JaCER

Japan Center for Engagement and
Remedy on Business and Human Rights

Progress Report
2022-2025

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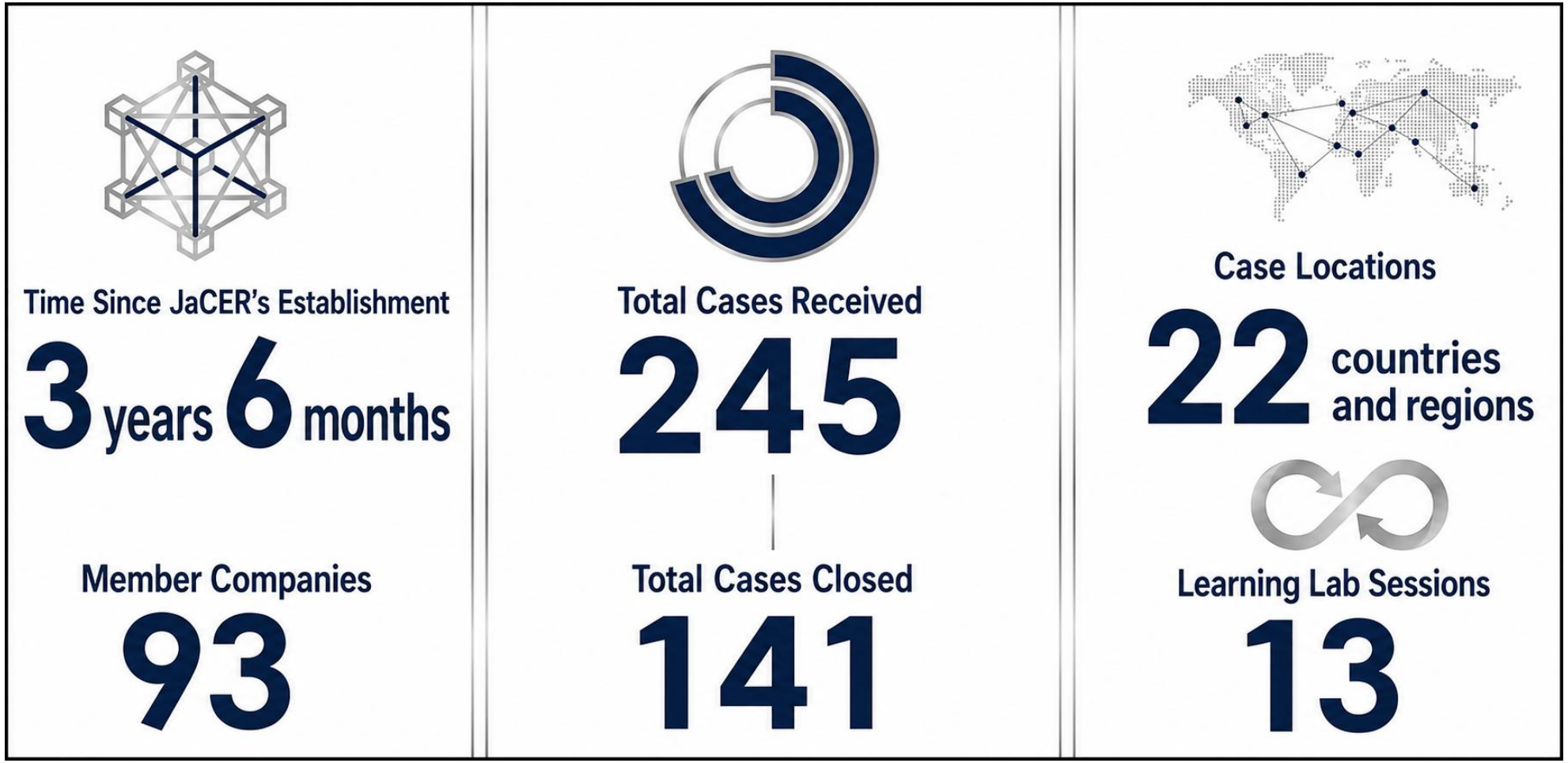
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its establishment in June 2022, JaCER has supported companies in respecting human rights and providing remedy through engagement and dialogue. In its first three and a half years, membership grew to 93 companies. JaCER received 245 cases and closed 141 of them.
The cases originated in 22 countries and regions and covered a broad range of human rights issues in business operations and supply chains. In addition to handling individual cases, JaCER held 13 Learning Lab sessions to strengthen members' practical capabilities.



As of 31 March 2026

MESSAGE FROM REPRESENTATIVE DIRECTORS

Message from Co-Representative Director Hidemi Tomita

JaCER was established nearly four years ago as a new and unique model for a grievance mechanism platform. Since then, both the number of member companies and the number of grievances received have continued to grow. We have also received a wide range of grievances concerning various aspects of companies' value chains, and we believe that JaCER has come to play a meaningful role as a grievance mechanism. At the same time, our experience over the past four years has revealed a number of practical challenges that we did not fully anticipate when JaCER was established. Going forward, we will continue to address these challenges in order to promote effective engagement and access to remedy, while also strengthening JaCER's role as a source of continuous learning in the field of business and human rights.

Message from Co-Representative Director Sakon Kuramoto

For companies to grow sustainably, they must embed appropriate responses to human rights issues in their management principles. As an organization supporting grievance mechanisms and dialogue-based problem solving, JaCER has worked to improve their effectiveness. Trust in a mechanism grows through each engagement and continuous improvement. We hope this report deepens understanding of our work and helps companies advance their efforts to respect human rights.

Message from Co-Representative Director Daisuke Takahashi

With the cooperation of companies, industry associations, civil society, trade unions, institutional investors and experts in Japan and abroad, JaCER has operated the Engagement and Remedy Forum to support and promote corporate grievance mechanisms. We will continue working with diverse stakeholders to support responsible business conduct, promote engagement with rights-holders and effective remedy, and create positive impact across society.

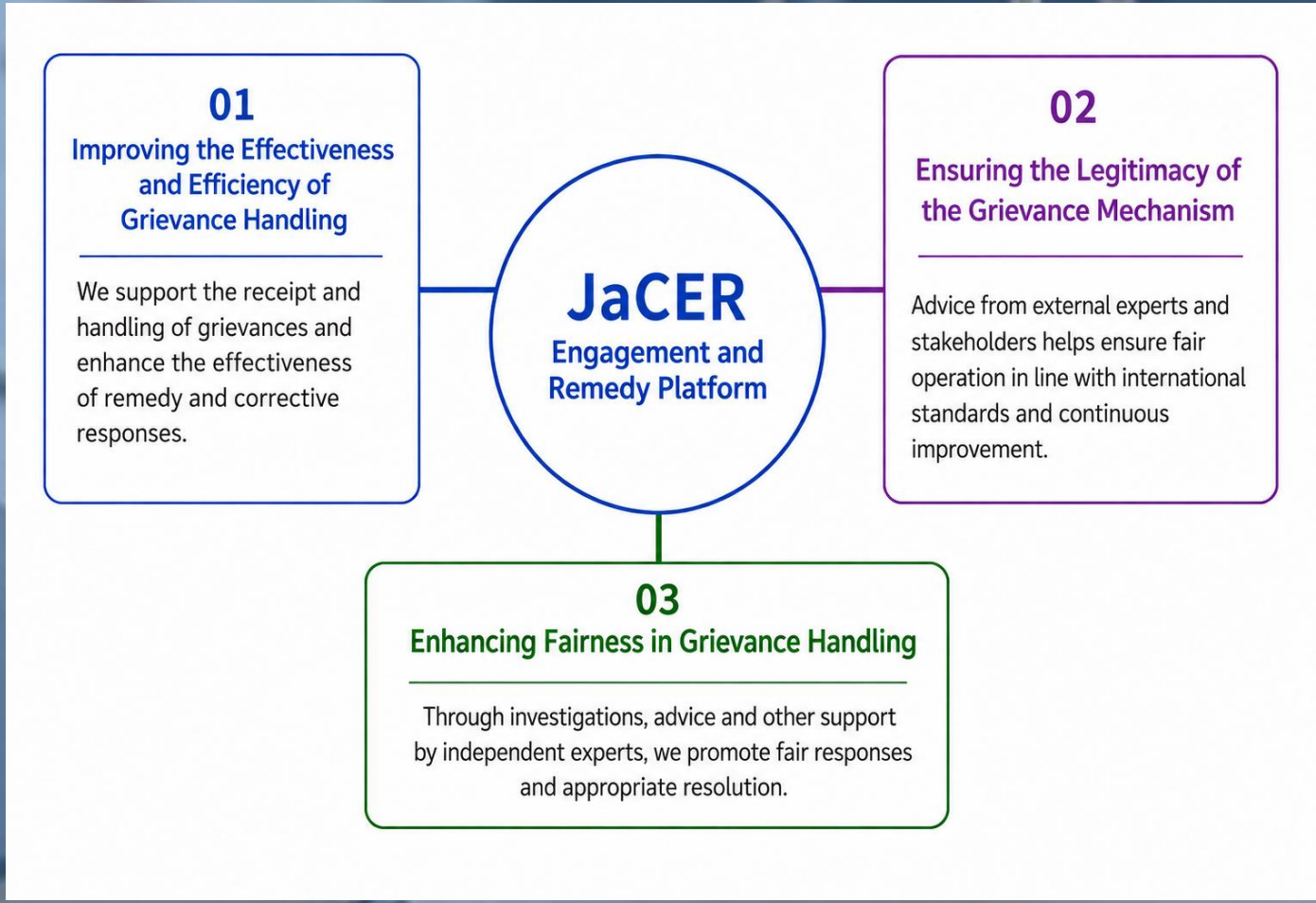
WHAT IS JaCER?

