



BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Defenders trained to promote and defend human rights in the business environment

- Enabling human rights defenders to better understand the general business and human rights environment, equipping them with the necessary mechanisms to promote corporate responsibility and deal with cases of abuse and violation of human rights was the main objective of the training organized by the CDD, in partnership with the Legal and Judiciary Training Center (CFJJ), the Mozambique Human Rights Defenders Network (RMDDH) and SouthernDefenders.





The training that took place on the 12th and 13th of April in the city of Nampula had the participation of international organizations such as the Fund for Peace and Chatham House.

In the training entitled “Strengthening the Agency for Human Rights Defenders in Northern Mozambique”, human rights defenders were also trained to use judicial spaces so that they are more prepared and active in preventing abuses and violations of human rights in the environment of business and human rights in general. Training recipients learned about international standards and frameworks that guide corporate responsibility and human rights, including the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Speakers emphasized the role of human rights defenders human rights in upholding corporate responsibility and the protection of human rights in the extractive sector.





The Provincial Director of Justice in Nampula, **Raul Cachimo**, spoke of the importance of training in raising awareness of the need to promote and protect human rights. “The State has a responsibility to protect the rights of all citizens in Mozambique. We need to enforce laws and regulations that protect human rights and ensure that all citizens are treated fairly and equally. Our participation in events of this nature is part of the Government’s efforts to increasingly improve the human rights situation in Mozambique”.



Chris Vandome, a researcher at Chatham House, spoke of the relationship between business and human rights and emphasized the need for companies to uphold human rights as part of their corporate responsibility. Chris Vandome believes that the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide a framework for companies to fulfill their responsibility to respect human rights. “The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights represent a significant shift in the way business responsibilities towards human rights are viewed and managed, moving from philanthropy to accountability.”

In addition, Vandome highlighted the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights and the role that Chatham House has in promoting them. “The Voluntary Principles were created to guide companies in their efforts to ensure the safety of their workers and their operations in conflict areas. Chatham House played a vital role in shaping the Voluntary Principles and continues to advance them through research and engagement with business, government, and civil society.”



Paul Turner of the Fund for Peace noted the progress made globally in recognizing the responsibility of businesses to protect human rights and the importance of integrating human rights into business practices. “The global progress we’ve seen in business and human rights is a testament to the growing recognition of the responsibility of business to respect human rights and the need to integrate human rights into business practices.”

Fund for Peace plays an important role in promoting spaces for reflection on the human rights situation, as well as dialogue and engagement between stakeholders. “At Fund for Peace, we promote spaces for reflection and debate on the human rights situation, which is essential to facilitate dialogue and engagement between stakeholders.”



Meamande Wamukwamba, from Southern-Defenders, defended the importance of recognizing the work of human rights defenders in promoting good business practices. “Human rights defenders play a crucial role in promoting good business practices, ensuring that extractive sector companies respect the human rights of their employees, customers, and the communities in which they operate.”

Despite the progress made globally in recognizing the responsibility of companies in the extractive sector to protect human rights, there are still many cases of human rights abuses in southern Africa. “We must continue to work tirelessly to promote and protect human rights, ensuring that businesses respect human rights and that human rights defenders can carry out their work without fear of persecution.”



The President of the National Human Rights Commission, **Luís Bitone**, referred that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Companies are an important tool that companies can use to guarantee respect for human rights in their operations and provide a framework for dealing with negative human rights impacts.

Bitone explained that Mozambique is facing challenges related to human rights abuses in the business context, including land expropriation, forced displacement of communities, and environmental degradation. “National and international mechanisms, such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, can be used to bring new solutions to the crises we face in Mozambique and to hold megaprojects accountable for human rights abuses”.



Sheila Nhancale, the coordinator of the RMD-DH, focused her intervention on explaining the work of human rights defenders in the promotion and protection of human rights in Mozambique. Any citizen who fights for the rights of others is a defender of human rights. The role of human rights defenders is to defend human rights and hold those in power accountable for their actions.” Sheila Nhancale discussed the situation of human rights defenders in Mozambique, lamenting the challenges they face, which include threats, harassment, attacks, and the lack of legal protection and government support.

The RMDDH coordinator also spoke of the importance of human rights defenders in promoting good practices and defending human rights in the extractive sector. “The extractive sector is often associated with human rights abuses and environmental degradation. Human rights defenders can play a crucial role in defending the rights of affected communities and promoting good practices in the extractive industry”.



Academic Amílcar Pereira, from Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM), defended the need for the Government to enforce existing laws and regulations and ensure that companies operating in the extractive sector respect human rights. “If the State fails to uphold the human rights of its citizens it will create a dangerous situation. We need to hold the State accountable for its actions and ensure that human rights are protected. Companies in the extractive and mining sector have a responsibility to respect human rights. They must not contribute to a climate of abuse of human rights and the rights of local communities”.

Human rights defenders are called upon to fight for the rights of communities living close to extractive industry projects, as well as to dominate national and international judicial mechanisms to protect their rights. “It is important to train human rights defenders with the knowledge and tools necessary to defend the rights of commu-



Prof. Adriano Nuvunga, Executive Director of CDD, contextualized the human rights situation in the context of business in Mozambique, highlighting the challenges faced by communities living close to extractive industries. “This training is crucial to ensuring that the voices of affected communities are heard and their rights protected. These discussions are still important to ensure that human rights are at the forefront of any business activity and that communities are not adversely affected.”

nities affected by the extractive industry”, he said. Collaboration between various stakeholders, including Government, civil society, and the private sector, is essential to ensure that companies operate with respect for human rights and that communities are protected from any negative impacts.





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