recognise that a lot of labour issues were discussed in the NAP BHR. In fact, labour was one of the six thematic areas that the NAP BHR focused on.

The NAP BHR consultations identified the following concerns relative to labour:

- the casualisation of employment;
- the exploitation and abuse of labourers, especially in the retail and small business sectors;
- the dubious contracting of women to foreign countries under the pretext of going to acquire legal domestic work, but in effect ending up in conditions of enslavement;
- businesses not adhering to affirmative action provisions restricting certain retail businesses to Liberian ownership;
- a lack of a realistic, implementable BHR reporting mechanism for concession companies to report on their BHR situation;
- wage discrimination based on special interest;
- employment discrimination against persons with disabilities;
- rampant piracy and persistent infringements of copyrights;
- delays in adjudicating matters before the courts (including the Labour Court);
- weak commitments to resolve recurring business vs. community disputes;
- persistent sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) cases against females/males seeking employment, and SEA pressure on female workers vying for promotion;
- inadequate enforcement of the judgement of the court for successful litigants;
- unsafe working conditions;
- contradictions in the provisions of the Decent Work Act and the CSA Standing Order; and

- an increased number of children under 18 engaged in hazardous work.⁵²

The NAP BHR proposes a number of interventions to deal with the labour issues, some of which include:

- Support for the inclusion of human rights policies in all contracts. Memoranda of understanding and other business-related policy documents shall include a clause outlining the parties' human rights obligations, including possible sanctions for violations.
- Concerning employment, the NWGBHR, when established, shall develop guidance notes for companies to manage their employment processes in compliance with human rights standards to ensure nondiscrimination and prevent child and forced labour.

The NAP BHR also notes that the Ministry of Labour shall take steps to curb the incidence of casualisation in labour, as well as hazardous, unsafe, and discriminatory workplace practices. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its monitoring and implementation processes to give effect to applicable laws. Where any law is not in compliance with human rights standards, that law shall be reviewed. Public education shall be provided to empower members of the public to demand a letter of contract/engagement from employers, irrespective of the nature or duration of their work engagement.

The government at all levels shall develop policies that advance BHR education. This may include introducing BHR courses in tertiary institutions and offering scholarships, fellowships, and research grants to advance knowledge in the field of BHR. There shall be public media campaigns and writing competitions among the youth population on BHR.

Further, the NAP BHR states that business enterprises will be required to produce a clear, simple, and understandable human rights policy within their value chain that reflects their commitment to promoting human rights in their operations. This policy shall guide all operations of the business and shall be conspicuously displayed on the website, at the gate, or in the reception area of the company, including a braille version for those with visual impairments.

The rights of staff shall be made clear as they relate to respect for human rights. Staff shall also be trained in various aspects of human rights, especially as they pertain to company operations. It is expected that the policy shall allocate roles and responsibilities and specify the departments within the company responsible for human rights issues. This shall apply to all companies irrespective of size, scope of operations, or type of business.

⁵² See page 18 of The Republic of Liberia. (2025).

Companies and other places of business shall conspicuously display hard copies of the Decent Work Act in areas for easy access by workers.

All businesses operating in Liberia shall be mandated to conduct HRDD from the onset, which shall identify possible human rights violations arising from their operations. HRDD shall address negative human rights impacts that may be linked directly or remotely to business operations, products, or services.

Businesses operating in Liberia shall be obligated to annually report on their human rights compliance. The NWG-BHR shall work closely with various regulatory agencies to incorporate human rights reporting and monitoring templates in their regulatory framework. An appropriate sector-specific template and checklist shall be developed for this, with input from relevant stakeholders in respective sectors.

We assess organised labour's influence on the content of the NAP BHR as **high**.

Substantive Responsiveness of NAP BHR Content to Gender Inequalities and Challenges in Labour Contexts

Based on the NAP BHR, women's participation in leadership and decision-making remains low, with only 11% representation in the legislature (at the time of this document's crafting).

