

THE  
VERY PINK  
BUT ALSO  
VERY GREEN  
SOURCING  
TEAM

# United Nations Global Compact Communication on Progress 2015

Sharon Childs

FD and Head of Sustainability

The Sourcing Team Ltd





## Statement by the CEO Gill Thorpe FCIPS

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that The Sourcing Team Ltd reaffirms its support of the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti Corruption.

Working in a sustainable, ethical and compliant way is embedded throughout our company culture and in this annual Communication on Progress we share our achievements in these areas during this calendar year with a particular focus on how these relate to the principles of the United Nations. We continuously look for ways to improve and also to work in a more transparent way across our supply chain, engaging with stakeholders to facilitate these improvements.

This year has been a year to review our progress to date and prepare and plan in areas that require work moving forward. We have taken time for reflection, consolidation and embedding new ways of working to enable us to progress in all areas during 2016.







Our company culture continues to be underpinned by our commitment to the United Nations ten principles and how these influence our business practices. This is monitored and measured by our Green Team, led by Sharon Childs, Finance Director & Head of Sustainability. The team take the lead in promoting sustainable purchasing throughout the company, which ensuring continual awareness and improvement.

Gill Thorpe FCIPS  
CEO – The Sourcing Team Ltd  
December 2015





## Human Rights and Labour

-  Principle 1 – Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
-  Principle 2 – Make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses
-  Principle 3 – Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
-  Principle 4 – The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
-  Principle 5 – The effective abolition of child labour
-  Principle 6 – The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

As part of the promotional marketing industry, we are very aware that what we do and how we behave has an impact on the wider world and, that we as a business must take steps to ensure we make a positive impact on our society. Promotional marketing is traditionally seen as a high risk area and therefore a robust, fully embedded CSR policy is crucial.

For us, CSR continues to run right through our business - we have always taken responsibility for checking factories and where necessary, setting action plans for improvement. We don't just send a form and ask them to tick a box; we carry out our own due diligence on ethical trading . We make sure that the people making product in our supply chain are fairly treated and working in a safe environment. We do this by asking for ethical audits of the factories with work directly with and encouraging all our supply partners to belong to SEDEX , of which we are AB members. We believe that vulnerable people should be supported, not exploited and we will turn work down if we cannot work with the right type of factory. We are fully committed to diversity and inclusion throughout the workplace and supply chain.

This year we have looked at how our enhanced AB membership can assist us with our transparency programme , and we have continued our programme of collaboration and transparency throughout our supply chain.





We have a full range of policies to support our adherence to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which can be accessed via the link on our website.

These policies include our CSR statement, Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, Ethical Policy, Harassment policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Sustainable Policy.

Key messaging from our policies includes:

- 🦋 'We are committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that our workplaces are free from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex [including gender reassignment], sexual orientation, marital status or disability'.
- 🦋 'We ask UK/EU factories to complete a self assessment questionnaire asking many key questions regarding policy on ethical, environmental, discrimination and the use of child or forced labour. With factories outside the EU we will always carry out a factory audit on new factories to ensure they are not using forced or child labour and that pay and working conditions conform to local laws. We ensure all non EU factories we work with have a recent ethical audit, preferably a SMETA 4 pillar or similar.'
- 🦋 'All staff have the right to join a Trade Union and to be represented by that union in regards to pay and working practices.'





## How do we ensure implementation of the principles?

As a company we are committed to ensuring human rights across the supply chain. Our AB membership of SEDEX ensures increasing transparency throughout our supply chain whilst reducing ethical audit fatigue and our ISO9001 management system ensures robust procedures for checking credentials of factories.

All staff receive training on our business principles and understand the importance of ensuring these principles are adhered to at all times. This is backed by our range of policies which all staff sign.

We have an open door policy and designated senior staff to deal with any reported breaches of these principles.

## Improvements/Actions in 2015

Our FD has contributed to best practice working via the SEDEX Associate Auditor Group, helping to approve a best practice guide on spotting forced labour. This will be continued into 2016 and beyond.

Staff at Director level have participated in the Accenture Diversity Programme, attending a number of workshops highlighting the need for transparent and ethical working.

Our FD reported on the usefulness of SMETA audits in a case study featured on the SEDEX website.

<http://www.sedexglobal.com/case-study-how-the-sourcing-team-use-smeta-to-drive-supply-chain-sustainability/>

Our CEO has spoken about transparency and diversity at a number of high profile events including the WeConnect Conference in London and as a panellist at the 2015 Sustainable Procurement Summit. She is also participating in the WBE Council.