Operating an Engagement and Remedy Platform
The Japan Center for Engagement and Remedy on Business and Human Rights (JaCER) operates the "Engagement and Remedy Platform," a non-judicial grievance mechanism aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). From an independent and impartial position, JaCER supports member companies in handling grievances and advancing engagement and remedy.

Facilitating Engagement between Companies and Stakeholders
JaCER receives grievances concerning human rights and responsible business conduct and facilitates constructive engagement between companies and stakeholders, including reporting parties and rights holders. It provides expert advice and support throughout the grievance-handling process, including fact-finding, stakeholder engagement, and corrective and remedial measures. Where appropriate, JaCER also provides opportunities for advice and mediation by independent experts to support resolution through dialogue and appropriate remedy.

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Grievance Mechanisms
Guided by the effectiveness criteria for non-judicial grievance mechanisms set out in UNGP Principle 31, JaCER seeks to ensure legitimate, equitable, transparent, and predictable grievance-handling processes that respect the perspectives of reporting parties and rights holders.

Through these efforts, JaCER aims to build trust between companies and stakeholders, promote responsible business conduct and access to remedy, and strengthen business and human rights practices among Japanese companies and the broader business community.



JaCER'S JOURNEY FY2022–2025

~2021
Preparatory Work and Foundation Building

December 2019
The Global Compact Network Japan (GCNJ) and the Business and Human Rights Lawyers Network (BHR Lawyers) took the lead in developing the "Engagement and Remedy Guidelines."

February 2021
With support from The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, the "Engagement and Remedy Project" was launched by BHR Lawyers, GCNJ, the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, and other organizations.

April 2021
A Grievance Mechanism Working Group was established within the JEITA CSR Committee, which had been working to promote industry-wide adoption of the "Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct," with support from The Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

2022
Establishment and Launch of Activities

- **June** JaCER established
- **August** Official website launched
- **October** Grievance-handling operations launched
- **October** Participated in the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights - Asia-Pacific Forum
- **December** Conducted the first Engagement and Remedy Practitioner Training

2023
Governance Development and External Evaluation

- **March** Co-organized the "Engagement and Remedy Forum for Responsible Business Conduct 2023"
- **July** Announced the members of the Advisory Board and Stakeholder Panel
- **August** JaCER was mentioned in the country visit report of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights
- **November** Established the Code of Conduct for Member Companies
- **November** Participated in the 12th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights
- **December** Held an Advisory Board meeting

2024
Functional Enhancement and Capacity Building

- **February** Held the Engagement and Remedy Forum 2024 (1st Session)
- **February** Held the 2nd Stakeholder Panel meeting
- **June** Held the Engagement and Remedy Forum 2024 (2nd Session)
- **July** Launched the JaCER Learning Lab
- **November** Participated in the 13th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights and exchanged views with European institutions

2025
Research and Strengthening International Outreach

- **March** Conducted a research visit to Malaysia
- **March** Launched "JaCER Briefing"
- **May** Launched "JaCER Research Paper"
- **May** Introduced automatic translation into 32 languages on the English-language website
- **Throughout the year** Continued training and knowledge sharing to enhance the quality of grievance handling

2026 (Jan – Mar)
Progress toward Institutionalization

- **February** In collaboration with GCNJ and other organizations, published the results of activities addressing sexual violence and harassment issues in the media and entertainment industry
- **March 12** Obtained certification from the Ministry of Justice as a certified dispute resolution service provider (ADR)
- **January – March** Reviewed the system and operations and advanced the development of closing criteria

PURPOSE OF JaCER

JaCER adopted the following Purpose to reaffirm its fundamental reason for being and social mission and to guide its future activities.

PURPOSE
Promote engagement between companies and stakeholders and contribute to effective remedy and redress envisaged by international frameworks, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct.

MISSION
Through the Engagement and Remedy Platform, improve the effectiveness of corporate grievance mechanisms and support and promote responsible business conduct, including respect for human rights.

VISION
A sustainable society that leaves no one behind, where companies sincerely pursue engagement and remedy and affected stakeholders can readily access to remedy.

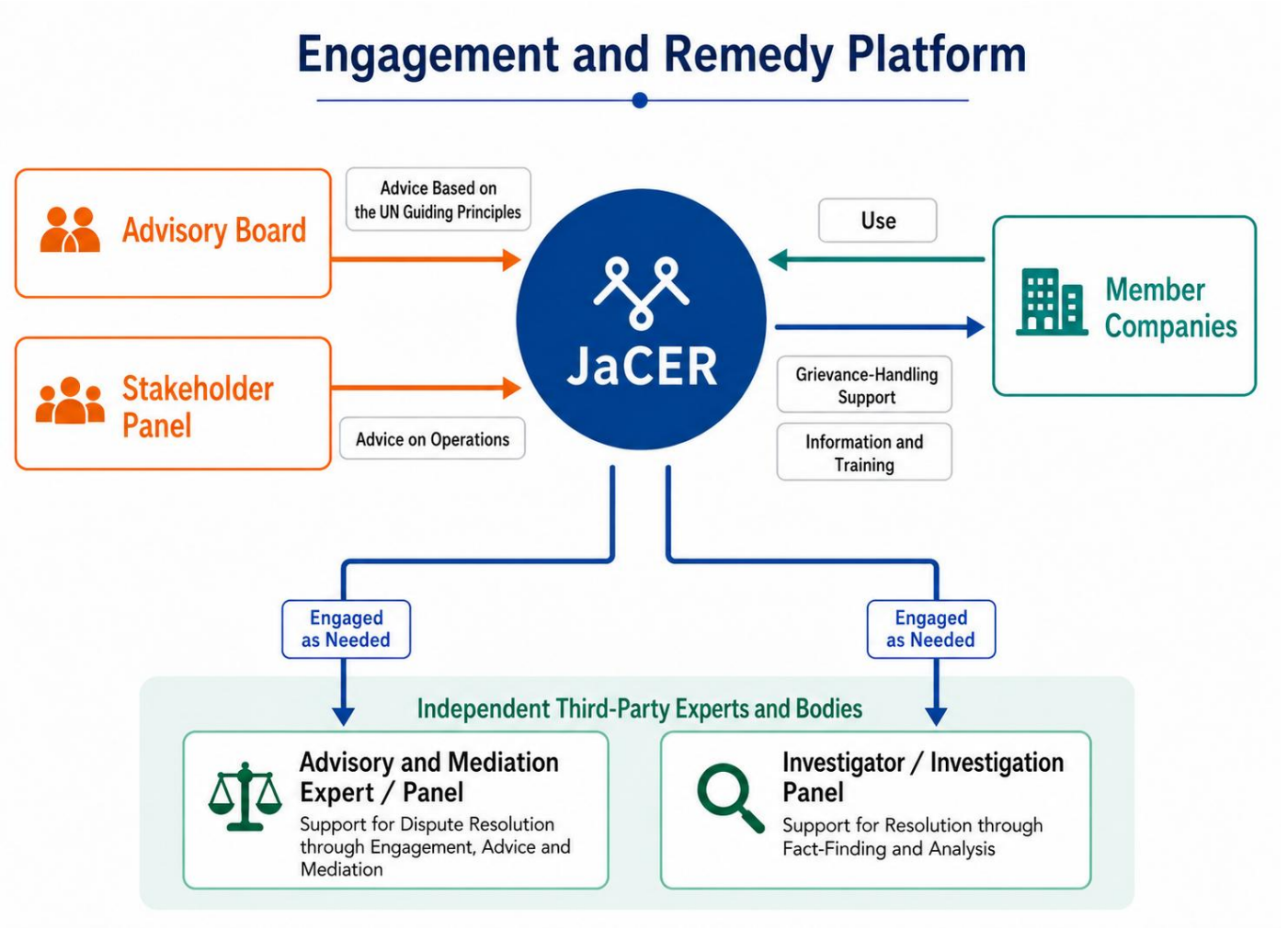
VALUES
- Use alignment with international normative frameworks as a common language.
- Prioritize engagement to promote mutual understanding.
- Recognize power imbalances and the perspectives of vulnerable people.
- Accumulate and actively share knowledge.
- Collaborate with diverse actors to increase social impact.
- Draw on diverse, balanced and multidimensional expertise.
- Make integrity the foundation of our work and strengthen public trust.