It also states that women continue to have limited access to education, health, and judicial services, severely curtailing their participation in the formal economy. The lack of qualified women is often cited as the main reason for the limited representation of women across sectors, including the security sector. Women and girls continue to suffer sexual abuse and gender-based violence. SEA remains prevalent in society. Unwanted pregnancies continue to be registered in many parts of the country, including in places where people converge to find work. Public infrastructure remains 'unfriendly' to people with mobility challenges. Additionally, the visually impaired have limited or no access to the basic setups required to aid their interaction with other members of the public and use of public facilities. There is also a lack of meaningful consultation with wom-

en about projects being carried out on their land, as well as a lack of a clear mechanism for their participation in decisions about the development of their community.

To deal with some of the gender issues enumerated above, the NAP BHR proposes the following, among others:

- The government shall take measures to mainstream gender considerations in BHR. In awarding scholarships or other benefits based on corporate social responsibility, including employment, contracts, and compensation, special consideration shall be given to the interests of women and persons with disabilities.
- In all business-related meetings, consultations, dialogues, or negotiations, the government shall adopt a policy that ensures women and persons with disabilities are fully represented.
- Labour practices that are discriminatory to women and persons with disabilities for employment, promotion, and incentives are to be addressed and eliminated.
- Given the vulnerability of women and persons with disabilities, the government shall take measures to mainstream gender considerations in BHR. Accordingly, in all meetings, consultations, dialogue, or negotiations, women and persons with disabilities shall be fully represented.

Our assessment of the extent to which gender issues were taken into consideration is **medium**.

Extent and Quality of Labour Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

Regarding the implementation arrangement, the government is tasked to establish a NWGBHR to coordinate all activities of the agencies involved in dealing with human rights and business-related programmes.

Membership of the working group shall consist of a cross-section of ministries, agencies, commissions, and CSOs already providing advocacy on the front lines of human rights defence within the country.

The government is also tasked with establishing a National Technical Working Group on BHR to conduct all technical sessions. Members shall include the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour, the INCHR, the National Commission on Disabilities, CSO representatives, the National Investment Commission, the National Bureau of Concessions, the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, private sector representatives, and relevant development partners.

Even though in all these implementation arrangements, no specific mention is made of the role of organised labour, we see the attempt to involve them in the implementation; as such, we rank organised labour's involvement as **medium**.

Extent and Quality of Gender Stakeholder Involvement in NAP BHR Implementation Structures and Processes

The NAP BHR makes a number of gender related recommendations for implementation and matches gender-related institutions, such as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the National Council on Disabilities, and UN Women, among others, to lead the process. The estimated costs for undertaking these specific interventions have also been stated. We therefore rank gender group representation in the implementation as **medium**.

Extent of the Positive Impact of the NAP BHR on Policy, Legislation, International Convention Ratification, and Behavioural Change by Corporate Actors

The Liberian NAP BHR is also fairly new; as such, it is a bit challenging to measure any significant impacts at this time. There is currently no evidence of its policy or legislative impacts. Neither is there any evidence of it resulting in additional ratifications of ILO conventions by the Liberian government or Liberian businesses. It is, however, expected, looking at some of the practical and well thought through interventions that are proposed in the NAP BHR, if well carried out, that by the time a midterm review and a final post-NAP BHR review are done, there will be signs of real impacts on labour. Currently, however, given its relative recency, its impact is assessed as **low**.

Cross-Country Analysis of the Five NAPs BHR

The five countries analysed represent diverse economic contexts within Sub-Saharan Africa. Ghana and Kenya have relatively mature democratic institutions and active civil society sectors. Nigeria, as Africa's largest economy, presents unique challenges given its scale and federal structure. Liberia, emerging from conflict, demonstrates post-conflict state-building dynamics. Uganda's assessment reflects the complexities of implementing human rights frameworks within a more restrictive political environment.