Two new staff have accessed the UNGC webinar on the principles of responsible supply chain management.

We continued our support of the CCLEF (Commonwealth Countries League Education Fund) which enables girls to complete their education in countries where it would not often be possible to do so.





## Goals for 2015 – What did we achieve?

'This year we are aiming to have over 80% of our approved core suppliers on Sedex (we are currently at 67%).'

🦋 We now have 77% of our core suppliers on SEDEX.

'We are rewriting our supplier self assessment questionnaire to encompass additional human rights questions.'

🦋 We have begun to utilise the information available via our AB membership to analyse suppliers. This is augmented by an appendix covering the few areas that SEDEX does not ask.

'Continue to educate and mentor all our stakeholders into the issues of human rights both within the supply chain and wider community'

🦋 We have continued to share our knowledge through our supplier engagement programme

'Continue to encourage transparency across the supply chain to help eliminate unjust and illegal labour practices'

🦋 Our supplier engagement programme continues to increase our transparency across the supply chain. This is aided by our SEDEX membership.





## Goals for 2016

This year we are aiming to have over 85% of our approved core suppliers on Sedex (we are currently at 77%).


Roll out additional learning to our suppliers through our engagement programme.


Refresh all staff knowledge in the areas of Human Rights through internal training / sharing sessions.





## Environment

 Principle 7 – Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

 Principle 8 – Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

 Principle 9- Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally – friendly technologies.

As a smaller office based facility, our immediate environmental impact is not as large as say, a factory or multi floored head office. However we take our environmental responsibilities seriously, as demonstrated by our ISO14001 certification.

We have identified where we have an environmental footprint and put in place a series of measures to reduce this footprint. This includes staff training and awareness an active recycling policy across the business and reduced consumption on gas and electric.

We use minimal packaging and request our suppliers do the same whilst actively encouraging our clients to think about whether their packaging requirements are strictly necessary.

We offset the carbon emissions from our electricity via the Eon easy green tariff.

Where we have direct control over purchases – paper, cleaning materials etc. we buy recycled / sustainable alternatives from accredited schemes. All business travel is kept to a minimum and public transport is used whenever possible . We prefer to conference call unless a face to face visit is necessary and group such meetings to obtain maximum benefit from the trip. All our environmental impacts are monitored and measured as part of our ISO14001 and underpinned by our policies on Travel, Environment and Sustainability – all of which are available via the link on our website.





## How do we ensure implementation of the principles?

We are independently audited annually as part of our ISO14001 certification. This ensures we continue to assess our impacts , target improvements and monitor progress. We self assess our carbon footprint to ensure continued improvements. Our green team continually educate and inform staff and stakeholders on environmental impacts through a variety of mediums from whitepapers , webinars, blogs and supplier engagement sessions.

## Improvements/Actions in 2015

As a responsible company we are always looking at innovative ways to reduce environmental impacts .

This year saw our fully sustainable charity collection box , made from recycled milk bottles and with a full end of life plan rolled out to a further two national charities. We continue to market the environmental benefits and expect additional uptake during 2016.

We once again offset 100% of our carbon emissions from our electricity usage via our Eon easy green tariff.

Our carbon footprint measured at 5.34 tonnes CO2 – a reduction on last year

We have investigated a textiles recycling scheme and joined the pilot project which commences in early 2016

We renewed our membership of EcoVadis and were reassessed on our performance





## Goals for 2015– What did we achieve?

‘Monitor the returns on the sustainable collection box to obtain meaningful reportable data.’

✈ This has not yet provided any meaningful data. This is because the boxes are traditionally kept by stores and local branches until unfit for purpose so we would not expect to see meaningful numbers of returns for at least another 18 months.

‘Add to our range of fully sustainable product offerings’

✈ We are currently working with a select group of suppliers to provide pricing and visuals on a number of fully sustainable products to be able to offer these to clients on every quote, not just when requested. This will hopefully increase awareness of the range and help clients choose a more sustainable option.

‘Increase the number of client orders purchasing a sustainable product. From 7% to 11%’

✈ This year the number of orders for sustainable options was a little over 10%

‘Ensure we reach our target of 1:3 quotes offering a sustainable option. 37% quote to order win on green quotes’

✈ Although our ratio of 1:3 green quotes was not achieved this year our quote to order win on green quotes increased to 41%





'Monitor our carbon footprint with a view to further reductions'

🦋 This year we continued to improve our carbon footprint through staff awareness and careful use of energy.

