MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS PART
OF EVERYDAY BUSINESS.

International Professional Certificate on Human Rights in the Built Environment

DRAFT OUTLINE FOR CONSULTATION, 2023

The Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) is developing an International Professional Certificate on Human Rights in the Built Environment, with support from the Ove Arup Foundation. The course will draw on IHRB's experience and networks from its thematic programmes on the built environment, just transitions and migrant workers. It will also build on IHRB's educational experience, including the Masters Course in Business and Human Rights.

IHRB is seeking **input** from stakeholders on the structure, content and knowledge contributors for the course: further details on this are below, followed by the course outline.

The need

The built environment - cities and towns, buildings and infrastructure - has a transformational impact in people's lives. Yet current built environment decision-making often leads to harm to people and to the planet: deepening discrimination and inequality, over-depleting nature and natural resources and contributing to climate change. Transformation is hindered by siloed approaches to decision-making, and the pursuit of narrow economic goals without taking social and environmental factors into account from the earliest stages of the built environment lifecycle. IHRB's report "Dignity by Design" and related programme materials provide more context.

The course will introduce new ways of thinking and doing in the built environment. It will equip current and future leaders working in the planning, financing, design and construction of the built environment with a powerful grounding in human rights – and in the social implications of climate action and technological change. It will be deeply collaborative, with

knowledge contributors from across the public sector, private sector, civil society and leading academic institutions. It will provide theoretical foundations and practical tools for real-world application and problem solving.

Learning outcomes

The certificate will lead to the following outcomes for participants:

1. **Human rights and just transition expertise:** A practical understanding of what it means to bring a combined social, environmental and economic approach to the built environment; and a **strong grounding in the breadth of international human rights**, how they apply to companies and to built environment decision-making, and relevant tools and frameworks.

   For finance and industry leaders, the expertise that the certificate will provide is increasingly a part of running a successful business: attracting responsible investment and clients; avoiding risks and unlocking opportunities in projects and through supply chains; complying with growing legal expectations; and inspiring and retaining a dynamic workforce. The International Professional Certificate will give them an edge on these issues in the marketplace.

2. **Bridging silos:** Connections with people from a range of disciplines for the duration of the course and beyond - shifting towards more interdisciplinary methods of decision-making and generating opportunities for collaboration.

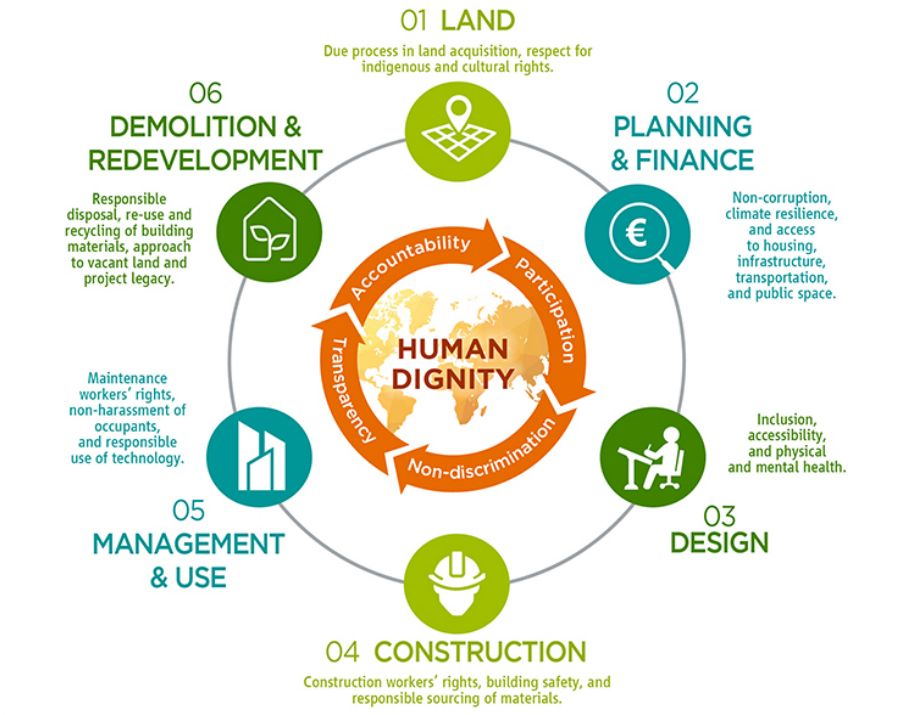
3. An ability to **influence and shape practices at the institutional and project level.** The course inspires critical thinking at each thematic session and supports participants in becoming active agents for change in their workplaces and beyond, leading to changes in policy and practice.

