



Project Highlight:
**Promoting Responsible Business Conduct with
Chinese Companies Operating in Complex
Environments**

Security and Human Rights Challenges facing Chinese Companies

As a result of China's Belt and Road Initiative, the scale of foreign investments and overseas operations by Chinese companies has increased significantly in recent years. In Africa alone, some 10,000 Chinese-owned businesses are now driving a significant percentage of the continent's infrastructure initiatives and extractive projects. In complex environments, Chinese companies and their personnel encounter a range of risks and challenges that can undermine the security of their personnel as well as the security and livelihood of local communities. These risks also negatively impact business continuity. Many companies have already recognized the need to align with international standards and are seeking practical support to ensure responsible security management.



DCAF-ICRC Engagement

The Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in the framework of their strategic partnership, are committed to enabling Chinese companies implement responsible business practices in their security management when operating overseas.

In 2019, DCAF and the ICRC signed a framework agreement with the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCMC). With a membership of more than 6,000 Chinese companies involved in international supply chains of minerals and other natural resources, CCCMC is a major actor leading different developments in the field of responsible business conduct, including the [Chinese Due Diligence Guidelines for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains](#). Under their framework agreement, CCCMC, DCAF and the ICRC undertook to raise awareness of good practices with Chinese companies operating in complex environments.



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Activities

- **Promoting good practices with Chinese companies.**

To support Chinese companies address security and human rights challenges in their security arrangements with host governments, public and private security, and communities, DCAF and the ICRC translated the [Toolkit on Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments](#) into [Chinese](#). In addition, a new [Chinese section on the Security and Human Rights Knowledge Hub](#) brings together tools and guidance on business, security and human rights that are available in the Chinese language.

- **Developing tailored training resources for Chinese stakeholders.**

DCAF and the ICRC are partnering with CCCMC and Renmin University of China to develop and promote dedicated Chinese language training tools that address security risks in complex overseas environments. These training tools are tailored to both executive and operational levels. The tools will be available in Fall 2021.

- **Facilitating engagement between Chinese companies and multi-stakeholder working groups in complex environments.**

DCAF and the ICRC are raising awareness among Chinese companies operating in complex environments on how they can work constructively with local authorities, community representatives, security providers and other companies through contributing to multi-stakeholder working groups established to address security and human rights challenges.

- **Conducting outreach to promote good practices with Chinese stakeholders.**

DCAF and the ICRC are actively engaging Chinese companies to promote good practices:

In September 2018, the ICRC gave a series of briefings to executives from Chinese companies operating in Africa, with a particular focus on Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Africa. The event was organized in Addis Ababa by the China Association of Construction Enterprise Management (CACEM), an umbrella organization with a membership of 3,500 construction companies. Participants included 14 country office-level senior executives of leading State-owned Enterprises, such as the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC). The briefing, given in Chinese, was the first of its kind and provided an opportunity to brief the executives on responsible business practices for companies working in conflict-affected environments, including based on the DCAF-ICRC Toolkit.

In December 2020, DCAF and the ICRC actively participated - as members of the Advisory Committee - in the new international forum created by CCCMC to promote good practices on sustainable mineral supply chains (SMISC Forum).

In April 2021, DCAF and the ICRC organized with CCCMC and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs the first ever [webinar on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human rights and their relevance to Chinese stakeholders](#).

Results to date

- Strategic partnership agreed between DCAF, the ICRC and the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals & Chemicals Importers & Exporters (CCCMC).
- Toolkit on Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments translated into the [Chinese language](#) and widely disseminated to Chinese stakeholders.
- A [new platform of resources in Chinese](#) created as part of the DCAF-ICRC Knowledge Hub improves accessibility of good practices for Chinese users.
- Training tools for Chinese company executives and field staff under development through an innovative partnership with CCCMC and Renmin University of China.
- In-country briefings on responsible business conduct delivered, leading to increased company engagement and identification of good practices for the management of their security.
- Constructive exchanges facilitated in the Democratic Republic of Congo between Chinese companies and Voluntary Principles in-country groups.

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