WHAT IS THE ENGAGEMENT AND REMEDY PLATFORM?

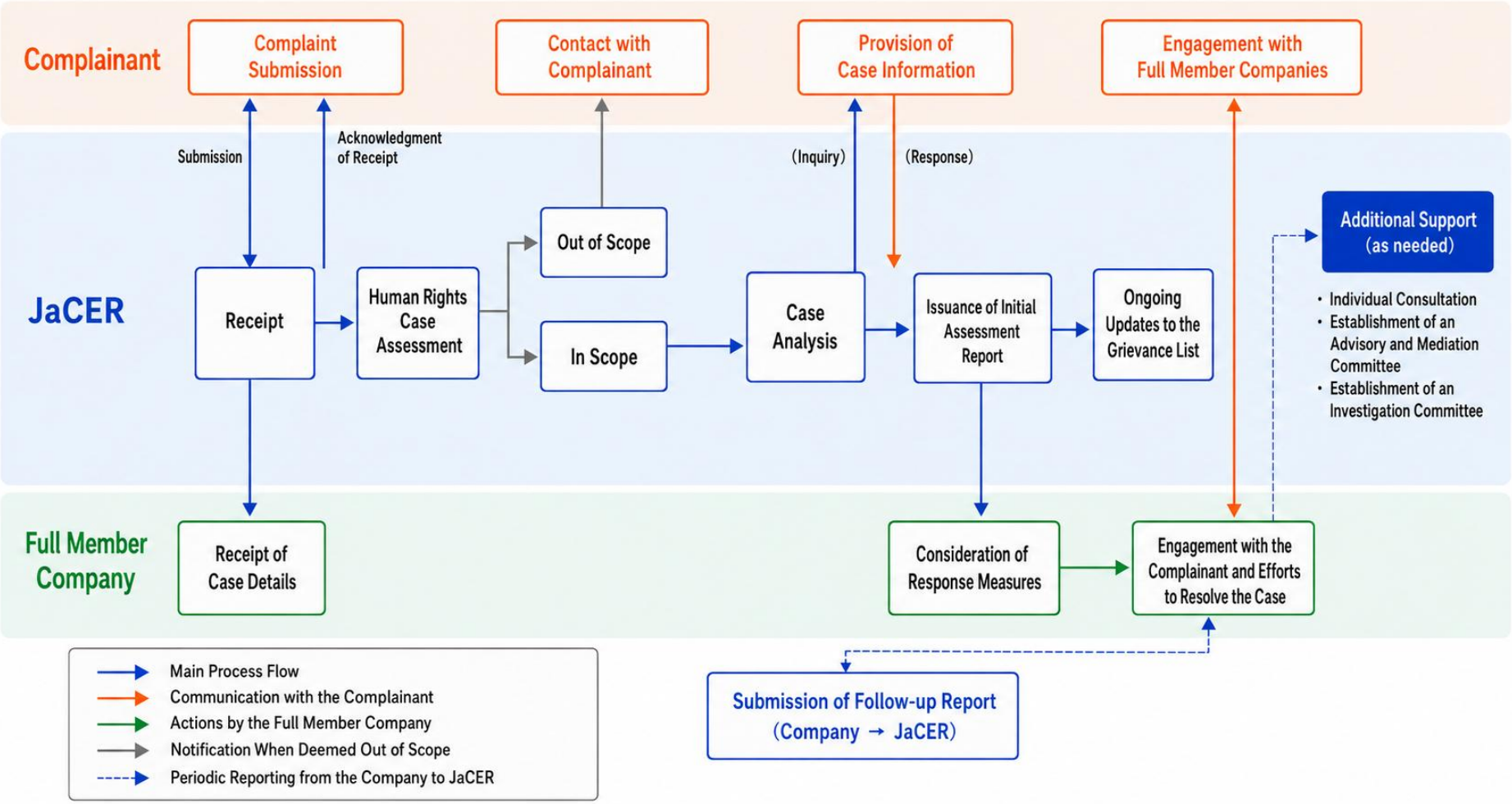
A mechanism based on the UNGPs
JaCER's Engagement and Remedy Platform is a non-judicial mechanism based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). It provides expert support for member companies' handling of human rights grievances. By promoting constructive engagement between the company and rights-holders and helping secure access to appropriate remedy, JaCER supports companies in meeting their responsibility to respect human rights.

Support and engagement for member companies
The Platform is designed to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, equity and legitimacy of grievance handling. JaCER receives complaints, manages cases, advises on engagement and corrective action, and provides information and training. Where needed, it supports independent Advisory and Mediation Panels and Investigation Panels, enabling expert, neutral dialogue and fact-finding.

Advice from consultative bodies
To safeguard the Platform's credibility, an Advisory Board of external experts provides advice on operation in line with international standards, while a Stakeholder Panel of labor unions, civil society, researchers and other stakeholders advises on governance and improvement. JaCER continuously incorporates these recommendations to build a transparent, trusted grievance mechanism aligned with international standards.



JaCER'S GRIEVANCE PROCESS



Receiving complaints
At JaCER, grievances are submitted through our website. We also accept grievances in multiple languages. Once a grievance is received, we first determine whether it falls within the scope of JaCER's criteria. We normally acknowledge receipt to the complainant within one to two business days and, at the same time, notify the relevant member company of an overview of the case.

Initial Review Report
JaCER analyzes in-scope complaints against internationally recognized standards and normally provides the member company with an Initial Review Report within 14 business days. The report summarizes the complaint, potential human rights issues and recommended next steps.

Engagement and response
The company conducts fact-finding, considers action and engages the complainant. JaCER tracks progress and provides support. Depending on the case and the parties' wishes, independent experts may facilitate dialogue or conduct fact-finding.

ADVISORY AND MEDIATION PANEL

What is the Advisory and Mediation Panel?
JaCER supports member companies' fact-finding and engagement with rights-holders. Where the parties have difficulty reaching a resolution, an Advisory and Mediation Panel supports a dialogue-based solution from a more independent position. External experts, including lawyers, provide advice or mediation tailored to each case.

Key features
Unlike a court, the Panel does not determine facts or legal liability. It listens to the company and rights-holders, clarifies their positions and interests, and supports a solution reached by the parties themselves. The first Panel was established in February 2024, and experience has since been accumulated through actual cases.

Certified ADR provider
On 12 March 2026, JaCER was certified by the Ministery of Justice as a dispute resolution service provider under Japan's ADR Act (Certification No. 191). Certified ADR enables an impartial third party to help parties resolve disputes through mediation or conciliation rather than litigation. Certification requires compliance with statutory standards, including fairness and neutrality.

Human rights disputes may involve information and bargaining-power imbalances, as well as ongoing employment or business relationships that make direct dialogue difficult. ADR therefore plays an important role in business and human rights by clarifying both parties' claims and needs and helping them identify mutually acceptable solutions.

What is ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution)?
ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) is a general term for procedures used to resolve civil disputes without resorting to court proceedings. The Ministry of Justice of Japan defines ADR as "a procedure in which an impartial third party is involved in helping parties seeking to resolve a civil dispute without litigation to reach a resolution." Typical forms of ADR include arbitration, mediation, and conciliation. In mediation and conciliation in particular, a neutral third party hears the views of both parties, facilitates dialogue and negotiation, and helps reconcile their respective interests with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable resolution. Compared with litigation, ADR can be conducted confidentially and allows procedures to be designed flexibly to meet the needs of the parties.

