



Impact and Innovation: Reshaping human rights due diligence at scale

SESSION PARTNERS

- Supply Unchained

SPEAKERS

- Nayantara Sriram, Supply Unchained



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Nayantara Sriram
Founder & CEO, Supply Unchained

Supply Unchained delivered a spotlight session on Reshaping Human Rights Due Diligence at Scale. The core message emphasised a crucial shift from a compliance mindset to one of collective responsibility, recognising that “there can be no greater revelation than when a human being recognises their responsibility to the world”. This shift is essential given the scale of the problem: 50 million human beings are in modern slavery.

The session highlighted that traditional methods – spreadsheets and one-day audits – are failing to capture real risks, especially in complex supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region. To combat this broken system, Supply Unchained presented its expert-led, harms-based framework and technology.

A demonstration of the technology featured a global tech company navigating risks across its physical supply chain (e.g., child labor in mining) and its digital platform (e.g., AI bias and hate speech). The platform provides dynamic dashboards and AI-enabled vetting, moving the company from a manual, reactive stance to a proactive one by identifying and prioritising the most significant harms.

Case studies across engineering, retail, and pharmaceutical industries were shared, along with the catastrophic costs of inaction, including fines up to 5% of annual global turnover and market capital losses of £1 billion. The final call was to “think anew, and act anew” and “unchain your supply” to eradicate human rights abuses.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Scale of the Problem:** 50 million people are currently in modern slavery, making human rights due diligence a global imperative.
- **The Failing Status Quo:** Traditional compliance methods (spreadsheets, simple audits) are “broken” and fail to provide the necessary granular visibility, leaving supply chains vulnerable.
- **The Crucial Shift:** The core message is the need to move from passive compliance to collective responsibility – to “think anew, and act anew.”
- **Harms-Based Framework:** Supply Unchained presented its expert-led, harms-based framework which prioritises preventing the most severe human rights abuses (salience).
- **Proactive Technology:** The platform utilises dynamic dashboards and AI-enabled vetting to transition companies from a reactive to a proactive risk stance.
- **Business Value:** The framework mitigates catastrophic risks, including potential fines up to 5% of annual global turnover, and increases operational efficiency (e.g., automating complex reports).
- **Human Rights Impact:** The focus on severe harms achieves profound impact by protecting the vulnerable, by driving systemic change.



CLOSED-DOOR INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE

Advancing Human Rights Due Diligence in Asia's Digital Transformation: Practical approaches, peer exchange and strategic preparedness

SESSION PARTNERS

- United Nations Development Programme
- OHCHR B-Tech

Asia's accelerating digital transformation is reshaping economies while intensifying governance, regulatory, and human rights challenges. In this closed-door roundtable, senior leaders from major technology companies and AI innovators examined how HRDD is being embedded across diverse business models amid political sensitivities, fragmented regulations, and rapidly evolving risks such as AI misuse, cyber fraud, and surveillance.

Discussions highlighted the need to translate global standards into practical, locally relevant approaches – simplifying human rights language, engaging engineers and product teams, and supporting SMEs through collaborative rather than punitive supplier engagement. Participants emphasized that individual companies cannot meet rising expectations alone; coherent standards, shared tools, and sector-level cooperation are essential. The UNGPs remain the region's most reliable anchor, but effective implementation will require continued peer learning and collective action across Asia's digital ecosystem.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Regional HRDD approaches are fragmented, with businesses navigating diverse political contexts, regulatory expectations, and emerging risks such as AI misuse, cyber fraud, and surveillance.
- Translating global standards into practice remains a major gap, requiring clearer, simplified human rights language and tools that resonate with suppliers, SMEs, and technical teams.
- Engineering and product teams are central to responsible innovation, yet remain under-engaged; building their human rights capacity is critical for upstream and downstream risk management.
- Supportive, collaborative supplier engagement is more effective than punitive approaches, especially for SMEs that lack capacity for audits or certification schemes.
- Sector-wide cooperation is essential – companies increasingly recognize the need for shared solutions, aligned expectations, and peer learning to meet rising due diligence demands.