

# Communication on Engagement (COE)

**Submission from Virtue Foundation**

**Period Covered: From January 2016 to December 2017**

## **PART I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive**

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018

To the representatives of the  
United Nations Global Compact and Stakeholders:

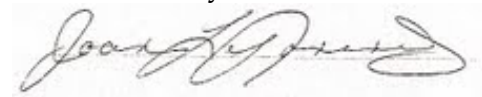
This letter serves to reaffirm the Virtue Foundation's commitment to United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. This document serves as Virtue Foundation's Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact, and we welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. As a non-profit organization working in a diverse spectrum of project areas and countries, Virtue Foundation has the opportunity to coordinate with a variety of partners and stakeholders, all of which help collaborate with our work towards furthering development on both a small and large scale.

Of the various kinds of sectors Virtue Foundation has worked with over the years, collaboration and partnership with business entities has proved vital to the success and impact of Virtue Foundation's mission. Through a variety of longstanding relationships, Virtue Foundation has been able to increase the impact and scope of its work by partnering with businesses on many of its projects, as shared in the document that follows.

The Virtue Foundation, as an NGO with Special Consultative Status to the United Nations, will continue to show support to the United Nations Global Compact in the coming years, as it seeks to further the Global Compact's mission and global agenda.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Joan LaRovere', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Dr. Joan LaRovere  
Vice President & Co-Founder  
Virtue Foundation

## **PART II. Description of Actions in support of the Global Compact**

The projects and initiatives of the Virtue Foundation agenda are multifaceted undertakings. As such, we look to partners to help ensure these endeavors are as impactful as possible. This involves engaging with businesses in a number of ways and encouraging them to participate in our work, much of which centers around upholding and supporting human rights at large.

### **1. Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia**

The Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia is one of Virtue Foundation's largest and most involved annual Medical Missions. Each year, a large number of specialized surgeons, nurses, and administrative staff travel to Mongolia to provide free surgeries and medical care to underserved populations.

*Good health and access to quality healthcare is a human right, and we encourage business to participate in our programming to support this end.*

- Equipment/Supplies: Every surgery and patient encounter involves a large amount of medical equipment, supplies, and instruments. To source these items, Virtue Foundation teams with pharmaceutical companies and medical device companies to secure the items necessary to travel to Mongolia and carry out hundreds of surgeries, as well as to build sustainable specialist healthcare services in the capital and more rural settings. These items are donated, sold at a discounted rate, or loaned for the duration of the mission through our corporate partners.
- Grants: Pharmaceutical companies partner with Virtue Foundation to financially support our extensive healthcare programming.
- Manpower: In some cases, a medical device company will send a representative to Mongolia to assist in cases that involve additional specialist input for a specific piece of equipment that has been loaned or utilized. This ensures that the item is being used properly, but also that cases go smoothly and more patients are ultimately seen.

### **2. Surgical and Medical Mission to Ghana**

As part of the Institute for Innovation and Philanthropy in Ghana, Virtue Foundation hosts annual Mission trips to Ghana to serve communities in the northern half of the country, which has historically been underserved. As Virtue Foundation believes access to health is a human right, the Foundation has worked hard to provide northern Ghana with support in building up its health systems. The annual surgical and mission trips are comprised of several medical and surgical specialties, which collaborate on complex cases and aim to work

alongside local medical staff in Ghana to ensure a long-lasting sustainable transfer of skills. In order for the volunteer medical staff to have the specialty supplies they need to take on the complex cases found in Ghana, our teams partner with medical supply companies for sponsorship and donation of medical goods as a contribution to the Mission.

Another way Virtue Foundation seeks to address healthcare inequities in Ghana is through regular infrastructure donations of healthcare instrumentation and equipment. The Foundation regularly organizes donations of shipping containers to help support district level hospitals and small community health centers in the northern districts. The donations are possible because of strong supporting partnerships with business and hospitals in Europe.

### **3. Virtue Foundation Data Mapping for Sustainable Development**

Each year, incredible resources are committed to development. However, the investment of such assets may not always yield or accomplish the desired results in the most efficient way due to the lack of easily accessible information. The Virtue Foundation Data Mapping for Sustainable Development Initiative seeks to use “smart-map” technology to represent the world from a development perspective to combine existing data at the national, regional, and most importantly, local and institutional levels, to create visually friendly and accessible representations of this data. Geo-spatial statistical analysis and advanced regression tools are applied to create multi-functional and interactive maps. These maps provide pivotal development-related information, and can show how and where resources can best meet needs. This kind of information is especially valuable to nonprofit organizations being held accountable to donors, and organizations that must responsibly and effectively maximize resources. Most importantly however, the Data Mapping Initiative can stand on it’s own as a tool used to further effective sustainable development, through the empowerment of individuals in need so they can reach a state of self-sufficiency by providing the information people need in order to do so.