Under the Act on Promotion of Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR Act), Japan has also established an accreditation system for ADR services provided by private-sector organizations. Under this system, the Minister of Justice accredits ADR services that meet statutory standards and requirements, including those concerning impartiality and neutrality. Accredited ADR procedures may have certain legal effects, including, subject to specified requirements, a stay of the completion of prescription periods.

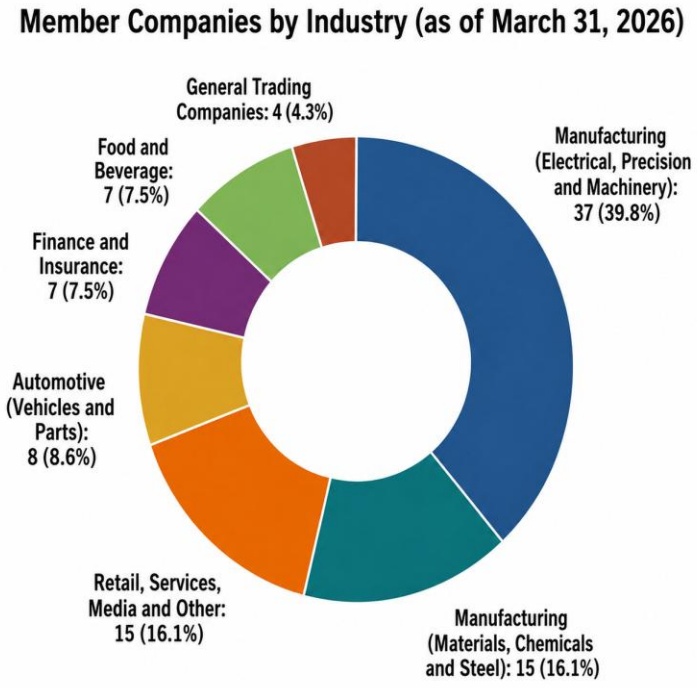
Source: Ministry of Justice of Japan, "Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)"

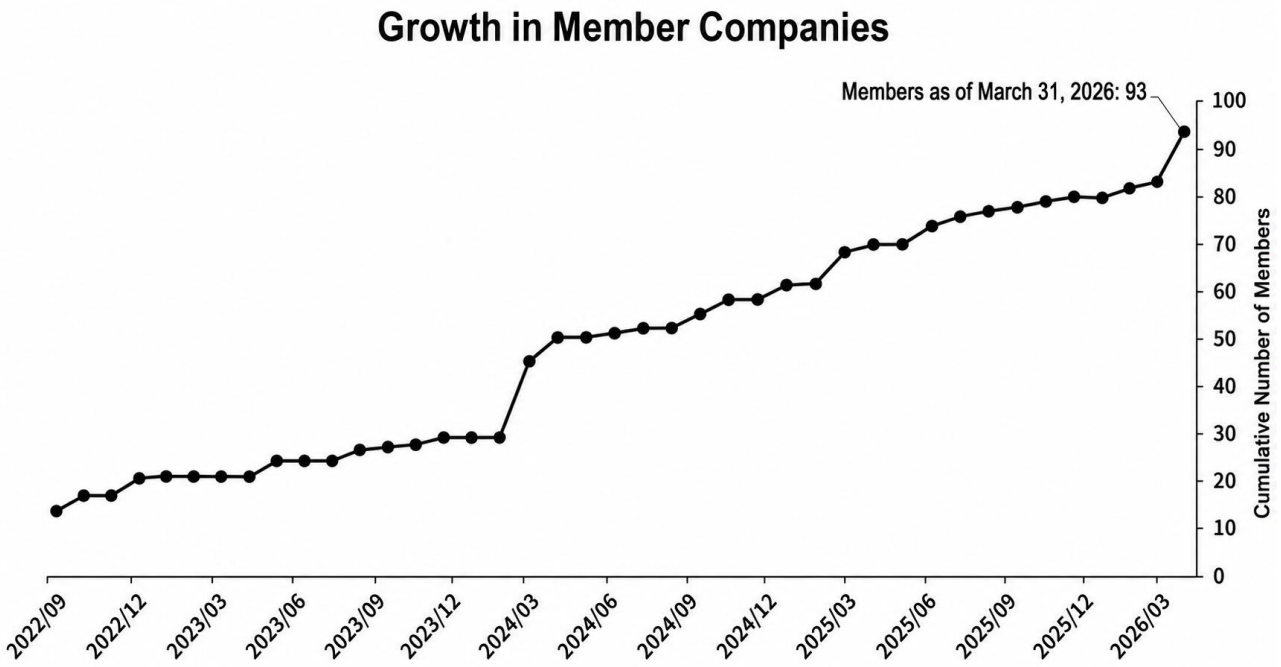
OUR MEMBER COMPANIES

ITOCHU Corporation	Bic Camera Inc.	ADEKA Corporation	Eisai Co., Ltd.	Pacific Consultants Co., Ltd.	Tanseisha Co., Ltd.
OMRON Corporation	Nissui Corporation	Murata Manufacturing Co., Ltd.	Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc.	Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd.	Daifuku Co., Ltd.
Kirin Holdings Company, Limited	Alps Alpine Co., Ltd.	Nippon Steel Corporation	Toyo Seikan Group Holdings, Ltd.	TOTO LTD.	Suzuki Motor Corporation
KOA Corporation	Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc.	Toyota Tsusho Corporation	H-ONE CO., LTD.	Ricoh Leasing Company, Ltd.	Suntory Holdings Limited
Sharp Corporation	IHI Corporation	Tokyo Gas Co., Ltd.	SHIMANO INC.	Isuzu Motors Limited	
Sumitomo Metal Mining Co., Ltd.	Mizuho Financial Group, Inc.	Seiko Epson Corporation	Mitsubishi HC Capital Inc.	Hachijuni Nagano Bank, Ltd.	
Panasonic Group	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd.	Kobe Steel, Ltd.	Oji Holdings Corporation	Mynavi Corporation	
Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd.	Nippon Light Metal Holdings Company, Ltd.	Daido Steel Co., Ltd.	Isetan Mitsukoshi Holdings Ltd.	Hokuetsu Corporation	
Morinaga Milk Industry Co., Ltd.	Fujitsu Limited	Sysmex Corporation	Japan Petroleum Exploration Co., Ltd.	Wacoal Holdings Corp.	
Yamaha Corporation	Joshin Corporation	EBARA CORPORATION	Daikin Industries, Ltd.	KOKUBU GROUP CORP.	
The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd.	Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd.	MARUI GROUP CO., LTD.	Nikon Corporation	Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd.	
MORINAGA & CO., LTD.	EIZO Corporation	TBS HOLDINGS, INC.	JFE Holdings, Inc.	Panasonic Automotive Systems Co., Ltd.	
Toshiba Corporation	Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Ltd.	FUJIFILM Holdings Corporation	Kioxia Corporation	Konica Minolta, Inc.	
Mitsubishi Electric Corporation	Komatsu Ltd.	JVCKENWOOD Corporation	Mitsubishi Motors Corporation	Mitsui & Co., Ltd.	
NEC Corporation	Sumitomo Corporation	AGC Inc.	Fuji Electric Co., Ltd.	TDK Corporation	
Sakai Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.	UCC Japan Co., Ltd.	Ricoh Company, Ltd.	Seiko Group Corporation	Kurita Water Industries Ltd.	
Brother Industries, Ltd.	Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co., Ltd.	ANRI Co., Ltd.	Mazda Motor Corporation	Kuraray Co., Ltd.	

In order of admission; as of March 2026

EXPANSION OF MEMBER COMPANIES





1. Early stage (2022–first half of 2023)

At launch in September 2022, membership centered on leading companies already active in global human rights due diligence. Companies from a broad range of sectors supported the development of a remedy mechanism.

2. Expansion (second half of 2023–FY2024)

In March 2024, companies from heavy industry and trading sectors joined in a significant cohort. This accelerated the use of JaCER as an industry-standard channel in manufacturing and materials sectors with broad and complex supply chains.

3. Acceleration and diversification (FY2025)

The most notable development from April 2025 was the full participation of the automotive industry. With major automakers represented, wider uptake among parts manufacturers is now expected. Membership also grew among consumer-facing services and consumer-goods companies, reflecting awareness of human rights issues beyond production and supply chains—including advertising, employment arrangements and customer relations.

MEMBER COMPANIES' CODE OF CONDUCT

JaCER Full Member Companies comply with international standards, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
To fulfill their responsibility to respect human rights and ensure access to remedy for affected people,
they actively strengthen their grievance mechanisms through JaCER's Engagement and Remedy Platform in accordance with the standards below.