Structure

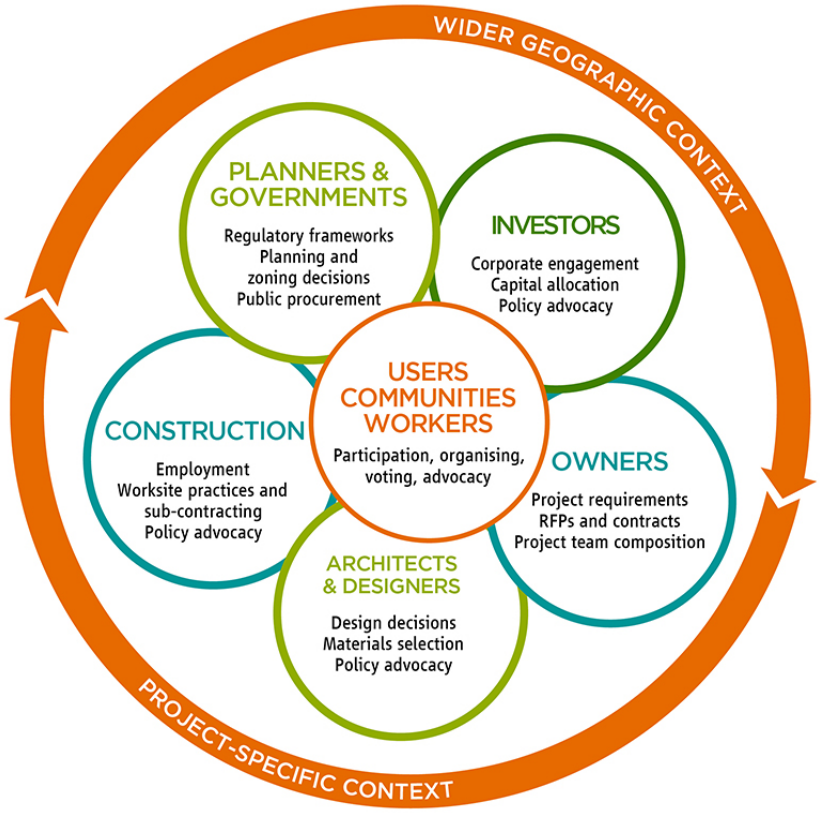
- The course will involve up to 15 learning sessions of an hour and a half each (with some required sessions, and some which participants will select from options). An initial outline of the sessions is below for review and feedback.

- At each session, participants will hear from and debate with three knowledge contributors on the given topic, from a *cross-section* of **civil society, the public and private sectors, and academia**. Knowledge contributors will be compensated for their time and contribution.
- Each session will include up to two hours of preparatory reading.
- Participants will complete: Four short written reflections with practical applicability (one per module); and a practical assignment at the end of the course - participants can adapt this to align with real-world application for their current and/or future careers.
- Participation in 90% of the learning sessions and completion of the assignments will result in a non-accredited "International Professional Certificate", as well as continued networking and impactful collaboration opportunities.

The certificate structure takes as its starting point IHRB's Framework for Dignity in the Built Environment. The Framework guides decision-making throughout the built environment lifecycle towards the realization of international human rights standards and the Sustainable Development Goals.



Human rights risks and opportunities through the built environment lifecycle @IHRB



Leverage points for social and environmental outcomes
throughout the built environment lifecycle @IHRB
Full framework can be downloaded at www.dignitybydesign.org

Endorsements and network

Endorsement: The course will be endorsed by representatives of: i. renowned academic institutions, ii. international organisations and iii. professional networks / associations.

Endorsers agree that the course is filling an important gap: they provide one or more knowledge contributors for the course; disseminate the opportunity to take the course through their networks; join one endorser review session per year, to review the outcomes of the course in that year and provide input for the next; and authorise their logo to be included on the course materials.

