

# GIFCT HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

## Human rights and the GIFCT mission

We believe that preventing terrorists and violent extremists from exploiting digital platforms enhances the protection, fulfillment, and realization of human rights, and that counterterrorism and human rights are complementary and mutually reinforcing goals. Achieving this alignment is not automatic, but requires a deliberate, inclusive, and sustained effort to embed human rights throughout counterterrorism efforts.

## About GIFCT's human rights policy

This human rights policy articulates GIFCT's commitment to human rights, describes our intention to embed respect for human rights across GIFCT processes, programming, and operations, and acknowledges our responsibility to address potential adverse human rights impacts that may arise from our work.

This policy articulates how GIFCT will respect human rights as an independent organization and applies to all our own activities, including how we seek to influence the practices of our member companies, stakeholder network, and the broader counterterrorism and violent extremism field.

This human rights policy exists alongside [minimum human rights criteria](#) that apply to all member companies joining GIFCT. These membership criteria constitute a key point of human rights leverage that GIFCT has over the human rights performance of GIFCT member companies.

## GIFCT's human rights commitment

GIFCT is committed to respecting the human rights contained in the International Bill of Human Rights, which consists of the UN Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

GIFCT's approach to human rights is based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). The participation of both governments and companies in GIFCT means that both the state duty to protect human rights and the corporate responsibility to respect human rights have direct relevance to our work.

States have a duty to protect against human rights abuses when setting the policy, legal, and regulatory context for counterterrorism and violent extremism efforts--for example, when they create lists that designate particular organizations and individuals as being involved in terrorism, or how they respond during moments of crisis. Within this context, companies are responsible for respecting human rights when pursuing efforts to prevent their platforms from being exploited by terrorists and violent extremists.

We acknowledge that GIFCT is often one step removed from the potential adverse human rights impacts relevant to our mission, as these impacts typically arise from the activities and actions of our member companies, rather than GIFCT itself. We are committed to creating and implementing processes, programming, and operations that help both governments and companies fulfill their respective human rights duties and responsibilities.

We also recognize the particular way in which some communities, groups, or populations are disproportionately both the victims of terrorism and violent extremism and the victims of efforts to address terrorism and violent extremism. We will engage with and pay particular attention to communities, groups, or populations that may be at heightened risk of vulnerability or marginalization.

## **Stakeholder engagement**

We cannot achieve our mission and human rights goals alone, and GIFCT's approach to multi-stakeholder engagement therefore underpins our approach to human rights due diligence. A variety of stakeholders are integral to GIFCT as member companies, as government, civil society, and academic members of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC), and as active participants in our thematic Working Groups.

## **Human rights due diligence**

To implement our commitment to respecting human rights in line with the UNGPs we have established a human rights due diligence framework for GIFCT activities organized around (1) GIFCT's three strategic pillars of "prevent, respond, learn", and (2) GIFCT's governance and operational structure. This human rights due diligence process is described in more detail in the annex to this policy and consists of the following:

- Identify and assess actual or potential adverse human rights impacts with which GIFCT may be involved, including via meaningful consultation with stakeholders.
- Integrate the findings into relevant GIFCT policies, processes, strategies, programming, and operations, and take appropriate action.
- Track the effectiveness of GIFCT's approach, including via quantitative and qualitative indicators and feedback from stakeholders.
- Communicate our progress each year through our annual report, and other channels as appropriate.

Supplementary to the six criteria for GIFCT membership, GIFCT takes into account three human rights considerations: (1) [GIFCT's membership criteria](#) and mentorship process for applicants with Tech Against Terrorism help ensure that GIFCT member companies respect human rights; (2) the GIFCT Independent Advisory Committee (IAC), which provides independent guidance to GIFCT, includes a majority of its members drawn from civil society; (3) all government representatives in the IAC must represent governments that are members of the [Freedom Online Coalition](#).

## **Review**

This policy was approved by the GIFCT Operating Board in November 2022. We will seek regular feedback on how we are meeting our commitment to human rights from stakeholders, and will review and update our human rights policy and due diligence framework periodically to meet evolving circumstances and expectations.