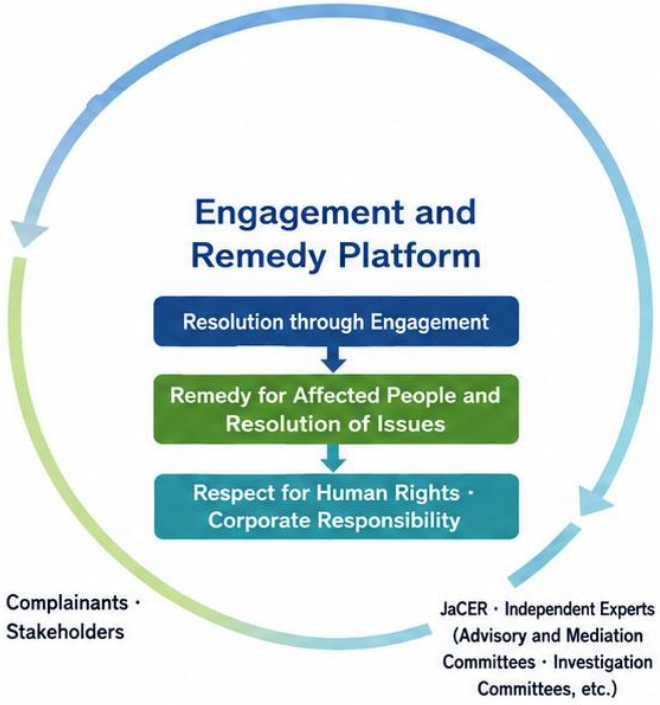
1 Accept Grievances Related to Responsible Business Conduct
Accept grievances concerning responsible business conduct, including internationally recognized human rights, arising from the company's operations and supply chains.

2 Respond Fairly and in Good Faith
Assign a responsible department or person and strive to respond promptly, fairly and in good faith.

3 Establish and Publicize Grievance Channels
Establish and publicly disclose grievance channels, including JaCER's Comprehensive Grievance Desk, and publicize them to potential complainants and stakeholders throughout operationts and supply chains.

4 Protect Confidentiality and Privacy
Maintain the confidentiality of complainants and other parties and protect their privacy.

5 Prevent Retaliation and Other Disadvantage
Do not subject complainants or stakeholders to retaliation or other disadvantage, and take steps to prevent it.



6 Seek Resolution through Engagement
Seek solutions through engagement with complainants and stakeholders. When necessary, obtain JaCER's support and engage independent experts, including advisory and mediation committees and investigation committees.

7 Provide Remedy and Resolve Issues
Strive to provide remedy to affected people and resolve issues in a manner consistent with international standards.

8 Regularly Review and Improve the Grievance Mechanism
Regularly review and improve the grievance mechanism.

9 Share Knowledge Internally and among Member Companies
Share the status of grievance handling and engagement within the organization, including with management. Member companies also learn from knowledge gained through grievance handling.

10 Strive for Disclosure
Disclose information on grievance handling and engagement appropriately and to the extent possible.

By implementing these standards, companies build trusted relationships with stakeholders and pursue sustainable, responsible business conduct.

Purpose of the Code
The Code sets out core principles for JaCER member companies to meet their responsibility to respect human rights through grievance handling, provide remedy to affected people and resolve issues in line with international standards, including the UNGPs.

Request from the Stakeholder Panel
In developing this framework, JaCER responded to a request from its Stakeholder Panel, which comprises diverse stakeholders, including representatives from civil society and labor unions, and incorporated the Panel's views into the framework.

Further development
JaCER will review the Code periodically and continue strengthening it in light of practical case experience, stakeholder input, international debate and evolving practice.

Implementation of the Member Code of Conduct — FY2025 Member Company Survey

54 of 79 companies responded (68% response rate) | Systems have advanced; improving effectiveness is the next challenge

96% Both JaCER and Compliance / Internal Reporting Channels Established

52 / 54 companies

85% Cases Reported and Shared with Management

46 / 54 companies

81% Alignment with International Standards Confirmed

44 / 54 companies

Areas of Progress

- **Multiple Reporting Channels**
  Multiple reporting channels now common
- **Broader Stakeholder Coverage**
  Extending from employees to business partners and local communities
- **Expansion of Engagement-Based Remedy**
  69% provide opportunities for engagement
- **Continuous Review and Improvement**
  Internal reviews: 35 companies; improvements implemented: 19

Key Priorities Ahead

- **Expertise and Resources**
  Lack of human rights expertise, experienced staff and capacity
- **Global Operations**
  System development and standardized responses at overseas sites
- **Complainant Protection and Trust**
  Addressing anonymity and fear of retaliation
- **Transparency and Effectiveness**
  Further strengthening remedy, engagement and disclosure

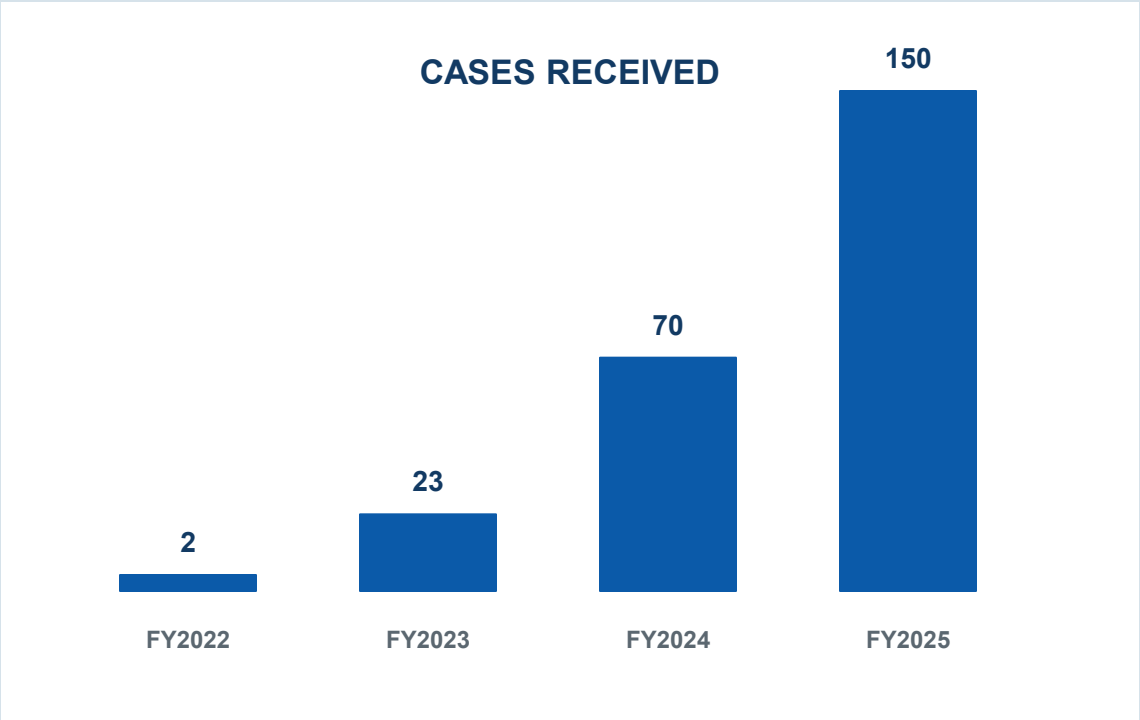
TREND IN THE NUMBER OF CASES

The number of cases submitted to JaCER has risen at an accelerating pace since JaCER began accepting complaints in FY2022.

Rapid growth in complaints
Cases more than doubled from 70 in FY2024 to 150 in FY2025, far exceeding earlier levels and showing a strong upward trend.

A mechanism taking root
Growth from only two cases in FY2022 to 150 in roughly three years reflects both expanding membership and members' sustained efforts to publicize reporting channels. It also suggests that the mechanism is becoming established as a trusted avenue for remedy.

From latent to visible human rights risk
The sharp rise can be viewed positively: latent risks are being surfaced appropriately, allowing the cycle of early identification and resolution to operate more actively.



* Figures cover complaints against member companies that were subject to initial assessment.
* FY2022 figures cover the five months from October 2022 to March 2023.

GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Over the past four years, the geographical scope of reported cases has expanded from being concentrated in Japan to covering regions worldwide, with Japan remaining at the center of the mechanism's reach. In FY2025 in particular, cases originated from an increasingly diverse range of countries and regions, suggesting that member companies' grievance mechanisms are becoming more effective across borders and are helping to identify and bring visibility to potential risks in different locations.

