

Your partner in change

particip

Communication on Progress 2019



Our statement of continued support

Particip GmbH – Your Partner in change was founded in 1989 and is now an independent, internationally-recognised consultancy company, offering the expertise and the know-how gained in over a thousand assignments worldwide. As a multi-cultural company, our services focus on international development and include monitoring and evaluation, capacity and organisational development, technical assistance, policy advice, development of management guidelines at policy, programme and project level, and studies, surveys and analyses – all services covering a broad variety of sectors and themes. For more information about Particip please visit our website at (<http://www.particip.de>).

As a consultancy in international development co-operation our overall approach focuses on sustainable development in accordance with the UN Millennium Development Goals.

The great coherence of our corporate values with the ten UN Global Compact principles encouraged us to become a signatory of the UN Global Compact on 7 September 2007. This is our 11th Communication on Progress (COP).

2019 was an important year for us. We celebrated Particip's 30th anniversary and used this event not only to honour our long-standing employees, but also to express our appreciation to all colleagues, freelance experts, and partners.

In 2019 we were in the lucky position to support several great causes not only through our project work, but also outside of our profession.

Amongst others, Particip acted as financial sponsor for a 24-hour charity race where our employees in total cycled over 325km in support of the Wold Bicycle Relief. As part of the Entrepreneurs for Future we also actively supported the fight against climate change.



Johannes G. Walter
Managing Director



Human Rights

Principle 1

Business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2

Business should ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Our commitment

We openly commit ourselves to complying with internationally proclaimed human rights in accordance with the UN Declaration of Human Rights and to observe the national laws in all countries we work in. We fully abide by the principles of non-discrimination against anyone regardless of gender, religion, colour, disability or origin.

We are aware that human rights are less protected in some of the countries we work in than in Germany, where our headquarters are located. We therefore attach importance to the fact that our commitment is not only binding for our permanent staff in our headquarters in Freiburg and our branch in Brussels, but also for all freelance experts contracted by us for short- or long-term assignments at home or abroad.

Since August 2010 Particip has an official Code of Conduct. By signing it, all staff members in our headquarters in Freiburg and our branch in Brussels ensure their assent.

The Code of Conduct lays down our ethical principles, provides us with a practical guideline while working to the highest professional standards in development consulting and sets a framework for action.

In order to guarantee adherence to Particip's ethical principles, an internal person of trust can be addressed confidentially whenever a staff member considers that one of Particip's ethical principles is not being complied with. It is guaranteed in the Code of Conduct that no employee or expert will suffer adverse consequences for reporting any disregard of Particip's ethical principles.

We ensure "equal pay for equal work" by using a transparent remuneration structure for our staff directly involved in project work irrespective of any personal circumstances such as gender. Requirements to be met for achieving different salary levels are clearly defined and available to all employees.

Human Rights and Democracy is one of the core sectors covered by our services. In 2019 we launched several projects focusing on human rights, e.g.:

- Monitoring and Support Mission for Civil Society Organisations for democracy and human rights in Madagascar.
- Final evaluation of the EU funded programme 'Promotion and protection of Human rights and civil society in Egypt'.
- Review of Gender Equality Findings from Middle East Evaluations.
- Final evaluation of a programme to help achieve equitable access to efficient legal enforcement of rights for all citizens in general and the poor and disadvantaged, including women, children, minorities, indigenous peoples, and human rights and social activists.

Performance

GRI Indicator LA 13: Percentage of employees in following categories
(based on full-time equivalent)

		2017	2018	2019
Gender	Female %	51%	50%	54%
	Male %	49%	50%	46%
Age groups	under 30 years old	17%	18%	19%
	30 – 50 years old	71%	70%	72%
	Over 50 years old	13%	12%	9%

GRI Indicator LA 13: Composition of senior management in following categories
(based on full-time equivalent)

		2017	2018	2019
Gender	Female %	17%	17%	17%
	Male %	83%	83%	83%
Age groups	under 30 years old	0%	0%	0%
	30 – 50 years old	17%	33%	33%
	Over 50 years old	83%	67%	67%

GRI Indicator LA 14: Ratio of basic salary of men to women

Our remuneration system applies irrespective of gender; hence this ratio is 1:1.

Targets

- Ensure the good practice standards are maintained.



Labour

Principle 3

Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

Principle 4

Business should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Principle 5

Business should support the effective abolition of child labour

Principle 6

Business should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Our commitment

Our company's most valuable asset is our people. We offer our staff long-term professional and personal development perspectives. In this regard we have been able to keep a stable percentage of employees formerly employed as student assistants or interns close to 20% over the past 7 years.

After having an increased employee turnover in 2018 due to different expectations of employer and employee, we introduced a new recruitment

process in 2019. More emphasis was put on thorough and in-depth recruitment of new staff. We were able to reduce the staff turnover significantly and aim to further reduce it for the future years.

Besides our transparent remuneration system for fixed salary levels, a flexible salary based on the company's profit margin is added to the fixed salary to enable employees to participate in the company's success. Since 2014 a component rewarding seniority has been added to the flexible salary system.

In July 2019 our bi-annually employee survey was conducted in order to document where employees feel positively about working at Particip as well as where they might not, and to disclose potential of improvement. The survey was divided into 3 sections:

- Individual work situation
- Management and leadership
- General work environment and organisation

The summarized and anonymized results of this survey were used as a basis for structured team internal discussions.

