

# GIFCT Human Rights Policy

## Human Rights and the GIFCT Mission

Preventing terrorists and violent extremists from exploiting digital platforms enhances the protection, fulfillment, and realization of human rights. Experience, research, and practice have shown that counterterrorism and human rights are complementary and mutually reinforcing goals. Achieving this alignment is not automatic, but requires a deliberate, inclusive, and sustained effort to embed human rights throughout counterterrorism efforts.

## About GIFCT's Human Rights Policy

This human rights policy articulates GIFCT's commitment to human rights, describes our intention to embed respect for human rights across our processes, programming, and operations, and acknowledges our responsibility to make every effort to address potential adverse human rights impacts that may arise from our own work. The policy further shapes our engagements with our member companies, multi-stakeholder network, and the broader counterterrorism and digital security fields.

This human rights policy exists alongside [minimum human rights criteria](#) that apply to all member companies joining GIFCT. These membership criteria constitute a key point of human rights dialogue that enables GIFCT to support its members in enhancing their human rights approaches.

## GIFCT's Human Rights Commitment

GIFCT is committed to respecting the human rights obligations outlined in the [International Bill of Human Rights](#), which consists of the [UN Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR), the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) (ICCPR), and the [International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR).

GIFCT's approach to human rights is based on the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) (UNGPs). The participation of both governments and companies in GIFCT programs and activities means that both the state duty to protect human rights and the corporate responsibility to respect human rights are directly relevant to our work.

States have a duty to protect against human rights abuses when setting the policy, legal, and regulatory context for counterterrorism and violent extremism efforts—for example, when they create lists that designate particular organizations and individuals as being involved in terrorism, or how they respond during moments of crisis. Within this context, companies are responsible for

respecting human rights when pursuing efforts to prevent their platforms from being exploited by terrorists and violent extremists.

GIFCT works with our members to deepen understanding and capacity to uphold human rights on their respective platforms, as GIFCT commits to doing in its own work. We are committed to creating and implementing processes, programming, and operations that help GIFCT members fulfill their respective human rights duties and responsibilities. While we acknowledge that GIFCT is often one step removed from potential adverse human rights impacts relevant to our [mission](#), we strive to embed human rights considerations throughout our activity and our collaboration with our multi-stakeholder community.

We also recognize the particular way in which some communities, groups, or populations may be disproportionately both the victims of terrorism and violent extremism and the victims of efforts to address terrorism and violent extremism. Furthermore, we understand that there may be biases in the tools and solutions developed, and commit to working with our multi-stakeholder community to raise greater awareness and understanding of these complex dynamics with a view to advancing corrective approaches. We aim to engage with and pay particular attention to communities, groups, or populations that may be at heightened risk of vulnerability or marginalization, and to consider the perspectives and needs of affected communities, victims, and survivors.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

We cannot achieve our mission and human rights goals alone, and GIFCT’s approach to multi-stakeholder engagement therefore underpins our approach to human rights due diligence. A variety of stakeholders are integral to GIFCT as member companies, as government, civil society, and academic members of GIFCT’s [Independent Advisory Committee](#) (IAC), and as active participants in our thematic [Working Groups](#). We also welcome opportunities to partner with global experts and practitioners through a series of activities and events; the deepened understanding of threats, trends, and human rights implications continually informs our human rights approaches at GIFCT.

## **Human Rights Due Diligence**

To implement our commitment to respecting human rights in line with the UNGPs, we have established a human rights due diligence framework for GIFCT activities organized around (1) GIFCT’s three strategic pillars of “prevent, respond, adapt,” and (2) GIFCT’s governance and operational structure.

This human rights due diligence process is described in more detail in the annex to this policy and consists of the following:

- 🌐 **Identify** and assess actual or potential adverse human rights impacts with which GIFCT may be involved, including via meaningful consultation with stakeholders.
- 🌐 **Integrate** the findings into relevant GIFCT policies, processes, strategies, programming, and operations, and take appropriate action.
- 🌐 **Track** the effectiveness of GIFCT’s approach, including via quantitative and qualitative indicators and stakeholder feedback.
- 🌐 **Communicate** our progress each year through our annual report and other channels as appropriate.

To further support its commitment to human rights, GIFCT takes into account three core human rights considerations: (1) GIFCT’s [membership criteria](#) and Membership Advisory Program (MAP) for applicants help to ensure that GIFCT member companies respect human rights in alignment with the UNGPs; (2) GIFCT continually engages with its multi-stakeholder and cross-sector network, to ensure continuous consideration of human rights throughout GIFCT workstreams; and (3) GIFCT’s Independent Advisory Committee has also looked to the standards set by the [Freedom Online Coalition](#), to ensure that IAC members have a shared commitment to fundamental human rights principles.

