

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



PHOTO BY : SWATI RIKHY

**CHILD LABOUR
IN INDIA:
UNDERSTANDING
THE COMPLEXITIES**
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TRANSPARENCY IN
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**INDIA &
SUSTAINABILITY
STANDARDS 2023**

From the CEO's Desk

Perhaps the most exciting event that I could think about in the first quarter of the 2023 calendar year was India assuming the Presidency of the G20. We were curious to see how this landmark event unfolds and what touchpoints emerge from it, on the Sustainable business agenda.

We have been pleasantly surprised and highly inspired to see the extent to which Sustainability and SDGs have been intertwined into the G20 agenda by India's G20 Presidency, especially by skillfully crafting them into the work program of the G20 Engagement Groups, including the Think20 (T20); Civil Society 20 (C20) and the Business 20 (B20).

CRB is extremely fortunate and most honored to be working with leading think-tanks of the world in developing the following three Policy Briefs under the Think20 (T20) Engagement Group. Inputs and recommendations from these Policy briefs will be incorporated into the T20 Communiqué. That is what we understand:

- Reducing Food Loss and Waste: Enabling Action Through the Target-Measure-Act Approach with WRI India, WWF, and FOLU India
- Driving Sustainable Consumption through Policy Innovations in Value Chains with Climate & Company, and CEEW
- A Broader Trade Facilitation Approach for Resilient and Sustainable Global Value Chains with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP, and Asian Development Bank

In our limited capacity, one common input that we have tried to articulate in these Policy Briefs is the need for creating greater balance and opportunity for the developing South to participate actively in developing and implementing international legislation on sustainable supply chains (global value chains). The international community should learn from earlier mistakes in driving Sustainable Global Value Chains using a top-down (or north-down) approach.

An array of international legislation is being developed and soon to be deployed (and implemented) that will have implications on trade and investments in India. These legislations have the potential to shape global value chains of materials and goods, especially impacting exporting 'southern' countries including the 2022-25 G20 Presidency Quadrant of Indonesia, India, Brazil, and South Africa.

However, there is very little awareness and information about these legislations and their implications in India, perhaps in most others. Through our little way, and in partnership with like-minded organizations, CRB is trying to create awareness among Indian stakeholders in some sectors including Apparel and textiles; Agri-commodities and Food; and Minor Minerals. We believe the Government of India's 'National Guidelines on Responsible Business (NGRBC) and the mandatory reporting framework, 'Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting' (BRSR) framework provide an excellent framework to prepare the Indian industry to meet the requirements of these legislations.

Our focus over the next few months will be to prepare the industry stakeholders to appreciate these developments in the governance of global Value Chains and to ready themselves to make the most of this 'opportunity', as we engage the international community on the rules of the game!

Rajat Sengupta
CEO, CENTRE FOR
RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS



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10th Edition INDIA AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

International Dialogues & Conference 2023

November 6th - 8th, 2023 | New Delhi (Hybrid)

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BUSINESS
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T20 INCEPTION CONFERENCE: KEY TAKEAWAYS ON SUSTAINABILITY



Rijit Sengupta

Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Responsible Business

CRB participated in the Think20 (T20) Inception Workshop of G20 which took place January 13 - 14, 2023. Here are some key take-aways from our perspective. This communicate has been prepared for the benefit of Sustainability practitioners and enthusiasts who could not attend this event. This in no ways represent the official record of proceedings.

- G20 should pursue the **Decarbonisation agenda** as a priority. This would require **mobilisation of climate finance** especially from the developed countries, urgently as promised
- Achievement of the SDGs has been set back by the pandemic; therefore it is critical to accelerate the process especially in the interest of the most vulnerable. In this regard, **technology and digitisation can play a key role**
- Lack of reform of Multilateral Institutions (including their Governance), given the changes seen over the last 75 years in the global context and realities, has resulted in increasing doubts about the efficacy of the Multilateral System and ability of Multilateral Agencies (UN and the WTO) in addressing complex challenges
- There is a need to identify and standardise a process that ensures that all the wonderful ideas proposed under the aegis of the T20 are communicated to the G20 leaders and incorporated into the G20 process and its diplomacy. **Public diplomacy of G20 is crucial, given its commitment to people's interests including Economy, Sustainability, Digitisation, etc.**
- It is the Members and not really the Multilateral Institutions *per se* that have failed to live up to the expectations. In terms of the G20, a conscious effort should be made to **blend continuity with an openness for innovative new ideas**
- Giving users control of their data, is the direction in which the digital world should be moving towards. It is crucial to consider an '**Adaptation Policy**' - wherein Finance and Capital is provided to those who are best at adapting themselves to the needs of the future

