The global community today faces a number of challenges and opportunities that bring with them threats to human rights. From intensive infrastructure delivery to natural resource exploitation, from climate change to mass migration, human rights are closely intertwined with environmental and political concerns. This Handbook offers clear-headed, expert advice on how human rights cannot only be considered in these developments but how they can be placed at the centre. The Handbook details leading methods, asserts the importance of diverse perspectives, considers varied socio-cultural contexts, and argues strongly for an interlinkage between project-based assessments and the broader business and human rights sphere. In so doing, the contributors deliver an essential resource for impact assessment practitioners, corporate, civil society and government representatives seeking to improve the consideration and protection of human rights.

– Sara Bice, President (2018-2019) International Association for Impact Assessment, Associate Professor, Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University, Australia

‘The duty to prepare human rights impact assessments has been, until now, honoured more in the breach than in the observance. This is due both to the lack of political will or good faith and to the complexity of the method. This impressive Handbook answers at least half of the equation: it shall now be for policy-makers and businesses to pick up the gauntlet.’

– Olivier De Schutter, former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food (2008-2014) and Member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

‘With a record number of shareholder resolutions filed on human rights due diligence in the 2019 proxy season, investors are increasingly asking companies to disclose how they identify and assess the real and potential adverse human rights impacts of their activities and business relationships. This Handbook provides valuable guidance for investors on a range of factors to consider when engaging companies on HRIAs, including how to ensure meaningful participation of rights-holders; relevant standards and frameworks to foster accountability; and what adequate disclosure of HRIA processes and findings should look like.’

– Paloma Muñoz Quick, Director, Investor Alliance for Human Rights

‘If companies are to meet their responsibility to respect human rights, they need a clear understanding of what their impacts on people’s human rights are or could be. The practice of human rights impact assessment is still a developing field, and the sharing of methodologies, insights, successes and challenges is central to its advancement and consolidation. This Handbook offers both practitioners of impact assessment and all of us with an interest in advancing business respect for human rights, an invaluable resource. I challenge anyone not to find fresh ideas, reflections and inspiration in its pages.’

– Caroline Rees, President and Co-Founder, Shift, US
‘An important book for those who want to understand the process of translating corporate human rights due diligence into practical action, and ultimately results for the people affected by company decisions. An essential read for everyone working at the nexus of business and human rights.’

– Ida Hyllested, Child Rights and Business Specialist at UNICEF

Human rights impact assessment (HRIA) has increasingly gained traction among state, business and civil society actors since the endorsement of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the Human Rights Council in 2011. This timely and insightful Handbook addresses HRIA in the context of business and human rights.

Employing state-of-the-art analysis of current practice, the contributors offer a dynamic overview of contemporary approaches to HRIA, looking ahead to its future trajectories. Chapters present key methodological concepts and new theoretical developments, comparing different approaches from project to sector and governance level. Collectively, these critical appraisals shed light on the role that HRIA can play in addressing the adverse human rights impacts of business activities and fostering sustainable development.

Featuring extensive analysis of HRIA practice in a range of industrial contexts and global regions, this Handbook provides crucial insight for practitioners working with impact assessment, human rights, and sustainable development, as well as businesses, investors, government actors and multilateral institutions promoting responsible business conduct. Academics and others investigating human rights and impact assessments in business contexts will also benefit from this book’s comprehensive analysis of theoretical developments in HRIA research.


**Nov 2019** c 512 pp Hardback 978 1 78811 999 3 c £190.00 / c $290.00

Research Handbooks on Impact Assessment series