## Review

This policy was originally approved by the GIFCT Operating Board and published in November 2022. In May 2026, this policy was updated by the GIFCT team to align with the [2025-2027 Strategic Plan](#). We will seek regular feedback from stakeholders on how we are meeting our commitment to human rights, and will review and update our human rights policy and due diligence framework periodically to meet evolving circumstances and expectations.

## Annex - Human Rights Due Diligence Framework

Human rights due diligence is a core element of the UNGPs, with Principle 17 stating that “to identify, prevent, mitigate, and account for how they address their adverse human rights impacts, business enterprises should carry out human rights due diligence,” adding that this due diligence “should be ongoing, recognizing that the human rights risks may change over time as the business enterprise’s operations and operating context evolve.”

The dynamic nature of the terrorism and violent extremism landscape and evolving technologies makes the “ongoing” nature of human rights due diligence especially important in GIFCT’s multi-stakeholder community.

According to the UNGPs, human rights due diligence has four elements:

- 🌐 **Principle 18, Assessment:** Assessing actual or potential adverse human rights impacts with which GIFCT may be involved, including meaningful consultation with stakeholders.
- 🌐 **Principle 19, Action:** Taking appropriate action to avoid, prevent, and mitigate human rights impacts identified in assessments.
- 🌐 **Principle 20, Tracking:** Tracking the effectiveness of GIFCT’s response to human rights impacts.
- 🌐 **Principle 21, Communications:** Communicating externally in a form and frequency such that GIFCT’s approach can be effectively evaluated.

The due diligence framework is organized around (1) GIFCT’s three strategic pillars and (2) GIFCT’s governance and operational structure. The human rights due diligence framework is deliberately succinct and sets out specific actions and approaches that GIFCT can conduct to fulfill its human rights due diligence responsibilities in accordance with the UNGPs.



## Human Rights Due Diligence Framework

| HRDD Expectation   | Prevent  | Respond  | Adapt   | Working Groups (WGs)   | Transparency   |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Assessment:</b><br/>Assessing actual or potential adverse human rights impacts with which GIFCT may be involved, including meaningful consultation with stakeholders</p> | <p>Tech innovation workstreams use a robust-but-simple human rights assessment tool for all new initiatives and developments (“human rights by design”).</p> | <p>Incident Response Framework includes a human rights impact assessment component, including identification of lessons learned, and ongoing dialogues on victims and survivor considerations.</p> | <p>Nexus of human rights and counter terrorism and violence extremism efforts is a <a href="#">Global Network on Extremism and Technology</a> research theme. It is also proactively raised in our multi-stakeholder and regional events and workshops.</p> | <p>Integration of human rights question(s) into every WG terms of reference / themes; continue multi-stakeholder participation, including human rights expertise.</p>                            | <p>Summaries of GIFCT’s workstreams included in <a href="#">GIFCT annual report</a>.</p>   |
| <p><b>Action:</b> Taking appropriate action to avoid, prevent, and mitigate human rights impacts</p>   | <p>Findings of human rights assessments are integrated into technical approaches.</p>  | <p>Acting upon lessons learned from Incident Response Framework multi-stakeholder debriefs and wider stakeholder feedback.</p>   | <p>Integrating insights from research into GIFCT workstreams; provision of research as a resource for GIFCT members; mainstreaming human rights considerations into substantive event follow ups.</p>   | <p>Outputs of WGs should reflect the human rights questions and recommendations included in terms of reference.</p>  | <p>Summaries of action included in GIFCT annual report and communications.</p>   |
| <p><b>Tracking:</b><br/>Tracking the effectiveness of GIFCT’s response to human right impacts, including via qual / quant indicators and stakeholder feedback</p>              | <p>GIFCT has specific metrics for measuring impact of all technical approaches (e.g., hash-sharing database metrics).</p>                                    | <p>GIFCT has specific metrics for measuring impact of Incident Response Framework.</p>   | <p>Maintain a register of human rights risks emerging from the Adapt pillar that should be addressed by GIFCT.</p>  | <p>Annual outputs of WGs should reflect the human rights questions included in terms of reference.</p>   | <p>GIFCT annual multi-stakeholder forums facilitate dialogue of progress made on human rights; Opportunity for input from IAC in annual letters.</p> |
| <p><b>Communications:</b><br/>Communicating externally in a form and frequency such that GIFCT’s approach can be effectively evaluated</p>                                     | <p>GIFCT shares metrics in the annual transparency report.</p>   | <p>GIFCT shares metrics in the annual transparency report.</p>   | <p>All GNET research <i>Insights</i> are publicly available. Readouts from GIFCT engagements and events are made publicly available.</p>  | <p>Outputs from each WG are published annually, including response to relevant human rights questions included in terms of reference. GIFCT communications proactively share outputs widely.</p> | <p>GIFCT annual transparency reports track progress against human rights objectives and summarizes other actions.</p>                                |