- India Presidency should come up with **solutions to deal with supply chain disruptions** especially the availability of materials/inputs and implications on the workforce
- The G20 should convey the importance of **rule based international trading system for supply chain resilience**, to the G7
- The **Global Climate Alliance report** was officially released, this Alliance will be a game-changer to raise ambition, ensure alignment of policies, and provide financing to the Global South
- Mechanism(s) should be explored to provide opportunity and encourage young people **from the community to drive desirable changes in community behaviour and norms**, to support the transition that the LiFE Mission envisages
- The Indian G20 Presidency is sui generis on many aspects, including on how it has been taken close to the ground/stakeholders through a multitude of meetings and discussions
- The Indian G20 Presidency strongly believes that Green Transition should go hand in hand with Economic Development for achievement of the SDGs. **Circular Economy and Sustainable Consumption are critical to achievement of Mission LiFE**, and needs to be prioritised
- On the issue of Gender Equality, interventions will need to go beyond women's empowerment, and **aim to bring women at the core of economic development planning and implementation**
- During India's Presidency, the G20 is being connected to people through an unprecedented process of **Jan Bhagidari** (peoples participation), and also by engaging youth, NGOs, businesses through hundreds of meetings planned across over 50 cities of India
- There is a need for a **Sustainability framework to enable the deployment of Agri Tech** especially to achieve productivity, profitability, prosperity for the farming families



ACHIEVING TRACEABILITY & TRANSPARENCY IN PALM OIL VALUE CHAIN

Nidhi Choudhary

Programme Officer, Centre for Responsible Business



Palm oil is the largest edible oil crop in the world and is produced in areas of the world where there is substantial biodiversity¹. India is the largest importer of edible oils in the world. Out of all the imported edible oils, the share of palm oil is about 56%, followed by soybean oil at 27%, and sunflower at 16%². India imports palm oil mainly from Indonesia & Malaysia³.

Palm oil is also a major driver of deforestation in top producer countries namely Indonesia and Malaysia which produce nearly 90% of the global supply. Both these countries are home to key biodiversity areas⁴. Indonesia, the largest producer country of palm oil, has faced deforestation due to palm oil plantations. The land clearing for oil palm plantations was the single largest driver of deforestation in Indonesia between 2001 and 2016, accounting for 23% of total deforestation⁴.

Considering this, it is imperative to grow and process palm oil sustainably. Palm oil is present in a variety of products like cooking oils, cosmetics, soaps, shampoos, snacks etc. It is believed that the goal of sustainable palm oil production could be achieved if businesses start resourcing sustainably and the consumers/end users show interest to know the origin of palm oil used in their daily used products. To reach the goal of sustainable palm oil production, it is essential to have a fully traceable and transparent palm oil value chain.

Traceability in the palm oil value chain is ability to track and trace the palm oil product back to its origin, making sure that it's legally sourced and produced from an environmental and social conflict-free area⁵. Transparency plays an important role in achieving traceability in the palm oil value chain as it allows growers and companies to share best practices with others in their industry and drive-up standards across the whole sector. It also helps to educate others who may not be aware of the issues involved, and the progress that has been made so far.

For palm oil mills, especially smallholders and all other parties involved in the value chain, achieving transparency in palm oil supply chains is highly beneficial. However, what this industry really needs are new and improved ways to collect and manage data on the value chain, and to use this information to act sustainably, to increase supply chain efficiency and revenues⁶.

The palm oil value chains are generally long and complex, involving many companies both large and small. It involves many steps; from plantations to mills, then to the refinery for further chemical processing and manufacturing, and finally to the products we use every day⁵.

Due to long complex value chain of palm oil, it is difficult to know the origin of palm oil as mills may have Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs) from several number of growers that are used to extract Crude Palm Oil (CPO) which is then transported to number of refineries and then to manufacturing units.