Growth and Establishment of Domestic Cases
Approximately 70% of all reported cases originated in Japan, indicating that grievance mechanisms are functioning primarily across member companies' domestic operations. The sharp year-on-year increase in domestic cases also reflects growing awareness of the JaCER reporting channel and increasing trust in the mechanism.

Growing Recognition and Use of the Mechanism
The increase from just two reports in FY2022 to 150 within approximately three years reflects both the growth in the number of JaCER member companies and their continued efforts to raise awareness of the reporting mechanism. At the same time, this trend suggests that the mechanism is not merely a formal system on paper, but is increasingly being recognized and used by affected parties as a trusted avenue for seeking remedy.

From Potential to Identified Human Rights Risks
The sharp increase in reports can also be viewed as a positive indication that potential human rights risks associated with member companies are being effectively brought to light, enabling a more active cycle of early identification, engagement, and resolution of human rights issues.

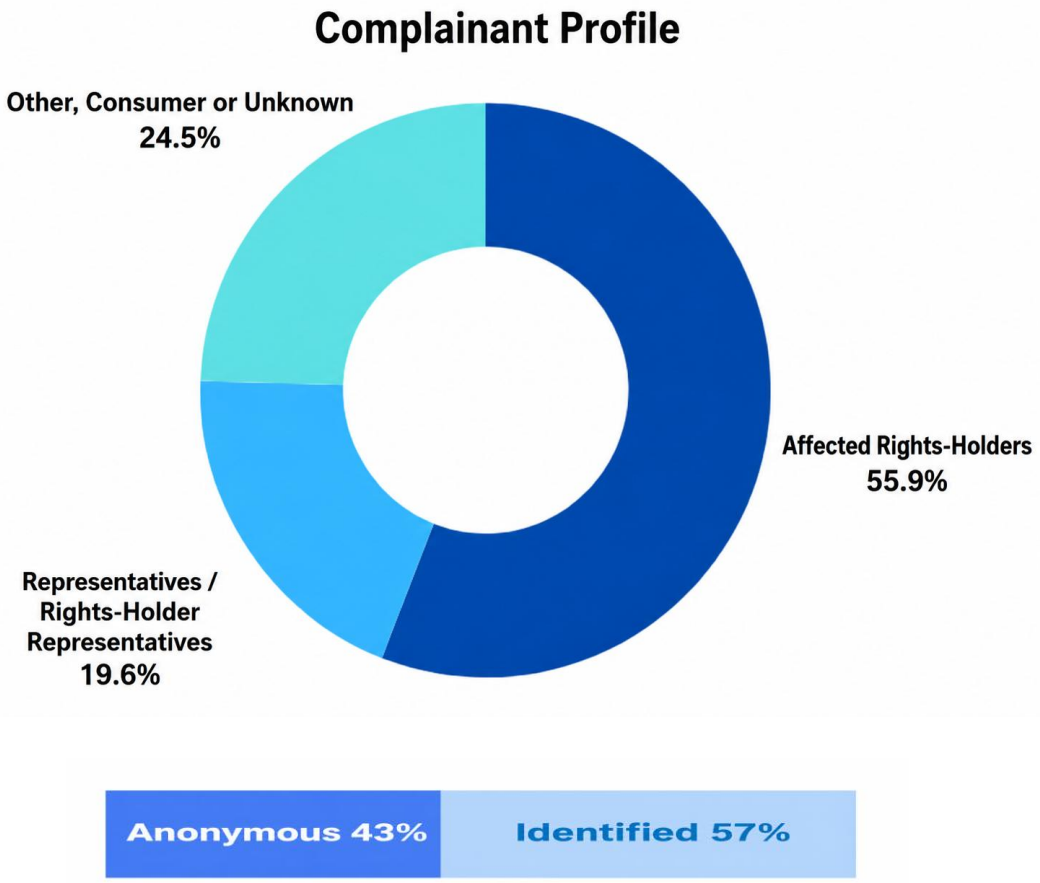
COMPLAINANT PROFILE

Anonymous and Identified Reports
To protect reporting parties, JaCER accepts reports submitted anonymously. In fact, anonymous reporting parties account for 43% of all reports, and this proportion has been increasing.

Anonymous reports can often create practical constraints for member companies in responding to cases, including conducting fact-finding investigations and implementing corrective or remedial measures, making it more challenging to resolve cases. Balancing the protection of reporting parties with effective case resolution remains an important challenge. JaCER therefore takes the utmost care to protect the anonymity of reporting parties.

Reports Primarily Submitted by Affected Parties
Affected parties—those who have experienced or are experiencing adverse human rights impacts—account for the majority of reporting parties, at 137 (approximately 56%). The growing ability of affected individuals and other rights holders to raise concerns directly indicates that access to the mechanism is being strengthened and can also be seen as evidence of its increasing effectiveness.

Multiple Channels for Raising Concerns
Reports submitted by representatives of rights holders (48) and other reporting parties (60) also continue to account for a significant share. This demonstrates that JaCER functions as a multi-channel grievance mechanism accessible not only to directly affected rights holders, but also to their representatives, people around them, and members of the general public and consumers.



ANALYSIS BY ISSUE

Over the past four years, JaCER's engagement and remedy platform has addressed an exceptionally broad range of cases, from day-to-day workplace issues to global human rights and environmental risks.

While continuing to focus on harassment and labor-related issues arising both within and beyond member companies, JaCER is also developing its capacity to appropriately address environmental issues and cases related to armed conflict overseas, although such cases remain relatively limited in number.

Workplace Issues Remain the Most Common

"Harassment" and "Labor Issues" together account for approximately 58% of all reports. While harassment cases tend to arise primarily in Japan, labor-related cases also include issues such as forced labor in overseas supply chains.

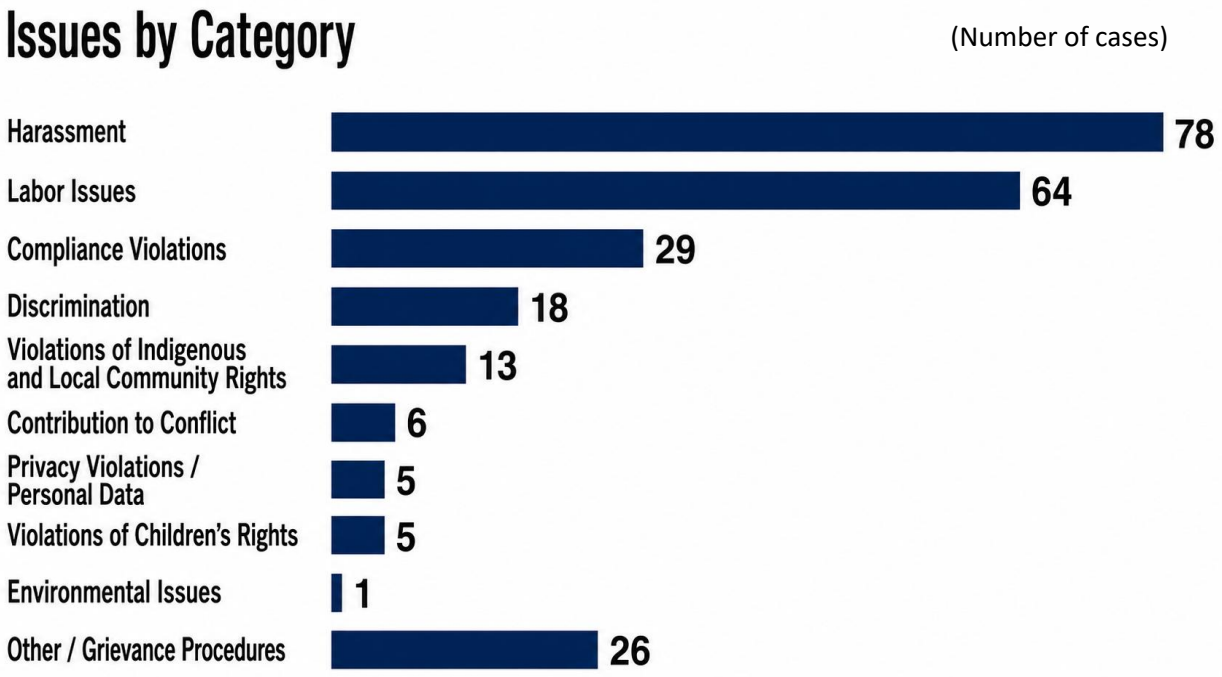
Growing Awareness of Business Ethics and Human Rights

"Compliance Violations" and "Discrimination" are the next most frequently reported categories. This suggests that, as human rights awareness and education become more firmly embedded within member companies, reporting is increasingly driven not only by concerns about legal compliance, but also by broader human rights principles such as fairness and respect for individual dignity.