The assessment framework's three-phase approach—pre-NAP BHR consultations, content responsiveness, and implementation involvement—captures the full life cycle of policy development and execution. This comprehensive methodology allows for the identification of gaps that may emerge at different stages, even when earlier phases show promise.

Labour Analysis

Pre-NAP BHR Stakeholder Consultations

The consultative phase reveals a stark divide among the assessed countries. Ghana and Kenya both achieved **high** ratings for pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations, indicating robust engagement with trade unions, workers' organisations, and labour rights advocates during the planning phase. This strong consultative foundation suggests well-established mechanisms for social dialogue and the recognition of organised labour's role in policy formulation.

Nigeria's **low** rating in pre-NAP BHR labour consultations represents a significant concern for Africa's most populous nation. Liberia and Uganda occupy the middle ground with **medium** ratings. For Liberia, this represents a reasonable achievement given capacity constraints and ongoing institutional development. Uganda's medium rating, however, suggests missed opportunities for leveraging existing labour organisations in the consultation process, particularly given the country's relatively well-organised trade union movement.

Labour-Responsiveness of NAP BHR Contents

The translation of consultations into substantive policy content shows interesting patterns. Ghana maintained its strong performance with a **high** rating for labour-responsiveness in NAP BHR contents, demonstrating consistency between consultation and content development. This alignment suggests that labour stakeholder inputs were mean-

ingfully incorporated into the final action plan. Liberia achieved a notable improvement, moving from **medium** in consultations to **high** in content responsiveness. This positive trajectory indicates that despite moderate consultation levels, the government successfully integrated labour concerns into the NAP BHR framework. This may reflect strong technical support or the influence of international partners in drafting processes.

Kenya and Uganda both received **medium** ratings for labour-responsiveness, representing a decline from their consultation ratings. For Kenya, this represents a step down from its **high** consultation rating, suggesting that strong stakeholder engagement did not fully translate into comprehensive labour provisions in the NAP BHR.

Nigeria's movement from **low** to **medium** represents incremental progress. While consultation remained weak, the NAP BHR contents achieved moderate labour-responsiveness through the technical expertise of Nigeria's NHRI, which served as the driving force in its development and ensured that its contents were grounded in international BHR guidelines, especially the three-pillar framework of the UNGPs.

In terms of gender consideration in the labour consultation, patterns reveal different dynamics of engagement. Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda all achieved **high** ratings for pre-NAP BHR gender consultations, indicating strong recognition of gender perspectives in the planning phase. This suggests well-developed women's desks within the various trade unions and among women workers in these countries, as well as government commitment to inclusive consultation processes.

Nigeria and Liberia both received **low** and **medium** ratings, respectively, mirroring their labour consultation patterns. This consistency suggests that consultation capacity challenges affect multiple stakeholder categories, rather than reflecting specific barriers to gender engagement.

Uganda's **high** rating in gender consultations, notably stronger than its **medium** labour consultation rating, may reflect the strength of women workers' groups in Uganda and their persistent engagement with the NAP BHR process.

The conversion of gender consultations into responsive NAP BHR content shows concerning patterns. Kenya stands out with a **high** rating, successfully translating strong consultations into substantive gender provisions.

This achievement suggests effective advocacy by women's organisations and government receptiveness to gender perspectives.

Ghana's decline from a **high** rate regarding consultations to **medium** content responsiveness represents an obvious concern. The high level of gender involvement in the development of the NAP BHR should arguably have translated into more robust gender protections in its content.

Uganda and Liberia both achieved **medium** ratings for gender-responsiveness. For Uganda, this represents a decline from **high** consultations, while Liberia maintained consistency with its **medium** consultation rating. Nigeria remained at a **low** across both indicators, indicating troubling stagnation in gender integration.

Nigeria's **low** rating across all three gender indicators represents the most concerning pattern, indicating systematic challenges in gender integration throughout the NAP BHR life cycle.