Although, it is possible to trace palm oil origin till plantation level, if it is put on contract/agreement between the different players of the value chain to share required data on traceability. This could be achieved by developing templates of what information is required from farmers, traders, middlemen, mill owners and refineries, so as to have only relevant data for achieving traceability. The awareness needs to be created between different players of the value chain on why data sharing is required and how it would be beneficial for them and how they can contribute in minimizing forest loss.

Hence, Traceability is a tool to produce palm oil sustainably. To achieve traceability and transparency it is essential to take into consideration all the players of complex value chain of palm oil. Creating awareness and capacity building at global, national, regional, and local levels is much needed.

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CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES

Vivek K. Singh
Assistant Director, Centre for Responsible Business



Photo by Aby Zachariah on Unsplash

Introduction

India has the largest child population in the world, with a total of 472 million children, accounting for 35% of the total population of the country¹. Unfortunately, this population is struggling with a crisis. Child labour, a complicated issue, that poses a threat to the sustainable, equitable growth of India and its future generations. Despite the existence of stringent laws and schemes, the issue persists. The situation in many ways has worsened further due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Scale of the Crisis

It is estimated that over 10 million children, or 4% of the total child population, are under the age of 14, working in poor and hazardous conditions². The table below shows the top 10 states with the highest incidence of child labour, which accounts for 77% of the country's total child labour. This highlights a significant impediment to the nation's sustainable development and economic growth.

State-wise Child Labour (As per the 2011 Census)³

No. of working children in the age group of 5-14 years

States/UTs	Child Labour(Main Workers)	Child Labour (Marginal Workers ⁴)	Total No. of Child Labour
Uttar Pradesh	8,96,301	12,80,405	21,76,706
Bihar	4,51,590	6,36,919	10,88,509
Rajasthan	2,52,338	5,96,048	8,48,386
Maharashtra	4,96,916	2,31,016	7,27,932
Madhya Pradesh	2,86,310	4,13,929	7,00,239
Andhra Pradesh	4,04,851	2,68,152	6,73,003
West Bengal	2,34,275	3,15,817	5,50,092
Gujarat	2,50,318	2,12,759	4,63,077
Karnataka	2,49,432	1,71,913	4,21,345
Jharkhand	90,996	3,09,280	4,00,276

The Underlying Causes

Child labour in India is not simply a consequence of poverty but is rooted in societal norms and cultural practices. One such widespread cultural practice is child marriage, systematically driven by gender inequality, social norms, poverty, lack of education, and safety concerns – which is closely linked to child labour.

Eradicating child labour is particularly challenging as it is not solely a socio-economic issue but also a cultural and traditional one.

Children are often forced into dangerous work in industries such as agriculture, brick kilns, carpet weaving, garment making, domestic service, food and refreshment services, fisheries, construction, and mining. This not only robs them of their childhood but also jeopardises their health and leaves them vulnerable to exploitation.

Ending child labour in India thus requires more than socio-economic reforms; we must address cultural attitudes and traditional practices.

The Legal Framework and Social Protection Schemes

India has a robust legal framework that safeguards the rights of children, as outlined in the Constitution of India and supported by several key laws. These include the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act of 2015, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2006, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act of 2012, and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 2016, along with the Right to Education Act (2009). India has also shown its commitment to child rights by ratifying binding international agreements such as the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions 138 and 182 related to child labour. Furthermore, the government has created a preliminary National Action Plan acknowledging the significance of upholding human rights in business and preventing child labour in the supply chain.

In addition to the above, the government of India has implemented a number of social protection schemes and initiatives to protect children from child labour. These include:

- **National Child Labour Project (NCLP):** The NCLP is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at providing education, vocational training, and rehabilitation to child labourers across India. The NCLP collaborates with state governments to identify child labourers who work in hazardous conditions and rescues them, enabling them to access education and vocational training. The project also extends financial assistance to families of child labourers, thereby ensuring that they can meet their basic needs.
- **National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC):** The National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) is a comprehensive 10-year strategy initiated by the government in 2016 to enhance the well-being of children. The NPAC strives to address various concerns related to children's education, health, nutrition, and protection, ultimately creating improved opportunities for their growth and development.

