
Methodology for Lawsuits Database

The Resource Centre's Lawsuits Database (Database) provides functionality to search lawsuits filed against companies to redress alleged human rights abuses. The Database includes lawsuits filed over the past 30 years. New lawsuits are added on a regular basis.

1. Scope

The Database tracks lawsuits brought against companies alleging that they caused or contributed to human rights abuses as well as lawsuits brought against governments to regulate company behavior. Lawsuits are understood as any legal action initiated in a court of law to redress the abuse of legal and/or human rights.

2. Sources

The lawsuits included in the Database are selected from the Resource Centre's pool of [Case Profiles](#). Case Profiles are concise summaries of lawsuits on issues relating to companies' human rights performance and practice, which have been selected, researched and drafted by the Resource Centre.

Multiple factors inform the selection process, including the salience of the alleged abuse, the nature of the litigation strategy, and the potential for setting legal precedent. The main sources for the Case Profiles are court documents, news articles, information provided by civil society organizations, and information provided directly by the lawyers involved in the case.

Each Case Profile provides a "snapshot" summary of key facts, in addition to an outline of the proceedings, involved parties, allegations and legal arguments. Where possible, the Case Profile includes links to relevant news articles, commentaries on the case, and court-documents.

3. Indicators/ Filters

Users can search the Database by the below filters:

➤ Language

All our lawsuits are available in English. Some lawsuits are also available in one or more of the Resource Centre's 10 languages. Users can use the language filter to search for lawsuits in languages other than English (e.g. Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian).

➤ Company

Identifies the company/companies against whom the legal action was brought.

➤ Sector

Identifies the primary sector in which the company operates.

➤ Lawsuit Status

Identifies whether the lawsuit is "open" or "closed." An open lawsuit is one where proceedings are still ongoing.

➤ Location of Filing

Identifies the country in which the legal action was brought.

➤ Location of Incident

Identifies the country in which the alleged abuse occurred.

➤ Issues

Identifies key issues raised in the case, including the types of alleged abuses. This indicator follows the Resource Centre's website's "issue" taxonomy. Examples of searchable issues include but are not limited to: Environment, Labour, Security issues & conflict zones, Killings, Forced labour & modern slavery, Climate change.

➤ Type of Litigation

Identifies whether the legal action is domestic, transnational, or filed with an international human rights body:

- **Domestic:**
The lawsuit is filed in the same country where the alleged abuse occurred.
- **Transnational:**
The lawsuit is filed in a different jurisdiction than where the alleged abuse occurred.
- **International body:**
The lawsuit is filed with an international or regional judicial body (e.g. the International Court of Justice or the European Court of Human Rights).

➤ Date

When the information is publicly available, this filter identifies the date the case was first filed in court. When that information is not publicly available, it identifies the date the case was first mentioned in news articles or press releases.

In addition to these filters, each lawsuit page has a set of indicators at the top, namely:

- Lawsuit status
- Incident date: date of filing (see above)
- Gender of the plaintiff 
- Group plaintiff is affiliated with 
- Location of Filing
- Location of Incident
- Type of Litigation
- Company name
- Company Sector
- Company Location: country of company headquarters

Lawsuit

Lawsuit against Company

Status: **OPEN**

Incident date
Dec. 1, 2020

 **Unknown**

 **Community**

Location of Filing: **United Kingdom**

Location of Incident: **Botswana**

Type of Litigation: **Transnational**

Company: **Company name**

Company Sector:

Company Location: **Denmark**

4. Seeking company responses

The Resource Centre does not reach out to companies accused of the abuse and ask them to respond to the allegations where there are legal proceedings, as we consider the courtroom the appropriate forum in which all involved parties can present and defend their position publicly. We provide links to press releases or other statements made by the company in relation to the lawsuit where available.