Labour Involvement in the Implementation Phase

Implementation represents the critical test of policy effectiveness. Ghana and Kenya both achieved **high** ratings for labour involvement in implementation, suggesting sustainable engagement mechanisms and genuine partnership approaches. This consistent involvement increases the likelihood of effective monitoring and accountability.

Nigeria's **low** rating across the implementation dimension mirrors its weak consultative foundation, indicating systematic challenges in sustaining labour engagement throughout the policy cycle. This pattern suggests that without strong initial consultation, maintaining stakeholder involvement becomes increasingly difficult.

Liberia's and Uganda's **medium** ratings in implementation suggest potential implementation challenges. For Liberia, this consistency across phases indicates steady, if modest, engagement. Uganda's pattern—moving from medium consultation to low content responsiveness and back to medium implementation—suggests an uneven but persistent effort to maintain labour involvement.

With regard to gender implementation, patterns reveal interesting variations. Liberia and Uganda both achieved **high** ratings in implementation, representing significant positive developments. Liberia's trajectory—from medium consultation to medium content responsiveness to high implementation involvement—suggests growing momentum and strengthening gender mechanisms over time.

Uganda's pattern is particularly noteworthy: high consultation, medium responsiveness, but high implementation in-

volvement. This suggests that despite limitations in how gender concerns were reflected in NAP BHR contents, strong gender advocacy networks have secured substantial roles in implementation and monitoring.

Ghana and Kenya both received **medium** ratings for gender implementation involvement. For Ghana, this **medium** rating on gender implementation falls short of its initially **high** consultation rating. Kenya's decline from **high** content responsiveness to **medium** implementation involvement suggests potential challenges in sustaining engagement or establishing effective implementation structures.⁵³

Political Will and Strategic Commitment

Political will is a decisive factor differentiating high-performing from low-performing NAP implementations. Ghana's and Kenya's ratings across pre-NAP labour stakeholder consultations, the labour-responsiveness of NAP contents, and the extent of labour involvement in implementation ultimately reflect their governments' commitment to integrating BHR principles into national policy frameworks—or at least their non-aversion to the same. This political determination manifests in sustained resource allocation, ministerial engagement, and the establishment of institutional mechanisms for multistakeholder dialogue. Conversely, Nigeria's uniformly low performance across all assessment dimensions reflects the absence of genuine political will to confront powerful business interests or address systematic labour rights violations.

Human Rights Records and Institutional Legitimacy

Each country's pre-existing human rights record affects the credibility and effectiveness of NAP implementation. Kenya's and Ghana's strong performance reflects a relatively robust human rights culture, where CSOs operate with meaningful autonomy, labour unions maintain genuine collective bargaining power, and judicial institutions demonstrate independence in adjudicating rights violations. When businesses and security forces routinely violate workers' rights without consequence, a NAP process lacks the institutional credibility necessary to compel behavioural change. Uganda's **medium** scores across most dimensions reflect a contested human rights environment in which progress in certain sectors coexists with repression in others, leading to uneven implementation. Kenya's high implementation scores despite ongoing human rights challenges suggest that targeted reforms in BHR can advance even when broader human rights deficits persist, particularly when supported by active civil society and international pressure.

Multinational Corporate Influence and Regulatory Capture

The influence of multinational corporations represents a critical variable shaping NAP effectiveness. Africa's extractive economy, dominated by international companies with enormous political leverage, creates structural impediments to meaningful labour protections. These corporations possess the resources to shape policy debates, influence legislative processes, and resist regulatory oversight through legal challenges, public relations campaigns, and direct political pressure. This is evident in all the countries under review. However, Nigeria will potentially face the biggest challenge in overcoming this hurdle. The influence of corporations is likely to affect the policy and legislative reforms needed to implement BHR reforms.