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):** The BBBP – is an innovative governmental program aimed at addressing the gender gap in education. With a focus on increasing awareness around educating girls, this initiative works closely with communities to drive change. Additionally, the BBBP offers much-needed financial support to girls who are currently enrolled in school.
- **Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for Adolescent Girls (RGNFAG):** The RGNFAG empowers young women pursuing higher education by offering financial support. This one-year fellowship awards a monthly stipend of Rs. 5,000 to full-time undergraduate or postgraduate students.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** The PMKVY is a three-year government scheme providing training providers with financial assistance to train youth in high-demand sectors. This initiative is dedicated to developing the skills of the youth to promote growth in the economy. In addition to financial assistance, the PMKVY offers a monthly stipend of Rs. 3,000 to trainees who successfully complete their training. The primary objective is to equip the youth with the practical skills and knowledge needed to succeed in today's job market.
- **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):** The SSA ensure free and mandatory schooling to children between 6 and 14 years old. This centrally sponsored scheme partners with state governments to enhance the quality of education in schools, as well as to extend financial aid for school construction and infrastructure upgrades.

These are just a few social protection schemes that the government of India has implemented to safeguard children against child labour. While these schemes have reduced the incidence of child labourers in India, there is still progress to be made. The way forward requires the government to continue implementing these initiatives and collaborating with civil society and businesses to provide children with education, nutrition, and protection from exploitation and child labour.



PHOTO BY VARAD SAMANT ON SHUTTERSTOCK

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2. Child labour rises to 160 million – the first increase in two decades. (n.d.). <https://www.unicef.org/india/press-releases/child-labour-rises-160-million-first-increase-two-decades>
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4. **Marginal workers:** Individuals who were employed for a limited duration of the year (specifically, those who worked for fewer than six months or 183 days annually) were classified as marginal workers.

INDIA & SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS 2023

The tenth edition of the conference will be hosted in **New Delhi** from **November 6 - 8, 2023** under the broad theme of **'Solutions for Sustainability and Inclusivity: Policy, Innovation & Collaboration'**.

This year, the conference will continue to provide an enabling platform to showcase and deliberate on key sustainability topics. The conference will aim to engage and enable dialogue on various sustainability issues while inspiring innovation, action, and solutions that can contribute towards a sustainable future.

The networking village and solutions lobby will aim to showcase and demonstrate innovation and solutions developed by various organisations. ISS 2023 will be built around a live and interactive agenda, this year the event will be set in a hybrid format, attendees will have the option to join either physically or virtually.

Day 1 (6th Nov)

- Inaugural Session
- Three High Level Plenaries
-

Day 2 & 3 (7th & 8th Nov)

- Parallel breakout sessions (90 mins each)
- About 20-25 sessions on a range of topics aligned to the conference theme



Breakout Sessions

Parallel Sessions on diverse sectors and themes co-hosted with Partner organisations



Plenary Sessions

Featuring sustainability champions from across the globe



Solutions Lobby

Showcase Innovations and Solutions to relevant stakeholders



Networking Village

Dialogue, Network and Collaborate with Peers and Experts



Memorial Lecture

Annual Lecture in memory of our Founder- Dr Bimal Arora



State/Region Focus

Select sessions feature conversations on a specific region to examine the potential for promoting responsible business

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL RETREAT

The Centre for Responsible Business team went on a Strategic Organisational Retreat from February 9 - 10, 2023.

The team spent 2 days collaborating, exploring nature, bonding and growing as a team. Together, everyone reflects on the organizations vision, work and key priorities.

The retreat was also attended by CRB's board members who took out time to provide their guidance and thoughts.

After the retreat, the team was energised with great ideas and strategies for the organizations way forward in 2023 and beyond.

Here's a quick glimpse at some cherished moments from the retreat.