Bringing Global Human Rights Risks to Light

Reports concerning the "Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities," "Complicity in Conflict," "Children's Rights," and "Environmental Issues" relate to risks associated with supply chains and global business activities that may be difficult to surface through conventional reporting channels.

The fact that such concerns are being reported through JaCER suggests that the platform is demonstrating a meaningful degree of effectiveness as a grievance mechanism aligned with international human rights standards.



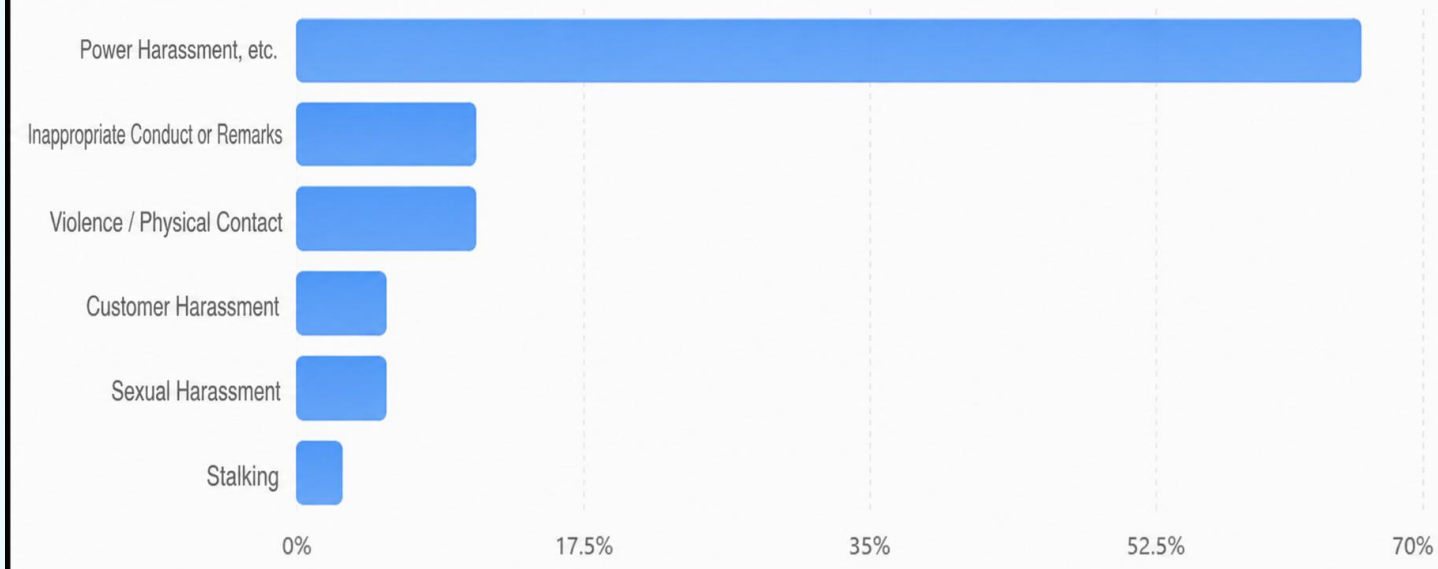
HARASSMENT ISSUES

Harassment is a major category of complaint
Since JaCER's establishment, harassment has been one of the leading complaint categories. As of 31 March 2026, cases principally or partly involving harassment represented roughly one third of the Grievance List. They range from workplace bullying by supervisors and managers to sexual harassment, violence, inappropriate remarks, stalking, customer harassment and intimidation of business partners.

Many cases reflect workplace hierarchy and managerial authority. Allegations often combine abusive or intimidating conduct with excessive workloads, withholding work, unfair evaluations, pressure to resign or non-renewal. Harassment is also frequently linked to mental or physical harm, leave, resignation, dismissal or other employment disadvantage. In one case at a Taiwanese group company, an investigation substantiated aspects of sustained sexual harassment, leading to a mediated agreement and stronger prevention measures.

Positive practices are also emerging
Even where an investigation does not substantiate harassment, companies may address workplace issues, conduct prevention training, caution managers and raise awareness of consultation channels. These examples show that grievance mechanisms do more than determine whether harassment occurred: a complaint can trigger improvements in the workplace and internal systems.

Responding to more diverse forms of harassment
Cases extend beyond employees of member companies to group companies, temporary and contracted workers, outsourced service providers, agents and suppliers. Even without a direct employment relationship, members are expected to use leverage through business or group relationships to prevent and mitigate adverse human rights impacts. Recent cases also include customer harassment and inappropriate comments about appearance, alongside conventional workplace bullying and sexual harassment.



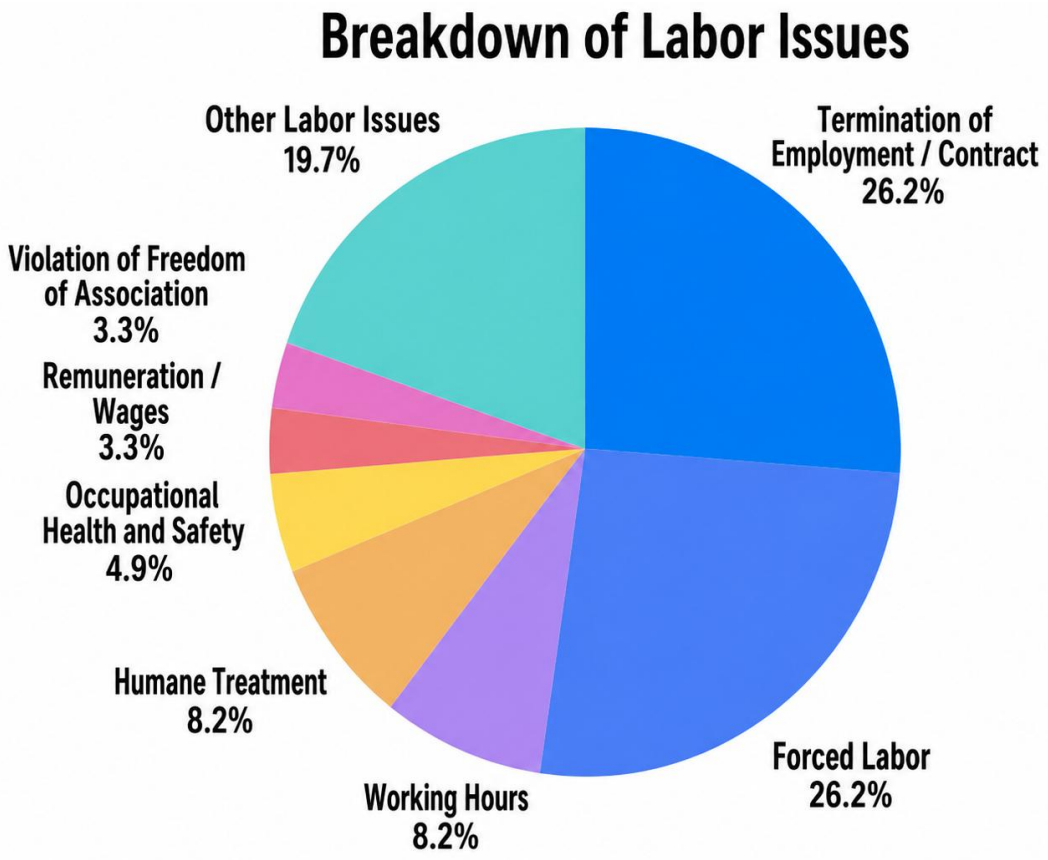
"Other / Details Unknown" is excluded from the analysis.

LABOUR ISSUES

Diversity of Labor-Related Issues
Reports submitted to JaCER concerning labor-related issues have covered a wide range of topics. These include termination of employment and contractual relationships, forced labor, working hours, inhumane treatment, occupational health and safety, remuneration and wages, and violations of freedom of association. In addition to cases involving member companies and their group companies, JaCER has received numerous reports concerning business partners in Japan and suppliers overseas.

Southeast Asia
Forced labor issues in Southeast Asia present particular challenges. In some cases, concerns have arisen at suppliers that have business relationships with multiple JaCER member companies. Providing effective remedy to affected migrant workers can take considerable time, and JaCER therefore continues to monitor the progress of these cases carefully.