Comparative Cross-Country Analysis

Ghana and Kenya

Ghana and Kenya emerge as the strongest performers overall, though with different patterns. Ghana excels particularly in labour dimensions, maintaining **high** ratings across consultation, content, and implementation. Kenya shows a balanced performance, with particular strength in gender content responsiveness but some weakening from the consultation to implementation phases. Kenya's and Ghana's patterns suggest strong policy development capacity but potential challenges in sustaining stakeholder engagement through implementation.

Liberia and Uganda

Liberia demonstrates an encouraging upwards trajectory, particularly in gender dimensions where implementation involvement has reached **high** despite moderate earlier phases. This pattern suggests effective learning and adaptation, with strengthening mechanisms over time. Liberia's achievement of **high** labour content responsiveness despite **medium** consultations also indicates effective technical support or strong government commitment.

Uganda presents a more complex picture. Strong in consultations (especially gender) but weaker in content responsiveness (particularly labour), before somewhat recovering in implementation. This uneven pattern may reflect competing priorities, capacity constraints in policy drafting, or tensions between consultation inputs and final policy decisions.

Nigeria

Nigeria's NAP BHR faced the unique distinction of not being a stand-alone NAP BHR. It was developed as a chapter in Nigeria's National Human Rights Action Plan. This resulted in fairly limited opportunities for labour- or gender-focused stakeholder engagement predicated specifically on BHR. This is the primary reason for Nigeria's comparatively low assessments. This suggests that countries should, where possible, avoid incorporating their NAP BHR in larger human rights action plans. Proceeding in this manner makes it difficult for the requisite pre-NAP BHR consultations to take place effectively, and it will have the unintended consequence of watering down the NAP BHR.

Other Key Findings

The Consultation-Content Gap

A recurring pattern across countries shows that strong stakeholder consultation does not automatically translate into responsive NAP BHR content. Ghana's gender dimension and Kenya's labour dimension both demonstrate this disconnect to some extent. This gap suggests that consultation processes may occasionally be more performative than substantive, or that drafting processes occur in isolation from consultation inputs.⁵⁴

Gender-Labour Divergence

Countries show notably different performance patterns between labour and gender dimensions. Uganda excels in gender but underperforms in labour. Ghana shows the opposite in the implementation phase. This divergence suggests that stakeholder engagement capacity is not uniform across issues and that different advocacy networks have varying levels of influence.⁵⁵

Implementation as the Critical Test

The implementation phase reveals the sustainability of stakeholder engagement. Countries maintaining strong ratings through implementation (Kenya for labour; Liberia and Uganda for gender) demonstrate genuine partnership approaches, while declining ratings suggest weakening commitment or capacity.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Baumann-Pauly, D., & Nolan, J. (Eds.). (2016); Buhmann, K., Jonsson, J., & Fisker, M. (2019)

⁵⁵ Doing business with respect for human rights: A guidance tool for companies (2nd edition). (2016)

⁵⁶ McCorquodale, R., Smit, L., Neely, S., & Brooks, R. (2017). Human rights due diligence in law and practice: Good practices and challenges for business enterprises. *Business and Human Rights Journal*, 2(2), 195–224.

The Way Forward: Some Final Thoughts, Suggestions, and Recommendations

The current cohort of African NAPs BHR represents, in many ways, a good start as far as the protection of labour rights and the rights of vulnerable groups are concerned. This is, however, just a start. It is important that African Union guidelines for the development of NAPs BHR take into account the strengths and weaknesses of existing NAPs BHR in relation to labour and gender issues.⁵⁷ There is, for example, engagement with trade unions in most countries, as well as direct or indirect reference to ILO standards in the Ghanaian, Kenyan, Liberian, and Ugandan NAPs BHR. Nigeria raises the right labour concerns but could improve the alignment between those concerns and the ILO conventions the cis currently a party to.

Based on the above reviews and from the earlier labour and gender analysis, we recommend the following.