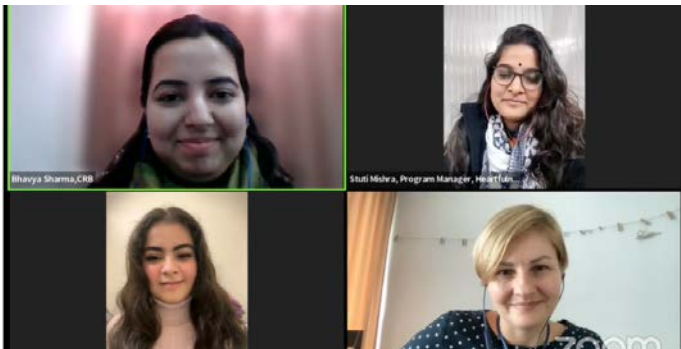


CRB ACTIVITIES

CONVENING

DECODING SUSTAINABILITY: INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY INTO EVERYDAY LIFE 27 January 2023

Centre for Responsible Business in collaboration with the Youth for Sustainability and Prem Jain Memorial Trust hosted a LinkedIn live on "Decoding Sustainability: Integrating Sustainability into everyday life". View the conversation [here](#).



INDIA FASHION FORUM: BRANDS WITH PURPOSE: TIME TO WALK THE TALK 1 March 2023

The Centre for Responsible Business co-hosted an insightful session on "Brands with Purpose: Time to Walk the Talk" at the India Fashion Form.

The session brought together experts and practitioners who shared their insights on the fashion industry sustainability landscape and brands that are purpose driven. Further, into the session, discussions were held on how sustainable practices can be used to create long term value for consumers.



REPRESENTATION

INDIA-EUROPE BUSINESS & SUSTAINABILITY CONCLAVE 1 January 2023

Rijit Sengupta, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Responsible Business, spoke about the India Europe partnership stating, "Europe and EU are not just important and leading trade and investment partners of India but have also been a supporter for various initiatives and programmes on sustainability and sustainable business."



THINK 20 INCEPTION CONFERENCE OF THE G20 14 January 2023

Rijit Sengupta, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Responsible Business, represented CRB at the Think 20 Inception Conference of the G20, on 13th & 14th January.



I-SPOC FOUNDERS MEETING 24 January 2023

The I-SPOC Founders had their first Founders meeting of 2023 on 24 January in Delhi. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the work plan for 2023-24, identify the elements that should be included in the I-SPOC roadmap 2023-2026.



PODCAST: DECODING IMPACT 27 January 2023

Rijit Sengupta joined Jagjeet Singh Kandal (Country Director at IDH India) in a podcast, Decoding Impact: Sustainable Sourcing, hosted by Rathish Balakrishnan.

In this episode on Sustainable Sourcing, the speakers delved into supply-and demand-side challenges in adopting sustainable sourcing within agribusinesses, the role stakeholders can play, and how the balance between the 3Ps — People, Planet and Profits — can be achieved through sustainable operations.

Listen to the complete episode [here](#).



INCREASING ECONOMIC AND OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN IN THE TEXTILE AND APPAREL INDUSTRY 17 March 2023

Vivek. K. Singh represented Centre for Responsible Business as a speaker for the session on "Increasing Economic & Opportunity for Women in the Textiles and Apparel Industry" at the 3rd Global Textile Conclave (GTC) organised by CITI India.



ENGAGEMENT

MEETING WITH H.E. MARTEN VAN DEN BERG, AMBASSADOR OF NETHERLANDS 15 February 2023

Nandini Sharma, Rijit Sengupta, and Devyani Hari met with H.E. Marten Van Den Berg, Ambassador of the Netherlands in India. This time it was for his views on a collaborative international initiative.



**MEETING WITH RAJEEV KHER FORMER
COMMERCE SECRETARY AND ANIL JAUHRI,
INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY
STANDARDS AND IMPLICATION ON TRADE
AND INVESTMENTS FOR INDIA.**

26 January 2023

Nandini Sharma, and Rijit Sengupta, met with the Former Commerce Secretary, Rajeev Kher and International Expert on Sustainability Standard, Anil Jauhri and together deliberated on Sustainability Standards and implications on Trade and Investments for India.



**MEETING WITH THE SWEDISH STATE
SECRETARY FOR TRADE: HAKAN JEVRELL**

13 March 2023

Rijit Sengupta participated in an interesting discussions with Swedish State Secretary for Trade, Håkan Jevrell on various aspects of business environment and responsible business in India, over lunch hosted by Swedish Ambassador Jan Thesleff. Mihir Sharma, ORF in the picture .



**MEETING WITH BARBARA SCHAFER, AND KARIN-
DIANA DECKENBACH**

16 February 2023

Devyani Hari and Vinay Pandey, met with Barbara Schaefer, German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) and Karin-Diana Deckenbach, GIZ India at the CRB office to discuss the work that Centre for Responsible Business is doing and identify potential areas to collaborate.



