

HUMAN RIGHTS

UN toolkit to help businesses become more gender-inclusive

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the College of Management of Mahidol University are releasing a toolkit for gender-inclusive workplaces designed for Thailand's business sector.

At the College of Management of Mahidol University, the UNDP and the college co-hosted a workshop to introduce the draft version of a standardised toolkit for businesses to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in a bid to halt workplace discrimination against LGBTQI people.

UNDP national consultant and Mahidol University lecturer Nattavud Pimpa said that while LGBTQI inclusivity in Thailand has gained momentum,

many LGBTQI people still face discrimination and prejudice in the workplace.

He said discrimination could occur in indirect and direct forms, such as job recruitment rejection due to being transgender or when a couple can only gain welfare support if they are legally registered.

"Discrimination in a Thai workplace can be witnessed when a gay man is called 'mummy' or 'sister' without consent or when the employees are blamed for speaking out when they call for help or oppose injustice in the workplace such as sexual harassment," he said. "From a management perspective, a company damages their human resources when this occurs; they're about to lose their talented and professional people just because

of their differences."

He said the draft toolkit aims to provide guidelines for the business sector to ensure their inclusivity and fair treatment of LGBTQI employees by basing them on UN standards.

He added that currently, there are 10 firms pioneering the use of the draft version in their workplace.

"This toolkit has gone through discussions with business sectors who submitted their stories on discrimination in the workplace and civil society organisations," he said.

"Academics on management and business have participated in making this draft," he said. "Although we have been working hard on this version, we still want to make it much more inclusive in the future," he added.