In 2019 we continued to work on offering our staff an even healthier and safer work environment. The employees were able to have a personal consultation by an occupational health professional, including eye examination and adjustment of the office furniture.

In this context we replaced most of our office desks with electrically height adjustable desks and older chairs with ergonomically high standard chairs.

Two employees took part in a first aid training to raise the number of first responders in the company.

At the beginning of the year we were awarded a project to combat trafficking and other forms of child labour. The specific objective of the project is to strengthen the legal, institutional, socio-economic and cultural environment conducive to the promotion and protection of children's rights.

Performance

GRI Indicator LA 2: Employee turnover in following categories

(based on total no. of employees)

		2017	2018	2019
Gender	Female %	6.2%	12.6%	13.1%
	Male %	2.5%	8.4%	3.0%
Age groups	under 30 years old	0%	7.4%	5.1%
	30 – 50 years old	8.6%	12.6%	11.1%
	Over 50 years old	0%	1.1%	0.0%

Percentage of overtime worked

(based on regular working hours)

2017	2018	2019
5.00%	1.00%	5.16%

Percentage of permanent staff members formerly employed as student assistants or interns

(based on total no. of employees)

2017	2018	2019
19.75%	20.00%	18.20%

Percentage of part-time employees

(based on total no. of employees)

2017	2018	2019
23.46%	23.16%	22.22%

Percentage of permanent work contracts

(based on total no. of employees)

2017	2018	2019
88.89%	92.63%	89.90%

GRI Indicator LA 3: Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or to part-time employees

Benefit \ Provided to	Full-time employees	Temporary employees	Part-time employees
Accident insurance	yes	yes	yes
Company pension scheme	yes	yes	yes
Allowance for childcare	yes	yes	yes
Allowance for homework	yes	yes	yes

Targets

- Keep overtime worked under a maximum of 10%
- Reduce employee turnover to less than 15%



Environment

Principle 7

Business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Principle 8

Business should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Principle 9

Business should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Our commitment

We actively contribute to environmental awareness and are committed to minimizing the negative environmental impacts of our day-to-day work. Amongst others the location of our head-quarters in Freiburg in a “plus-energy building” shows our environmental commitment. Plus-energy buildings are characterized by on average generating more energy than its inhabitants spend.

In 2019 we took several important steps towards reducing our CO₂ output and to support the fight against climate change.

We disposed of our company car and are using a car sharing service where we have the option to use electric cars as well. To ensure environmentally friendly mobility, Particip provides a Bahncard50 - a German Rail loyalty card that offers a 50% discount - to all travelling employees. Travels within Europe are therefore mainly undertaken by train. For 2020, we plan to make CO₂ compensation for all flights compulsory.

We are supporting the German NGO CO₂ Abgabe e.V., that promotes CO₂-tax for fossil fuels and joined Entrepreneurs for Future.

In our offices we offer our employees free fruit, coffee and milk. In 2019 we switched to organic fruit, organic local milk and fair-trade coffee.

In 2019 we significantly reduced our ratio of used copies per 1,000€ turnover to below 5, amongst others due to further digitalising our internal processes.

Environment is another core sector covered by our services. In 2019 we renewed our contract for the provision of support for the monitoring of LIFE projects, communication about the LIFE programme and other related activities. LIFE is the main European Commission funding mechanism for improving the state of the environment in the European Union.

Other projects involve the development of environmental monitoring and information systems in North Macedonia; the external evaluation of the Nordic Climate Facility, a fund to finance innovative climate change projects; and Legal advisory services to support the implementation of the integrated pollution prevention and control in Ukraine.

Performance

GRI Indicator EN 4: Indirect energy consumption

	2017	2018	2019 ¹
kWh	44,381	41,547	46,050
Turno- ver [€]	40,794,971	40,967,913	43,250,000
kWh / turnover per mille	1.09	1.01	1.06

GRI Indicator EN 1: Materials used

	2017	2018	2019 ¹
Copies	293,732	270,234	200,052
Turno- ver [€]	40,794,971	40,967,913	43,250,000
Copies / turnover per mille	7.20	6.60	4.63

Company car / Car sharing use

	2017	2018	2019 ¹
km	6,264	2,590	2,580
Turno- ver [€]	40,794,971	40,967,913	43,250,000
km / turnover per mille	0.15	0.06	0.06

¹ Turnover estimates

Targets

- Keep the ratio of copies used per 1000€ turnover below 5.
- Monitor and reduce CO2 impact through compensation



Anti-Corruption

Principle 10

Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Our Commitment

As an actor in international development cooperation, we are convinced that our company's long-term success is not feasible at the expense of a few individuals or the general public, but solely in a sound, trustful and fair societal environment.

We therefore attach great importance to the fact that our staff members know and adhere to Particip's no-tolerance policy regarding corruption.

All contracts with freelance experts clearly refer to the issue of corruption. By signing their contract, the freelance expert agrees amongst others with the following points:

1. The contractor shall not accept any commission, discount, allowance, indirect payment or other consideration in connection with, or in relation to, or in discharge of, his obligations under this contract.
2. In context of services provided by the Contractor he shall not accept or give any favour, gift or remuneration from or to any source external to Particip without obtaining its approval. Otherwise, Particip may, without prejudice to any accrued rights of the Contractor under this contract, terminate this contract

In 2019 we also launched projects addressing anti-corruption issues, e.g. by strengthened policy development and implementation of the "anti-corruption and transparency national policies" at all levels in Georgia.