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

CRB AUTHORED BLOGS

[Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality](#)



[Responsible Sourcing Solutions for Forest Conservation](#)



CRB IN THE MEDIA



[India G20 for a collaborative initiative on sustainable global value chains](#)



[Integrating Industry Practices & Sustainability: How Businesses Can Attain SDGs?](#)



[9th Indian and Sustainability Standards: Sustainability requires the need to work with a growing thrust on technology.](#)



[Transparency leads to consumer trust: Industry experts](#)

REPORTS LAUNCHED

ISS 2022 POST - CONFERENCE REPORT

The theme of the 9th edition of ISS was - **'Prioritising Nature and People in Business to Create Measurable Impacts'** – during the sessions over the 3-day conference, we dialogued and reflected on the experiences of businesses in India and beyond to identify replicable models/approaches/experiences of businesses in pursuing climate goals, environmental impacts, biodiversity loss, inequality and diversity. The sessions also tried to examine various factors and resources that have and can support business transformation. We are thankful to our partners, speakers and participants for their active engagement in the conference. Read the full report [here](#).

Organised & Hosted by:
CRB
 Creating Responsible Business

INDIA AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS
 International Dialogues & Conference
 November 2nd-4th, 2022 | Eros Hotel, New Delhi (Hybrid)

Prioritising Nature and People in Business to Create Measurable Impacts

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RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS NEWS ROUND UP

BY SWATI RIKHY



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The blue economy is thriving but india needs to be careful of the marine litter

Being the leading country in the blue economy, India has been threatened by the rise in debris of fishing gear, plastic waste killing marine life. Does India have a solution for this? [Read here](#)



PRIVATE SECTOR & SDGS

India to invest 240 million \$ in the water sector

The 6th Sustainable Development Goal is about "clean water and sanitation for all". India has invested 240 Million \$ in the water sector and is implementing the world's largest dam rehabilitation programme to restore the groundwater level, as told by the Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra, Singh Shekhawat at the UN.

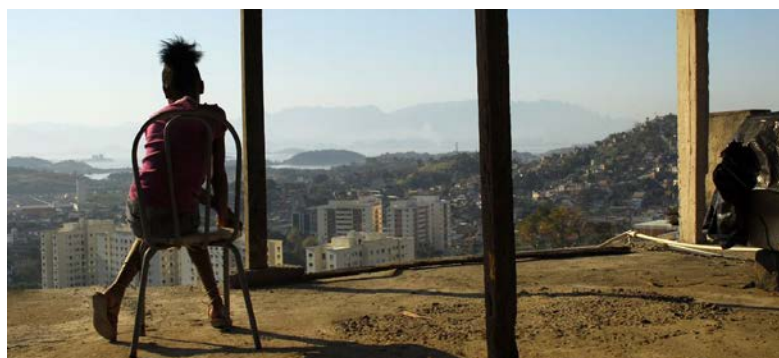
This ambitious programme and effort is being undertaken in India towards ensuring water security and achieving the 6th Sustainable Development Goal of clean water and sanitation for all. [Read here](#)

BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

'Real Economy' can drive progress, UN deputy chief says

The deputy of chief of UN talked about the how the social progress and strengthening global solidarity and rebuilding the trust in the government by overcoming the barriers and sharing opportunities for social justice

[Read More](#)



ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

India Submits its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy to UNFCCC

With temperatures already rising in india earlier this year, the impact of this climate change is affecting the agriculture sector of the country, especially the wheat production. So, What does tis mean for the most critical produce (Wheat) of Indian households? [Read here](#)



BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Need for upskilling and reskilling in the Indian pharma sector

The pharma sector in India is the third largest in term of volume, India has significantly contributed to shaping the healthcare outcomes of patients around the world. the third largest in terms of volume globally.

The Covid-19 pandemic triggered an abrupt change in the pharmaceutical sector. The pandemic accelerated digital change while also nurturing adaptability and learning agility. Today's pharmaceutical landscape is constantly shifting due to changing regulations as well as geopolitical and technological developments. Upskilling and reskilling are critical for remaining successful in the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world. [Read More](#)



SMEs AND SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Index for MSMEs

Sustainability for MSMEs: the third quarter report surveyed MSMEs to better understand the actions carried out to implement sustainability and advance sustainable development goals.



