Human Rights Now has been sending their staff to Myanmar and has been investigated work environment in sewing factories in the country cooperating with NGO Action Labour Right [1].  In the course of the investigations, Human Rights Now interviewed workers in supplier factories of Miki House Trade Inc. (Miki House Trade) and Lecien Corporation (Lecien, a subsidiary of Wacoal Corporation).  Human Rights Now made an announcement considering results of their investigation (please click the link below to see the whole announcement).

Although the investigation was done in a short period, as a result of the investigation, Human Rights Now found that in the supplier factory by the Miki House Trade, the workers suffered from serious infringement on their rights such as being forced to work overtime so long, low wages, delay payments of wages, inferior safety in working environment, not being provided an employment contract, lack of protection for female workers including admitting a maternity leave.  Being advised by Human Rights Now, Miki House Trade requested third-third party institutions whose leading member is Energetic Green Co., Ltd to investigate the issue, and the investigation report prepared by the third-party institutions was published on January 13, 2017 [2].

As a result of investigation by interviewing conducted in August 2016, it was found that the level of safety in working environment in a supplier factory of Lecien falls below the minimum level secured by labor law in Myanmar (according a response from Lecien, a part of the issue of the safety in working environment was improved later).  Also, claims by workers about breach of minimum wages and lack of protection for female workers were found.

The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights established by the United Nations (“Guiding Principles”) requires that business enterprises: (1) avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities, and address such impacts when they occur, and (2) seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations, products or services by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts.  Based on these principles, Miki House Trade is required to mitigate infringements of human rights occurring in their supply chain, and prevent further human rights violations in the future.

Human Rights Now has requested the supplier factories of Miki House Trade and Wacoal Corporation (Lecien) to improve the things pointed out by the announcement and other investigation by Human Rights Now.  Considering the Guiding Principles, Human Rights Now has requested Miki House Trade and Wacoal Corporation (Lecien) to encourage their other subcontractors and suppliers of their products to comply with the standard of international human rights and working conditions, and Burmese law.