Coordination of NAP Peer Learning by Labour Organisations

A number of African countries are in the process of developing NAPs BHR. The lessons learnt by the five pioneering NAPs BHR are useful ones that can and should be shared by the implementing countries. Labour organisations can play a key role in coordinating and facilitating these peer learning processes. Ghana and Liberia can provide guidance for the Economic Community of West African States. Kenya and Uganda can play a similar role for East Africa and the Southern African Development Community.⁵⁸ They are already connected transnationally, and they have a vested interest in ensuring that the NAP BHR developed by their respective governments are effective and impactful.

It is also recommended that efforts be taken to develop the cross-country peer monitoring of NAP BHR implementation processes. This can be an independent process or incorporated into the existing African Peer Review Mechanism.⁵⁹

Improved Compliance with International Labour Standards and Conventions

One of the primary recommendations is to ensure that NAPs BHR are grounded in international labour standards and conventions, particularly those of the ILO. This includes the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which covers freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the effective abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation⁶⁰ NAPs BHR should explicitly reference and commit to the ratification and effective implementation of these core conventions. Furthermore, there is a need to integrate a gender perspective into labour rights provisions, recognising that women often face unique vulnerabilities and discrimination in the workplace.⁶¹ This involves addressing issues such as equal pay for work of equal value, protection against gender-based violence and harassment, and access to decent work opportunities.

Strengthening Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

Strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks at the national level is paramount to giving effect to labour rights commitments in NAPs BHR.⁶² This includes reviewing and amending existing labour laws to align them with international standards, ensuring adequate enforcement mechanisms, and providing for effective sanctions for violations. Promoting responsible business conduct through incentives and disincentives can also encourage companies to uphold labour rights. This could involve linking access to public procurement contracts or investment opportunities to adherence to labour standards.⁶³ Furthermore, cross-border cooperation and the regional harmonisation of labour standards within Africa can help address the challenges

⁵⁷ Deva, S., & Bilchitz, D. (Eds.). (2013)

⁵⁸ Bonnitca, J., & McCorquodale, R. (2017)

⁵⁹ Nieuwenkamp, R. (2016)

⁶⁰ ILO declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work. (1998). International Labour Organization; Vogt, J. S. (2019). The evolution of labour rights and trade: A transatlantic comparison and lessons for the transatlantic trade and investment partnership. *Journal of International Economic Law*, 22(3), 577–595.

⁶¹ Anner, M. (2012)

⁶² Ruggie, J. G. (2013). *Just business: Multinational corporations and human rights*. W. W. Norton & Company.

⁶³ Martin-Ortega, O. (2014). Public procurement as a tool for the protection and promotion of human rights: A study of collaboration, due diligence and leverage in the electronics industry. *Business and Human Rights Journal*, 1(2), 275–295.

posed by multinational corporations and complex supply chains operating across multiple jurisdictions.

Addressing Informal Sector Realities

Each NAP BHR must include dedicated sections addressing informal sector workers with context-appropriate interventions recognising informal work's distinct challenges.⁶⁴ These cannot simply extend formal-sector frameworks but must develop protection mechanisms suited to the characteristics of informal work. Learning from Uganda's National Social Security Fund, countries should develop innovations: flexible labour inspection approaches, support for informal worker collective organisation, simplified grievance mechanisms, and formalisation pathways not requiring full immediate compliance. Particular attention must be paid to vulnerable informal workers in agriculture, domestic work, and street vending, with women informal workers facing compounded disadvantages that require targeted interventions.

Integrating Gender-Labour Intersectionality

NAPs BHR must mandate explicit intersectional analysis that addresses how gender shapes labour experiences across all sectors.⁶⁵ Every NAP BHR should address equal pay and wage transparency requirements, the prevention of and response to gender-based violence and harassment in workplaces, maternity and family leave protections with childcare support, participation targets for women in male-dominated sectors, and the recognition and redistribution of unpaid care work.⁶⁶ Beyond consulting women's organisations, NAPs BHR must directly engage women workers from diverse sectors whose lived experiences provide essential insights that organisations may not fully capture.