As the adoption of measures to promote sustainable business practises gains momentum among enterprises in India, an increasing number of MSMEs are joining the sustainable drive, recognising the value of sustainability beyond commercial criteria. [Read More](#)

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Circular economy – Is India ready to come full circle in sustainability?

A dozen areas have been identified based on the 2022 budget, which have introduced the idea of circular economy in some of the sectors. But, the transition to a circular economy is more than the sum of sectoral efforts. A circular economy requires the foundation of an economy designed so that products and materials can be reused, remanufactured, recycled or recovered. [Read More](#)



PRIVATE SECTOR & SDGS

Private Sector Firms could turn big spenders, soon

Reliance industries will be dominating a mix of large investment programme in services ranging from oil to chemicals, digital services companies and new energy.

Bharti Airtel, the second largest private investor, will be spending a huge sum on 5G deployment. The rating agency said rated cooperates will see capital expenditure increases of 10% to 12% in fiscal years 2023 and 2024, although the agency warned that this recovery is fraught with risks. [Read More](#)



VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

Sustainability standards: Finmin urges banks to incentivise MSMEs

The finance ministry has advised banks to support those micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) that have adopted certain sustainability standards for manufacturing with a raft of incentives, including cheaper credit, at a time when interest rates are on the rise.

The move is part of the government's broader efforts to encourage MSMEs to become "responsible manufacturers" and improve credit flow to these units that account for a bulk of the country's job creation. [Read more here](#)



ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

Humanity has 'broken the water cycle,' UN chief warns

The future of humanity's "livelihood," water, is under threat throughout the world, the UN Secretary-General claimed on Wednesday at the start of the first major UN summit on water resources in in 50 years'. "We've broken the water cycle, destroyed ecosystems, and contaminated groundwater," Antonio Guterres stated during the three-day summit in New York, which hosted all the officials of state and government. [Read Here.](#)



BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Six NGOs for specially-abled and human rights lose FCRA licences

While the Blue Cross Society claims to be associated with the United Nations-DESA and to have European Union accreditation, the Good Education Society was founded by the Eicher family to educate children, with a special emphasis on the girl child, beginning with primary education for the rural poor. Similarly, the Deaf Cricket Society seeks to improve the physical mobility of the differently-abled through a variety of charity activities and cricket. The Behavior Foundation provides intervention services for autistic children. [Read Here](#)



SMEs AND SUSTAINABILITY

Greening of MSMEs key in India's journey towards climate-resilience

The dangers connected with climate change have had an influence on India's micro, small, and medium-scale (MSME) sectors. These enterprises are growth engines as they foster grassroots innovation, build value chains, effectively use latent local resources, and generate jobs. However, the sector is vulnerable to climate change-related harm, uncertainties, and financial concerns. [Read Here.](#)





STAFF CORNER

NEHA TOMAR

Program Manager

Neha is Program Manager at the Centre for Responsible Business. She is a Lawyer with Masters in International Law (University of Bristol, United Kingdom).

Neha has been in the development sector for over nine years and has keen interest in policy, planning and multi stakeholder engagements. In her previous role she was deputed at the Ministry of Corporate Affairs by the United Nations Development Program to provide support in drafting of India's first National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights.

She has managed implementation of Centre Government Schemes, MPLAD funds and solid waste management projects for the Office of Member of Parliament – Ladakh. She also has experience in implementing multistakeholder projects in the Philippines, Ghana, and in India – Bihar and Rajasthan.

In free time, Neha enjoys reading and exploring new restaurants.

ABOUT CRB

Centre for Responsible Business (CRB) was established in 2011 as think-tank to pursue its vision, 'businesses integrate sustainability into their core business practices'. Given that sustainability is a multi-dimensional problem especially in the context of India and other emerging economies, CRB has adopted a model of engaging multiple stakeholders to develop action plans for promoting sustainable/responsible business, across various sectors in India.

CRB has consolidated its programmatic activities into the following thematic areas:

- Circular Economy
- Business & Human Rights
- Private Sector & SDGs
- Voluntary Sustainability Standards
- SMEs & Sustainability

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