Partnership: The course will also have a wider network of partners, with different tiers of engagement - from content guidance, to dissemination, to financial support.

Who will take the course?

The course is purposefully inter-disciplinary, with a strong emphasis on breaking down silos between sectors and actors. Participants will be people who are already working or plan to work in government, finance, civil society organisations, AEC industries (architecture, engineering and construction) and technology, who are committed to new ways of learning and doing in the built environment, and to a more inclusive and just future.

The course will have a tiered pricing structure to enable diverse participation.

Provide your input

From August - December 2023 IHRB is seeking global input on: the course content (outline below); recommended knowledge contributors; and delivery structure. The course will be launched in 2024. Please review the outline below and provide your suggestions through this form:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BECertificate

COURSE OUTLINE

FOUNDATIONS

1. Introduction to human rights, and to human rights frontiers

Human rights reflect the inherent dignity of a person. The human rights framework has much to contribute toward more just outcomes in the built environment. It delineates clear duties of governments (national and local), and responsibilities of private sector actors. It covers a wide breadth of rights, as well as the cross-cutting dimensions of non-discrimination, meaningful participation, accountability and transparency.

Communities and civil society organizations in all regions use human rights to hold powerful actors accountable - within their own countries, or across geographical boundaries: sometimes putting their lives at risk to do so. Meanwhile many are exploring new frontiers of rights, such as the rights of nature, and the inter-connection of the environment and human rights.

Illustrative knowledge contributors[1]: *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights* / *Center for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESR)* / *Cesar Garavito, New York University*

2. The built environment lifecycle: Roles, responsibilities, accountability

Investing time at the earliest stages of a project in exploring the "who", "why" and "how" can transform its long-term impact. There are risks to human rights, as well as social opportunities to unlock at each stage of the built environment lifecycle. While the earliest stages - planning and financing - are definitional, it is important to look out across the full lifecycle (from design and construction, to management and use, to re-use or re-development), to map what the risks and opportunities may be, involve key stakeholders in decision-making and adjust plans and procurement accordingly.

[1] Note: illustrative knowledge contributors are organizations and individuals in IHRB's network that have expertise on the related topic: they have not yet been confirmed as knowledge contributors for the course, but are included as examples and to inspire stakeholders' thinking on knowledge contributors they may like to recommend.

Participants will be introduced to the Framework for Dignity in the Built Environment as a foundational practical tool and touch-point for the course, and its elaboration of points of leverage between actors around the lifecycle.

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *IHRB / Raoul Wallenberg Institute / ARUP / Coalition for Human Rights in Development*

ACTORS AND LIFECYCLE STAGES

LAND, PLANNING AND FINANCE

3. Planning, finance and economic innovation

What gets built, where, and for whom is largely determined by access to public and private **finance**, **planning** decisions, and the interactions between them. How can urban planning address human rights risks and inequalities? How can governments generate adequate public and private **finance** to meet locally defined needs? What are the tensions between long-term plans, and short-term realities? And how can approaches such as "mission-oriented innovation", new business models, and new economic thinking enable forward-movement by shifting the way that financing happens?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *ISOCARP / Urban Land Institute / African Climate Foundation / UCL Center for Innovation and Public Purpose / Beirut Urban Lab / It's Material*

4. Corruption and human rights

The Odebrecht scandal may be the most high-profile example of corruption in infrastructure and its implications for people and politics. But corruption abounds: an estimated 10-30% of investment in infrastructure is lost through corruption and mismanagement. This has direct consequences for multiple human rights, including the right to participation in public affairs, non-discrimination, and access to water, health

services, and energy. And, as the high death rate in the 2023 Turkey/Syria earthquake due to un-enforced building codes showed - the right to life. What are the linkages between corruption and human rights? What steps can help eradicate cultures of corruption?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *CoST - The Infrastructure Transparency Initiative* / *Transparency International* / *FACT Coalition*