Strengthening Implementation and Accountability

Implementation must become a sustained focus of attention and resources.⁶⁷ Countries should establish multistakeholder implementation bodies with formal structures giving meaningful labour and gender stakeholder participation, real decision-making power, and adequate resources. Comprehensive M&E frameworks require specific labour and gender indicators, with baseline data, clear targets, and regular reporting enabling independent civil society monitoring.⁶⁸ Securing adequate resources through dedicated government budgets supplemented by development partner support would cover implementation activities, monitoring systems, and capacity building. Mandating periodic reviews—midterm and final—with full stakeholder participation would create opportunities to assess progress, identify challenges, and adjust strategies.

⁶⁴ Chen, M. A. (2012). The informal economy: Definitions, theories and policies (Working Paper No. 1). Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing; Transitioning from the informal to the formal economy. (2015). International Labour Organization.

⁶⁵ Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299; Holvino, E. (2010). Intersections: The simultaneity of race, gender and class in organization studies. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 17(3), 248–277.

⁶⁶ Elias, J. (2013). Davos woman to the rescue of global capitalism: Postfeminist politics and competitiveness promotion at the World Economic Forum. *International Political Sociology*, 7(2), 152–169.

⁶⁷ Mares, R. (Ed.). (2012); Smit, L., Bright, C., McCorquodale, R., Bauer, M., Deringer, H., Baeza-Breinbauer, D., Torres-Cortés, F., Alleweldt, F., Kara, S., Salinier, C., and Tejero Tobed, H. (2020)

⁶⁸ Buhmann, K. (2016)

Conclusions

The assessment reveals a landscape of incomplete progress where no country has achieved comprehensive excellence. Yet within this landscape lie important achievements pointing towards what is possible when political will, adequate resources, and genuine stakeholder engagement align.⁶⁹ Three fundamental insights must guide improvement efforts: The systematic gap between consultation and content reveals that process alone does not guarantee substance; the persistent inadequacy of attention to informal sector workers and gender-labour intersections demonstrates that NAPs BHR cannot simply adapt formal employment frameworks; and implementation remains universally weak, with resource constraints, capacity limitations, and insufficient stakeholder engagement undermining even well-designed provisions.

Yet grounds for optimism exist. Uganda's National Social Security Fund demonstrates that creative policy solutions can expand protection to previously excluded informal workers.⁷⁰ Kenya's success in integrating gender-labour intersections provides an adaptable model. Ghana's excellent labour integration shows what comprehensive stakeholder engagement can achieve when properly executed. Liberia's strong labour content, despite moderate consultation, suggests that effective technical approaches merit study. These achievements demonstrate that challenges are not insurmountable but require political will, adequate resources, technical capacity, and genuine commitment to centring workers' voices.

Three priorities should guide NAP BHR improvement efforts across the region—first, by closing the consultation-to-content gap through validation mechanisms, transparent documentation, and stakeholder empowerment.⁷¹ Ghana's urgent need to address its gender content deficit and Uganda's labour content weakness exemplify why this must be an immediate priority. Second is directly addressing the realities of the informal sector and gender-labour intersections with context-appropriate, innovative interventions. This requires moving beyond formal sector frameworks to develop protection mechanisms suited to informal work's distinct characteristics while explicitly recognising how gender shapes labour experiences. Third is making implementation the sustained focus through multistakeholder bodies with real power, comprehensive monitoring frameworks with labour and gender indicators, adequate budget

allocations, and periodic reviews with stakeholder participation.