'Investigate offsetting our total carbon footprint via an accredited scheme'.

🦋 This has been investigated again this year but a cost effective solution is not readily available.

' Reassess our EcoVadis Sustainability scoring'

🦋 This year we improved our scoring to enable us to move from Silver to a Gold rating

## Goals for 2016

Trial the textile recycling scheme to assess the benefits

Increase our Green quote ratio to 1 : 3 using a new process currently being implemented.

Improve our CIPS scoring through improved environmental practices


Raise Client awareness through a targeted marketing campaign focusing on specific sustainable products.

Increase the number of client orders purchasing a sustainable product from 10% to 12.5%










## Anti Corruption

 Principle 10 – Businesses should work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.

The Sourcing Team are opposed to all forms of bribery and corruption and this is underpinned by our Anti Corruption Policy and our Staff Code of Conduct, both of which are signed by individual staff members. Copies of these policies are available via the link on our website.

Key messaging includes:

-  The explicit setting out of what is acceptable in terms of hospitality/gift/charitable donation offers.
-  An explanation of the terms Bribery and Corruption.
-  The use of a benefits register to log all permitted hospitality.
-  The procedure if breaches are suspected, including a link to Public Concern at Work, should the breach involve the public good.
-  Rules concerning contract sign off.

**How do we ensure implementation of the principles?**


Ensuring all staff read, understand and sign the relevant policies.

The use of a benefits register to log hospitality which is available for inspection during working hours.

Counter checking and signing of sales and purchase orders.

Ensuring our supply chain are fully aware of our policies and our support to them in compliance.

Refusing work in geographical areas where transparency is not possible or bribery is culturally acceptable.





## Improvements/Actions in 2015

Ensuring all staff read, understand and sign the relevant policies.

The use of a benefits register to log hospitality which is available for inspection during working hours.

Counter checking and signing of sales and purchase orders. Levels of sign off were reviewed as part of our annual review.


Ensuring our supply chain are fully aware of our policies and our support to them in compliance.

Refusing work in geographical areas where transparency is not possible or bribery is culturally acceptable.

Once again all new staff completed the Transparency International UK on line learning module covering anti bribery training.

## Goals for 2015- What did we achieve?

‘Continue to educate and advise our stakeholders and staff and remain vigilant and non complacent’.

 This is an ongoing goal which is facilitated through in house training, staff attending relevant sessions organised by SEDEX, UNGC, CIPS and other organisations. Regular webinars accessed to ensure non complacency at all levels. We check our policies on an annual basis and our process team regularly meet to ensure all procedures are as watertight as possible.

## Goal for 2016

To remain vigilant and ensure staff and stakeholders are fully educated into the risks.





## Other CSR achievements/ Events

As a small company in numbers we have limited time and funds to donate to charity however we feel it is important to support both our local community and the wider community as much as possible.

During the last 12 months staff have contributed to the following events/charities:

- 🦋 Donation to One Life - Local London Based Charity providing DJ & Music Academies across London for children
- 🦋 Donation to Paul Strank Charity Gala 2015 – supporting One Life and Shooting Star Chase Hospice
- 🦋 Donation to Macmillan Cancer Support who provide support and care to cancer patients
- 🦋 Donations to several smaller charities through Just-Giving donations
- 🦋 Employment of two apprentices to increase local employment.
- 🦋 Joined the Sutton Business Initiative to enable participation and collaboration with local businesses and community.
- 🦋 Introduced a 'Community day' to enable staff to take a paid day to participate in a charity event.

We have also contributed in other ways via our supplier engagement sessions to share knowledge and expertise and our CEO Gill Thorpe has spoken at a number of events and education days on a wide range of subjects including addressing the WEConnect conference 2015.

As the year draws to a close we have agreed to participate in a local high school 'project based learning scheme' where learning is applied to the real business world.

We will be continuing our community involvement as much as possible in 2016





- ## Useful Links

- [www.sourcing.co.uk](http://www.sourcing.co.uk)
- <http://www.doingbusinesswithoutbribery.com/>
- <http://www.transparency.org.uk/>
- <http://www.sedexglobal.com/>
- <https://cips-sustainabilityindex.com/>
- <http://www.shootingstarchase.org.uk/>
- <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Home.asp>
- <http://www.onelifeuk.org/>
- <http://www.cclef.org/>
- <http://www.ecovadis.com/>

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