

I. Statement of Continued Support by Chief Executive Officer

April 16, 2019

I am pleased to confirm that *Search for Common Ground* reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. This letter serves as our *Communication on Engagement* and includes updates on our activities and outcomes from 2016-2018.

In this letter, 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. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely,

Shamil Idriss, CEO of Search for Common Ground

II. Description of Actions

Search for Common Ground is committed to transforming the way the world deals with conflict, away from adversarial approaches and toward constructive solutions. In this spirit, we work to transform the role of the private sector in conflict spaces and promote a greater commitment to human rights and community cohesion.

Our programs advance the Global Compact's Ten Principles, particularly Principle 1, by:

1. Building a **company-wide commitment** to meaningful stakeholder engagement. By training and developing the skills of people within the company and sub-contractors at all levels of an organization, we open the door to breakthroughs previously considered impossible for engaging communities, civil society, and governments.
2. **Informing and empowering local communities** to be more participatory, take charge of their own development, and avoid the trap of entitlement.
3. Creating effective **mechanisms for dialogue and communication**, collaboration, and dispute resolution among all stakeholders to reach consensus on issues that affect their lives.
4. **Strengthening local government** by building the capacity of government officials to be more transparent, communicative, efficient, and stronger players in community development.

Our approach engages stakeholders from across the private sector, government, and civil society to manage potential conflicts - whether they concern human rights, labor practices, environmental impact, or corruption - at their source.

At a global level, Search has been a leading civil society voice in supporting the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, including serving as a member of the Steering Committee and of the Board of Directors of the Voluntary Principles Association during the period of this report. Search plays an active role in the meetings of the VP Working Group in Myanmar and presented on our work at the 2018 Annual Plenary. Through this involvement, Search has helped to foster greater consideration of human rights, transparency, and security within the extractives industry.

At a local level, some of our most illustrative work has been conducted in Madagascar, Tanzania, Guinea, and Lebanon.

- In **Madagascar**, Search is conducting a project to improve respect for human rights in the extractives industry by fostering collaboration between Madagascar Oil, mining companies, local authorities, security forces, and CSOs. Through workshops, these actors concrete action plans to increase community access to reliable and transparent information about the activities in these industries.

- In **Tanzania**, Search has worked to build sustainable, positive, and cohesive relationships between community members, government officials, decision-makers, mining companies and other stakeholders from communities around three mining sites. This has included facilitating a series of briefings for mining company managers and supervisors on the Voluntary Principles and tangible steps they could take to minimize the risks of human rights abuses in communities located near extraction sites in North Mara.
- In **Guinea**, Search is increasing the understanding of the communities impacted by mining operations as to their rights and duties in relation to the sites. We then assist communities in the implementation of these rights and the mobilization around them. Since 2017, we have set up regular and functional coordination mechanisms in Conakry, Boké, and Boffa that serve as frameworks for consultation and coordination between CSOs, mining sector companies, and local authorities. In addition, Search strengthens the capacities of Consultation Committees, set up by the Ministry of Mines and Geology in mining localities, by training their members in communication, rumor management, mediation, and conflict transformation. Capacity-building of the Committees and of the newly created national Department of Community Relations and Local Content will result in a more effective engagement of the local authorities in non-violent resolution of conflicts around extractives. This is also done through the establishment of scorecards and the organization of popular forums in which all stakeholders can express their concerns and interests, so as to increase accountability and enhance constructive dialogue.
- In **Lebanon**, Search has created new spaces for direct collaboration between civil society and the private sector. In this process, Search has trained 12 businesses on our Common Ground Approach to inform them about the investing value of peacebuilding and promote positive conflict management within their own businesses' practices and internal policies. In parallel, Search facilitated individual meetings to discuss collaborations and avenues of wider engagement.

III. Measurement of Outcomes

Search's programming has created new spaces for collaboration and transformed the way private sector actors understand human rights and community engagement. In the past few years, the results of this work can be seen through assessments of several key programs.

In our effort to improve respect for human rights in the extractive industry in **Madagascar**, Search has:

- Trained 50 people in leadership, negotiation, and communication;
- Conducted 44 community dialogues, reaching 1,508 people (including 822 women);
- Developed and disseminated 1,000 copies of a guide on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Malagasy;
- Facilitated 3 multi-actor forums with 198 participants; and
- Produced 15 radio programs emphasizing the importance of human rights.

At the end of this initiative, the participants' knowledge of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights increased by 32% on average. Specifically, 82% of those participants increased their knowledge by at least 20%.

Similarly, through our programming with the extractive industry in **Tanzania**, we have:

- Conducted 8 training sessions on the Voluntary Principles, reaching 228 police officers;
- Conducted training sessions on the Common Ground Approach to Conflict Transformation in 20 communities connected to mining sites;
- Led capacity-building training sessions for 40 local government leaders;
- Hosted 4 community events and participatory theater performances, reaching over 1,000 people; and
- Facilitated 3 learning visits with small and medium enterprises.

These efforts have helped to strengthen interest and buy-in from mining industry partners, and, as a result, Search was able to scale up the project in 2018 to expand trainings and programming to reach mine staff, police leadership in new districts, and government leaders at the district and regional level.

These are just two illustrative examples of the many initiatives Search is conducting around the world to equip local actors to become involved in securing peaceful and just societies. Guided and inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals and the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, Search is committed to achieving a world free of violent conflict.