Our ongoing commitment to human rights

Since Google’s founding, we’ve believed in harnessing the power of technology to advance human rights. That’s why our products, business operations, and decision-making around emerging technologies are all informed by our Human Rights Program and deep commitment to increase access to information and create new opportunities for people around the world.

Today, we’re sharing more information about our ongoing work and examples of how we’re continuing to enhance and evolve our broader approach to human rights.

Strengthening our programmatic approach

We’ve long been committed to respecting the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its implementing treaties, and we continue to uphold the standards established in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and in the Global Network Initiative Principles. Through our Human Rights Program, we’ve developed a deeper understanding of both the opportunities and potential risks associated with technology by advising product teams on potential civil and human rights impacts, conducting human rights due diligence, and engaging external experts and stakeholders on these issues. Here are recent examples of how we’ve been making progress on our commitment to human rights:

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1 This blog post was originally posted on December 21, 2022.
• **Human Rights Due Diligence:** Core to our work is establishing a strategic and cross-company methodology for assessing human rights impacts, addressing the findings, and tracking progress across our products and operations — with a particular focus on the most salient human rights risks. For example, our human rights due diligence informs our planning when we expand Google Cloud infrastructure into new countries or deploy certain technologies like Cloud AI solutions into various industries. More broadly, we assess human rights on a range of topics, such as misinformation and disinformation online. Our human rights due diligence enables us to address near-term events and establish the policies and processes required for a sustained and strategic approach to human rights risks.

• **Independent Assessment:** As a founding company member of the Global Network Initiative, Google is subject to a periodic assessment by an independent party to review how the company integrates GNI Principles into our governance, due diligence and risk management, and operational practices. This year we underwent our fourth assessment, and the GNI determined that we are making good-faith efforts to implement the GNI Principles with improvement over time.

• **New Laws and Regulations:** Whether it is regulation focused on the technology industry (such as the Digital Services Act or the EU's proposed AI Act) or industry-agnostic directives (such as the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and Reporting Directives), human rights frameworks are playing an integral role in shaping new requirements of business. That's why our Human Rights Program is working closely with Google's implementation of these initiatives, to be sure that we are meeting these requirements in a manner that supports our human rights commitments.
● **Crisis and Conflict Settings:** According to the United Nations, approximately 2 billion people live in conflict-affected areas. We’ve engaged with organizations like the GNI and International Committee of the Red Cross to better understand the humanitarian and human rights risks of technology in crisis and conflict settings, and are working together to identify new ways to ensure technology is used responsibly to protect and assist people in need. In addition, we’re supporting the development of tools and best practices that can benefit the broader ecosystem of technology companies and stakeholders globally, such as the Conflict-Sensitive Human Rights Due Diligence for ICT Companies, which was launched earlier this month by Business for Social Responsibility and JustPeace Labs.

● **Multi-stakeholder Collaboration:** Governments, the private sector, international organizations, and civil society each have a role to play in respecting and safeguarding human rights. That’s why we remain invested in multi-stakeholder efforts like GNI and initiatives like UN BTech to inform and evolve our approach to human rights, and support the Freedom Online Coalition, Declaration for the Future of the Internet, and the Copenhagen Pledge to promote human rights frameworks and shared values globally.

Through our Human Rights Program, we will continue to make good on our commitment to international norms and standards—helping to ensure that responsible technology continues to benefit people around the world.