We hope with this tool, inefficiencies in development will decrease, making programming and initiatives in several areas, including those programs which promote human rights in every aspect, more impactful.

Virtue Foundation has partnered with data and technology companies to advance this effort. Our corporate partners have provided manpower, data, technology expertise and financial support of these efforts.

### **PART III. Measurement of Outcomes**

#### **Measurement of Outcomes for Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia**

Since the Virtue Foundation Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia was introduced in 2009, the number of volunteers has grown significantly each subsequent year. With the availability of more surgeons to carry out increasingly advanced surgeries, more supplies are needed and more businesses are partnered with to fill the increasing supply requirements. This also means that more patients are ultimately served on the ground:

Increased interest in VF Mission  
More volunteers  
Increased need for supplies to accommodate patients  
More business relationships formed  
More patients served

In 2018, Virtue Foundation returned to Mongolia to celebrate 10 years of work, and with the largest group to date: 38 volunteers worked over 2 weeks in 5 clinical sites to serve over 900 patients. Virtue Foundation intends to continue returning to Mongolia and partnering with a variety of business entities to maximize impact on the ground.

#### **Measurement of Outcomes for Surgical and Medical Mission to Ghana**

Since 2010, when the Virtue Foundation first started its work in Ghana, the size and scope of the program has grown substantially. As patient turnout has increased over the years, so has the size of the team to accommodate the need for specialized and advanced services. The size of the team and the amount of partnerships needed to support the work in Ghana has thus grown in tandem.

In addition, 2016 yielded a very fruitful relationship between Virtue Foundation and The Hospital of Wolfsberg, in Austria, which donated an entire shipping container worth of hospital beds, operating room equipment, tables, and other large infrastructure to support rural hospitals in northern Ghana. This was a large undertaking and only possible with the support of countless private entities and business, which helped to pack, load, and transport these items to their final destination. The items helped to support the East Sissala district in the North West Region in Ghana, and helped to upgrade a small health clinic to a full surgical care center.

#### **Measurement of Outcomes for Virtue Foundation Data Mapping Initiative**

As the Data Mapping for Sustainable Development Initiative grows from prototype into a platform, Virtue Foundation has learned the importance of up-to-date, accurate, robust data. Virtue Foundation believes that business entities

have the potential to provide some of the most crucial data with regards to economic indicators, contributing greatly to constructing a more accurate and clearer image of the actual state of development in our data maps. This will allow us to more fully see the dark spots most in need of our interventions in healthcare and the white spots more ripe for economic development. As such, the Foundation has consulted and partnered with several business entities to determine what kind of data they might be able to contribute to the project as a whole, moving the project forward towards completion.

#### **PART IV. Conclusion**

As the Virtue Foundation plans its projects for 2018 and beyond, businesses will continue to be considered key partners and facilitators in the Foundation's work. It is clear by their past involvement with Virtue Foundation that businesses and private entities have much to contribute, and can truly have a significant impact on non-profit work.

With regards to the UN Global Compact, Virtue Foundation will continue to show support to the UNGC as the Foundation continues to partner with businesses seeking to further development on both a small and large scale. Together, the impact can be twofold, while promoting a sense of collaboration and partnership across two different, albeit linked, sectors.

## **About Us:**

### **The Virtue Foundation**

The Virtue Foundation is a non-profit organization with Special Consultative Status to the United Nations. The Virtue Foundation mission is to increase awareness, inspire action and render assistance through healthcare, education and empowerment initiatives. Comprised primarily of volunteers, Virtue Foundation is guided by the principle that true global change must begin within each of us – *one person at a time, one act at a time.*

### **Objectives**

Virtue Foundation seeks to provide both short-term impactful and long-term sustainable development solutions to communities across the globe. Our goals are to remedy pressing, immediate community concerns while establishing lasting partnerships to create and implement initiatives for development and advancement in the areas of health, education and empowerment.

### **Guiding Principles**

Virtue's innovative model of sustainable development includes five guiding principles:

- Invest in local women leaders as agents of change to sponsor development projects.
- Create collaborative models among local and international organizations to maximize efficiency and impact.
- Collaborate with local leaders, NGOs, and other global partners to map specific evidence-based interventions through interdisciplinary research and analysis.
- Build capacity and train local professionals in and through evidence-based, high-impact service delivery.
- Facilitate public-private partnerships to create and implement appropriate and sustainable solutions for development.