Forced Labor
JaCER has received multiple reports concerning forced labor involving migrant workers from South Asia in countries such as Malaysia and Singapore. In particular, migrant workers from countries including Bangladesh and Nepal may incur substantial recruitment fees in connection with migration and employment, leaving them heavily indebted and vulnerable to forced labor.
To better understand the underlying circumstances and structural challenges associated with these cases, JaCER conducted a field visit to Malaysia and interviewed relevant local stakeholders.



LEARNING LAB

In addition to handling individual complaints, JaCER runs the Learning Lab to support member companies' efforts to respect human rights. Launched in July 2024 following a proposal from an Advisory Board member, it builds on earlier online seminars. The Lab shares current domestic and international developments, practices of external organizations and experts, and insights from international conferences for practical use by members.

FY2024
Four sessions were held. The first invited human rights advocates working on migrant and labour rights to examine corporate practice through the lens of forced labour, migrant workers, human rights defenders and remedy. Later sessions reported on UN regional and global business and human rights forums and featured the International Organization for Migration on migrant-worker issues.

FY2025
Nine sessions covered effective engagement and mediation, supply-chain contracts and access to remedy, business and human rights in the entertainment industry, communicating human rights policies to suppliers, and effective grievance mechanisms. International experts, civil society organizations and people with lived experience of human rights harm gave members direct access to rights-holder perspectives.

The Learning Lab shares knowledge and perspectives that individual case handling alone cannot provide. Effective grievance mechanisms require more than post-complaint responses; rights-holder and civil-society perspectives must inform human rights due diligence and prevention.

JaCER Learning Lab

July 2024 – March 2026 List of Sessions

2024.07.29	Session 1 Forced Labour, Migrant Workers, Human Rights Defenders, and Perspectives from Remedy Practitioners
2024.10.30	Session 2 Report on the 6th UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific
2024.12.12	Session 3 Report on the 13th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights
2025.03.12	Session 4 Migrant Workers and Business and Human Rights: Activities of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
2025.04.03	Session 5 Good Practices for Designing Effective Investigation and Engagement Processes
2025.04.24	Session 6 Supply Chain Contracts, Third-Party Beneficiaries, and Access to Remedy
2025.05.29	Session 7 Business and Human Rights in the Arts and Entertainment Sector
2025.08.26	Session 8 Strengthening Competitiveness through Innovation in Human Rights Practices Overseas
2025.09.10	Session 9 Approaches to Supplier Awareness-Raising and Traceability
2025.09.25	Session 10 Report on the 7th UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific
2025.11.18	Session 11 Towards Building Effective Grievance Mechanisms
2025.12.22	Session 12 Report on the 14th UN Forum on Business and Human Rights
2026.02.24	Session 13 Sexual Harassment Issues in Former Johnny & Associates and Their Background

STAKEHOLDER PANEL AND ADVISORY BOARD

JaCER has established an Advisory Board of external experts and a Stakeholder Panel of diverse domestic stakeholders to strengthen effectiveness and trust. Each provides advice and recommendations from a distinct perspective.

Stakeholder Panel
The Panel is a forum for dialogue among NGOs, trade unions, companies and business associations, investors, disability organizations and others. It emphasizes a broad range of views rather than seeking a single consensus position.

Discussions have addressed JaCER's independence and transparency, member commitment, complainant access, disclosure, effective remedy and supply-chain awareness. Recommendations have led to practical improvements, including adoption of the Member Companies' Code of Conduct.

Advisory Board
The Board comprises Japanese and international experts on business and human rights and grievance mechanisms. Drawing on international standards and global practice, it has recommended effectiveness assessments, stronger training, clearer case-closure criteria and enhanced disclosure. It has also emphasized knowledge management: accumulating and analyzing case experience for organizational learning.

Together, these bodies bring domestic stakeholder voices and international expertise into JaCER's work. JaCER will continue turning their recommendations into institutional and operational improvements and building a more effective Dialogue and Remedy Platform trusted by a broad range of stakeholders.

Key Discussion Themes

As of February 2026

Practical Responses to Anonymous Reports
We discuss practical approaches to handling anonymous reports, including how to verify information, ensure the protection of rights holders, and share information with companies, in order to balance effective action with confidentiality.

Impartiality and Independence
We discuss how to ensure the platform's credibility through its impartiality and independence, including governance structures, decision-making processes, and the management of conflicts of interest.

Criteria for Closing Cases
We discuss the criteria and considerations for closing cases, including when a resolution has been reached, measures have been implemented, contact has been lost, or the case has been withdrawn, as well as the transparency of the decision-making process.

Key Considerations for the Advisory and Mediation Process
We discuss important practical issues related to advisory and mediation procedures, including applicability criteria, consent of the parties, selection of third parties, procedural steps, confidentiality obligations, and record-keeping.

Challenges Related to Corporate Confidentiality Obligations
We discuss practical challenges for companies, including how to ensure access to remedy while respecting confidentiality obligations, and how to share information with stakeholders and engage with them.

Handling "Non-Eligible" Cases at the Initial Review Stage
We discuss appropriate ways to handle cases deemed ineligible for consideration at the initial review stage, including clearer eligibility criteria, communication with the complainant, and information on other avenues for remedy.

Effective Communication and Resolution
We discuss how to enhance awareness among a wider range of stakeholders and make the platform more accessible, including information provision to companies, supply chains, and local communities, creating a user-friendly environment, and approaches to achieving effective resolution of grievances.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Since its establishment, JaCER has addressed a diverse range of human rights issues in Japan and overseas and supported responsible business conduct by its member companies. Companies themselves bear the responsibility to respect human rights and are primarily responsible for taking appropriate action and providing remedy in individual cases.

As an independent organization, JaCER facilitates engagement with rights holders and supports companies in fulfilling these responsibilities. Experience to date has also highlighted areas for further improvement, both in corporate responses and in JaCER's own mechanisms and operations.

Going forward, companies and JaCER will address these challenges in accordance with their respective roles, while continuously improving the grievance mechanism as a whole toward meeting the effectiveness criteria set out in UNGP Principle 31.

Improving Access

The first challenge is improving access to the grievance mechanism. To date, many reports have concerned harassment and labor and employment issues involving employees of member companies, while reports from workers in overseas supply chains and other externally affected rights holders remain limited.
Member companies are expected to raise awareness of JaCER among rights holders who may be affected by their business activities, including supply chain workers and local communities, and ensure that they can use the mechanism when needed. Particular attention should be paid to barriers such as language, geographic distance, limited digital access, vulnerability, and fear of retaliation.

JaCER will support these efforts by expanding multilingual access and strengthening collaboration with labor unions, NGOs, local support organizations, and other stakeholders.

Enhancing Effectiveness

The second challenge is enhancing the effectiveness of responses to individual cases. Establishing the facts and considering and implementing appropriate corrective and remedial measures through engagement with rights holders are primarily the responsibility of companies. Member companies are expected to focus not simply on completing procedures, but on achieving meaningful remedy for rights holders. JaCER will support these efforts by strengthening its case-handling capacity, clarifying case closure criteria, facilitating engagement, and following up on corrective and remedial measures.

Enhancing Transparency

The third challenge is enhancing transparency and accountability. Companies have an important responsibility to provide appropriate explanations regarding their responses to individual cases. JaCER also needs to enhance the transparency and credibility of its mechanism by providing information on case-handling processes and outcomes to the extent possible, while respecting confidentiality and privacy.
Companies and JaCER will continue to explore appropriate approaches to disclosure from their respective positions.

Contributing to Prevention

Lessons from individual cases should also contribute to preventing future adverse human rights impacts. Companies are expected to incorporate these lessons into their human rights due diligence, internal systems, and supply chain management to prevent similar issues from recurring.

JaCER will analyze lessons emerging across cases and share them with member companies through Learning Labs, training, and other activities, supporting continuous learning and changes in corporate practices.
Companies will remain the primary actors responsible for respecting human rights and providing remedy, while JaCER will support their efforts from an independent position and continuously improve its own mechanisms and operations. Through these complementary efforts, JaCER aims to strengthen the grievance mechanism in line with UNGP Principle 31 and contribute to effective remedy, changes in corporate practices, and the prevention of future adverse human rights impacts.

Through Engagement,
Building Trust for a Sustainable Future.

PEOPLE
BUSINESS
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

JaCER
Japan Center for Engagement and Remedy

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ENGAGEMENT
TRUST
REMEDY
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Notes

Images used in this report are AI-generated illustrations and do not depict real individuals, companies, organizations, or specific cases.

Data included in this report is based on information available as of March 2026, unless otherwise stated.

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