Ultimately, NAPs BHR will be measured not by consultation processes or document quality but by whether workers—especially informal sector and women workers—experience tangible improvements in rights, working conditions, and access to remedy.⁷² This requires moving from commitment to implementation, consultation to substantive integration, and aspiration to measurable impact. Success demands political will to prioritise labour and gender rights even when difficult or costly, adequate resources to recognise that effective implementation cannot occur on symbolic budgets, sustained stakeholder engagement to maintain worker and representative participation throughout implementation and monitoring, and genuine commitment to centring workers' voices and experiences in all their diversity.

The five countries have laid the foundations. Some foundations are stronger than others, but all provide starting points for further development. Now they must build upon these foundations to ensure BHR frameworks translate into real improvements in workers' lives. The path forward is clear, tools are available, and regional examples demonstrate what is possible. What remains is political will and sustained commitment to move from policy documents to transformative change advancing labour and gender justice across Africa.

⁶⁹ Lund-Thomsen, P., Lindgreen, A., & Vanhamme, J. (2021)

⁷⁰ Olivier, M. P., Kaseke, E., & Mpedi, L. G. (2012). Informality, employment contracts and extension of social insurance coverage in the Southern African Development Community. African Institute of South Africa.

⁷¹ Buhmann, K., Roseberry, L., & Morsing, M. (2020)

⁷² Williamson, D., & Lynch-Wood, G. (2012). Social and environmental reporting in UK company law and the issue of legitimacy. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 12(2), 172-189.

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The Five Countries' NAPs BHR Assessment Summary

Kenya			
Pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations	High	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	High
Labour-responsiveness of contents of the NAP BHR	Medium	Gender-responsiveness of the contents of the NAP BHR	High
Extent of labour involvement in the implementation phase of the NAP BHR	High	Extent of gender involvement in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR	Medium
Impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors	Medium		
Uganda			
Pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations	Medium	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	High
Labour-responsiveness of contents of the NAP BHR	Low	Gender-responsiveness of the contents of the NAP BHR	Medium
Extent of labour involvement in the implementation phase of the NAP BHR	Medium	Extent of gender involvement in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR	High
Impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors	Medium		
Ghana			
Pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations	High	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	High
Labour-responsiveness of contents of the NAP BHR	High	Gender-responsiveness of the contents of the NAP BHR	High
Extent of labour involvement in the implementation phase of the NAP BHR	High	Extent of gender involvement in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR	Medium
Impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors	low		

Nigeria			
Pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations	Low	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	Low
Labour-responsiveness of contents of the NAP BHR	Medium	Gender-responsiveness of the contents of the NAP BHR	Low
Extent of labour involvement in the implementation phase of the NAP BHR	Low	Extent of gender involvement in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR	Low
Impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors	Low	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	

Liberia			
Pre-NAP BHR labour stakeholder consultations	Medium	Pre-NAP BHR gender consultations	Medium
Labour-responsiveness of contents of the NAP BHR	High	Gender-responsiveness of the contents of the NAP BHR	Medium
Extent of labour involvement in the implementation phase of the NAP BHR	Medium	Extent of gender involvement in the implementation stage of the NAP BHR	Medium
Impact of the NAP BHR on policy, legislation, international convention ratification, and behavioural change by corporate actors	Low		

A Comparative Study of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights in Africa

Across Africa, there's growing momentum around National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights (BHR NAPs), aiming to encourage responsible business practices that respect human rights, in line with the African Charter and UN Guiding Principles. A few countries—like Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Liberia, and Ghana—have taken the important step of formally adopting these plans. But despite this progress, the journey is far from over. Too often, the process feels like ticking boxes, with real involvement from key groups—especially trade unions—still missing or just symbolic. While these efforts are promising, the real impact on workers' daily lives isn't visible or felt yet. This study sheds light on these gaps and urges governments and stakeholders to do more than just set policies. It's time to invest the resources and energy needed to make sure trade unions have a real voice and influence. Only then can these plans truly make a difference for workers across the continent.

Further information on this topic can be found here:

➔ african-union.fes.de/publications