DESIGN: OF URBAN AREAS, BUILDINGS, AND SYSTEMS

5. Between clients and end-users

Architects, engineers and master-planners are positioned between the end-users and people who will be impacted by a project, and their clients. What is their role in advocating "up" to clients for more human rights-based approaches to design of public and private places and buildings, and advocating "out" for policies that enable it? Does the human rights record of certain governments, private clients and contexts mean they should be "no-go", and if so how have architects, engineers and planners navigated these decisions?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *ADPSR (Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility) / Yasmeen Lari / Gehl / Ramboll*

6. Design for whom? The right to meaningful participation

How does the design process and decision-making exclude or include certain groups of peoples or individuals - from people experiencing homelessness, to people with disabilities, to immigrant populations? What are the various tiers of participation, from information-sharing through to agency over outcomes? How can participation strategies themselves take account of the power dynamics and disparities among participants? And how do public and private ownership structures enable or restrict diverse users of places?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Disability Rights Fund / Oman Think Urban / Community Architects Network / Maria Vassilakou (Vienna Solutions - IHRB Advisory Council)*

CONSTRUCTION

7. The materials supply chain

Approximately half of extracted materials are used in the built environment. These include materials for the green transition. For example copper is a key material for the electrification of buildings. Yet the process of mining copper is often accompanied by human rights abuses, such as displacement and harmful working conditions. And of the top 300 undeveloped copper orebodies globally, 47% are on or close to indigenous lands and 65% are in high water risk areas. What are the global human rights implications of the material supply chain, and the combined social and environmental opportunities in the generation of circular and localized material production?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Sand Stories / Design for Freedom / Responsible Steel / Marshalls / ICLEI Circulars / Responsible Minerals Institute, Uni of Queensland / MASS BUILD /*

8. Construction workers rights and gender in construction

Approximately seven percent of the world's workforce is in construction. Given the industry's tight margins and multiple layers of subcontracting, exploitation of construction workers on site and through supply chains is pervasive. This includes wage theft, indebtedness for recruitment fees, hazardous working conditions, and inadequate housing for migrant workers, and at the extreme, forced labor. Trade unions work to strengthen the rights of construction workers, but for many construction workers opportunities to form and join unions are limited. At the same time, there is a significant under-representation of women in the construction industries, influencing how places are planned, designed and built. What are examples of structural changes that can improve conditions for construction workers, and break down gender barriers?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *NABTU - Women Build Nations / Dr. Natalie Galea, Univ. of Melbourne / SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association, India); Building Responsibly group of companies*

MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND USE

9. Maintaining buildings and infrastructure

The longest stage of the built environment lifecycle is when buildings, infrastructure and places are in use - sometimes over centuries. The resource intensiveness and climate impacts of building are starting to shift mindsets and priorities towards the care and retrofit of existing buildings, over new builds. In what ways are renovations and retrofits - from school buildings in India, to Europe's renovation wave - generating positive impacts for people, and mitigating risks? How can building owners ensure respect for and diversity among tenants, and the rights of maintenance, cleaning and security workers? How does literal and figurative investment in "social infrastructure" build connectivity and resilience within communities? And in what ways is cultural heritage being harnessed and preserved in inclusive rather than exclusive ways?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights; UNI Global Union; Eric Klinenberg; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; Manish Sisodia*

DEMOLITION, RE-USE AND CIRCULARITY

10. Endings, beginnings, continuity

The final stage of the building lifecycle, when buildings, places and infrastructure are demolished, dismantled, deconstructed or repurposed, links back to the lifecycle start with its considerations of land, displacement, and use. Particularly for major infrastructure projects and those with defined lifespans like mega-sporting events, issues relating to the legacy of the project should be factored in from the outset. There is growing attention on designing projects in adaptable ways, recognising the implications of a turbulent world affected by climate change, environmental degradation, economic change and migration flows. This session will explore the political-economic forces behind demolitions, innovation in using vacant spaces, and in designing adaptability from the outset.

