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When AI decides:
building human rights
accountability in, not after

AI is already deciding.

The question is: who is accountable?

1

Welfare benefits, visa approvals, credit scores, bail decisions, border crossings – consequential choices increasingly made or shaped by algorithmic systems.

2

Yet human rights frameworks were built for human decision-makers. They respond through courts and complaints – after harm has occurred.

3

*The structural gap: **from reactive to proactive.**
From **general to system-specific.**
From **post-deployment remedy** to **pre-deployment accountability.***



What is Human Rights Impact Assessment?

?

WHAT IS HRIA?

A structured methodology rooted in the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights (UNGPs) that **identifies, assesses, and mitigates human rights risks before and during AI deployment.**

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HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

AI Safety

= protecting systems from failure

AI Security

= protecting data from attack

HRIA

= **protecting people - the rights-holders who bear the real costs of algorithmic decisions**

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UNGP FOUNDATION — Protect • Respect • Remedy

The three-pillar UN framework translated into a step-by-step AI assessment methodology.

GROUNDING IN THE Universal Declaration of Human Rights

30 rights — all at risk from AI



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Art. 2

Non-discrimination

Art. 12

Privacy

Art. 10

Fair hearing

UNDP Human Rights Impact of AI Assessment Toolkit



DEVELOPED BY

UNDP · for governments, businesses and civil society

METHODOLOGY

Based on experience by **Catalan and Croatian** Data Protection Authorities — tested in **Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia**, and now in-house at **UNDP (Africa, Asia, Latin America)**, more than **100 AI use cases**

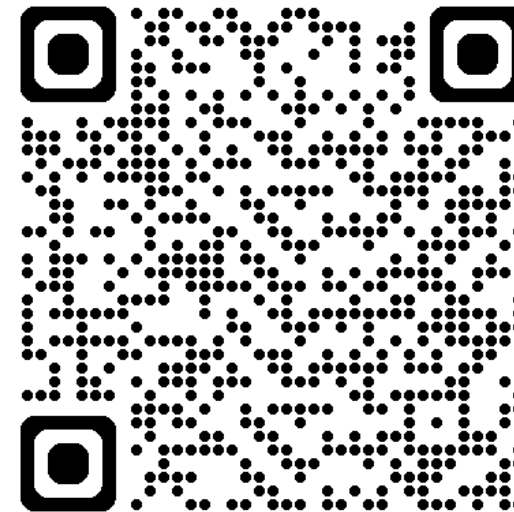
WHAT IT DOES

Step-by-step HRIA for AI systems: readiness check → 5-step assessment → concise governance report

ACCESS

PDF Toolkit: go.undp.org/HRIA · Online Beta: hria.eu

Interactive Beta Version



Use the online user manual (in Beta):

<https://hria.eu>



The Five-Step HRIA Framework

1

Plan & Scope

Define the system, identify stakeholders, set the HRIA scope

2

Identify Impacts

Map which rights could be affected and how

3

Analyse & Prioritise

Assess likelihood and severity of each risk

4

Manage & Mitigate

Design concrete safeguards and alternative approaches

5

Monitor & Report

Track outcomes and maintain accountability over time

Mongolia - Pastureland MRV Tool

PURPOSE

AI-powered Monitoring, Reporting and Verification system using satellite imagery, remote sensing, and machine learning to track vegetation cover and land degradation across Mongolian pastures.

APPLICATION

Supports sustainable pastureland management and green finance — sustainability-linked loans and climate finance instruments for herders and land managers.



Satellite & remote sensing

Vegetation index, land cover classification via ML



Green finance link

Climate bonds, sustainability-linked instruments



Nomadic communities

18 countries & territories; ECA region focus

HRIA PRIORITY RATING: HIGH

Which human rights are at risk?

Right to Livelihood

CRITICAL*UDHR Art. 23 / ICESCR Art. 6*

If the AI inaccurately assesses land condition, nomadic herders may be wrongly restricted from accessing ancestral pastureland — threatening their only means of subsistence.

Right to Property

HIGH*UDHR Art. 17*

Erroneous land degradation scores could be used to deny or restrict customary land rights. For nomadic communities with oral-tradition tenure, algorithmic misclassification carries asymmetric risk.

Right to Non-Discrimination

HIGH*ICCPR Art. 26 / CERD*

ML models trained on limited ground-truth data may systematically underperform for remote or minority-inhabited zones, **producing discriminatory loan and access decisions.**

Right to Privacy

MODERATE*UDHR Art. 12 / ICCPR Art. 17*

Ground-level monitoring infrastructure (sensors, drones, GPS tracking) raises localized privacy concerns for herder households and community movements.

Two failure modes — both harm herders

FALSE POSITIVE

Land rated as degraded when it is healthy

- Herder denied sustainability-linked loan
- Pasture access restricted or suspended
- Livelihood lost despite healthy land use
- Customary tenure challenged algorithmically

FALSE NEGATIVE

Degradation missed — land rated as healthy

- Overgrazing not flagged — degradation spreads
- Green finance instruments lack integrity
- Climate reporting data corrupted at source
- Structural harm to ecosystem goes unaddressed

The MRV system is not merely a monitoring tool — it is a de facto land rights adjudication engine. Inaccuracy in either direction produces irreversible harm for communities with limited legal recourse.

Integrating HRIA into public-sector processes

Build into existing workflows throughout the AI lifecycle

Policy development:

- Embed HRIA in national AI strategies and digital government policy

Procurement

- Build HRIA requirements directly into tendering criteria for AI systems

Deployment

- Build human oversight as deployment conditions.

Monitoring

- Not optional step – impacts identified pre-deployment often change with real users of the system at scale

NEXT STEPS

UNDP Human Rights Impact of AI Assessment Toolkit



Bootcamps for tech/start up companies – September 2026

UNDP – ITU training academy – October 2026

Training of civil society - 2026



ACCESS

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Thank You