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Eli Friedman, Iryna Serhiiuk, ICLEI Urban Transitions Alliance participating city, e.g. Dortmund, Huarirou, Baltimore*

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Course participants select three of these thematic sessions

11. Indigenous rights, cultural rights and free, prior and informed consent

Internationally, indigenous people's rights are set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, while some countries and territories have introduced specific protections of indigenous rights. How can indigenous peoples have more direct participation in decision-making spaces? How are ownership structures - for land, buildings, and infrastructure - giving greater recognition to indigenous rights? And how can architects, builders and engineers work with indigenous communities and strengthen the realization of indigenous rights through their practice?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples / Minority Rights Group / Hiroko Yamamoto, Univ. of Utah's DESIGNBLUFF / Joan Carling / Wakatu*

12. The right to adequate housing

The right to adequate housing still remains out of reach for many, with over a billion people living in informal settlements, and with the cost of housing in relation to average incomes on the rise in many regions. In international law, the right to housing has seven core elements: security of tenure; availability of services, materials facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability; accessibility; location; and cultural adequacy. All these elements have heightened resonance in the context of global climate change. In what ways can policy and finance align to realize the right to adequate housing for all, and what kinds of economic innovation are needed?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: UN Habitat / IUT / The Shift / UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs / UN Rapporteur on the Right to Housing

13. The right to water

The right to water and sanitation is a key component of the right to an adequate standard of living. However measures to secure access for water for one community can undermine the rights of other communities, for example when a reservoir leads to forced evictions, displacement and the erosion of cultural rights. And in some countries the privatization of water supplies has led to protests when costs increase or access becomes more limited. How can frameworks such as AAAQ ("Availability, Accessibility, and Quality") guide human rights-based approaches to water access?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *TNI - Transnational Institute, Water Justice / Representative of Flint, Michigan / OECD*

14. The right to physical and mental health

The built environment is one of the "social determinants" of health. The COVID pandemic highlighted the centrality of the built environment to both physical and mental health - from the quality of indoor and outdoor air, to access to public spaces, to access to health infrastructure such as hospitals. It also revealed deep disparities in health outcomes as a result of inequality in the built environment. How are leaders from multiple regions re-shaping the built environment for stronger health outcomes?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Tolulah Oni, Univ. of Cambridge / NeuroLandscape / WHO*

15. Smart cities, digital rights and non-discrimination

Technology plays an increasingly intrinsic role in the planning and delivery of the built environment. "Smart city" strategies can improve efficiency, communication, and

connectivity. They can also deepen existing inequality - both through the diversion of stretched-budgets from essential services and by benefiting only a few - and bring human rights risks such as discrimination, targeting of minority groups, and abuses of privacy. What planning and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure that technology within the built environment contributes to the realization of rights, rather than undermining them? This includes technology that is harnessed for climate innovation.

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *UNDP Smart Cities / Access Now / UN Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy / HP*

TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSITION

16. Just transition in the built environment

A "just transition" in the built environment will involve action to reduce emissions and strengthen resilience in ways that expand opportunity and minimize harm. It will involve respecting workers' rights, the right to housing, non-discrimination, social dialogue and participation, and the necessary shift in business models. What are the pathways towards a just transition and the roles of the public and private sector actors involved? This session will draw on the context-specific insights from eight cities and the international-level advocacy of IHRB and partners' global project "Building for Today and the Future: Advancing a Just Transition in the Built Environment".

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *IHRB / ICLEI / ADB or Green Climate Fund / Green Accountability Initiative*

17. The rights of nature, biodiversity, and nature-based solutions

There has been growing momentum in many regions to endow certain natural resources - such as wetlands and rivers - with rights, to protect them from human exploitation. What are the possibilities and limitations of this approach, and what are the initiatives underway

to recognise the interdependence of human beings and the natural environment in the context of built environment decision-making?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *Prof. Elizabeth McPherson (New Zealand) / Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature*

18. Inter-generational action and visions of the future: Who gets to imagine?

Cities contain multiple layers of past uses and experiences, current uses, and future directions. What methodologies combine each of these dimensions to shape more just outcomes in the built environment? How should the 1987 definition of "sustainability" as "development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" be interpreted and acted on today? In what ways are older and younger generations co-creating more just outcomes in the built environment?

Achieving change also means creative approaches to visioning alternative futures, free from the constraints of possibility. What can fields such as science fiction, climate fiction, and "futures thinking" bring to the transformation of the built environment?

Illustrative knowledge contributors: *UN Rapporteur on the Rights of Older Persons; Architects Climate Action Network; Welsh Government (Wellbeing of Future Generations); Institute for the Future / LK Jemisin / African Futures Institute*