

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a woman in a vibrant yellow and green patterned dress, carrying a large, round, brown water pot on her head. She is standing in front of a traditional mud-brick building with a thatched roof. A white dog is visible in the background to the right. The scene is set in a rural, arid environment.

# United Nations Global Compact

**Communication on Progress 2019**



## About NIRAS



NIRAS is an international, multidisciplinary engineering consultancy company. We cover a broad spectrum both professionally and geographically. We have close to 2,300 employees in 51 offices in 27 countries around Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, and we implement projects in 108 countries.

NIRAS works with everything from building, energy, utilities, environment and infrastructure to development projects, process industry and urban planning.

Our values are: Listen, learn and deliver. To NIRAS it is crucial to develop a close and trusting relationship to our customers. In everything we do, we strive to create value for our customers and create a positive impact on society through sustainable progress and technologies.

NIRAS contracts highly competent professionals within our multiple fields of competence. We strive to create an engaging and exciting work environment with special attention to work-life balance for our employees.

Our DNA ties us together across national borders, sectors and professional expertise. Our unique trademark is an interdisciplinary and innovative approach to projects, and we take pride in transforming clients' visions and challenges into sustainable solutions.

We are not affiliated with contractors, manufacturers or suppliers, and we are a member of the Danish Association of Consulting Engineers (FRI) and the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC).

## Statement of continued support



Carsten Toft Boesen  
CEO



NIRAS have for many years been committed to improving social and environmental issues through the services we offer our clients and by the way we operate as a business and as an employer.

During the last years, we have systematically integrated UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals in our strategies and in the services and solutions we offer our clients. We believe that by combining our expertise within sustainable solutions with our clients' ambitions to make a constructive change for their customers, we can create a positive impact on societies and on the climate.

In NIRAS we believe that as an organization we have to take responsibility for the total environmental impact that we are generating. Consequently, we have measured our environmental footprint as a company for several years.

In 2019, we have extended the scope of this by including Corporate Value Chain Scope 3, which allows us to assess the entire environmental impact from the products and services we acquire from suppliers.

Furthermore, we also initiated a new program in 2019 in order to systematically analyse ways we can reduce the environmental footprint from our business. Based on these findings, we are implementing several initiatives to reduce the amount of CO2 emissions that we either generate directly or that are generated by the products and services that we acquire.

At NIRAS, we strive to find solutions that can have a positive impact on our societies on a global scale. It is our aim to contribute to a better future through our expertise, and it is our ambition to work towards the fulfilment of UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CTB' or similar, representing Carsten T. Boesen.

Carsten T. Boesen, Chief Executive Officer

# Human Rights



## Principles

NIRAS' principles reflect the deeply rooted values and ethics of the company:

1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
2. Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

## Actions and outcome

NIRAS considers the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the unequivocal and irrefutable international proclaimed rights of all human beings. NIRAS fully subscribes to international charters and conventions on human rights and gender equality. Our Integrity Management System guides the way we conduct our business, both internally and in our external projects around the world. This is implemented through specific actions, such as alignment with national human rights laws in the countries where we work, and by transferring national standards into internal policies for human resource management and work related policies.

In 2019 NIRAS carried out development projects in more than 80 countries under the 17 SDGs. Many of these projects are contributing to SDG 5 Gender Equality as we design our projects based on a human rights approach and use of gender mainstreaming. Hereby we specifically identify gender gaps and risks for discrimination and ensure that program activities improve the situation for disadvantaged groups. We have a Gender and Human Rights Unit with comprehensive competence in leading projects focusing on improving women's participation and leadership, women's economic empowerment, reducing gender based violence and ensuring more gender aware and inclusive national budgets.

## Reference to policies

NIRAS subscribes completely to all charters and international conventions on Human Rights. This encompasses Rights of the Child, Rights of Indigenous People, gender-related issues including Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women as well as the Rights of LGBT+. NIRAS promotes a tolerant and inclusive work environment, by a set of specific guidelines on anti-bullying and prevention of sexual harassment that sets zero tolerance towards harassment or discrimination.

These guidelines ensure all employees equal opportunities, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, nationality, ethnic and social origin, disability, political or sexual orientation and family status. At NIRAS we believe that diversity ensures our clients a better quality of service and creates an inspirational environment in-house. The culture and values of NIRAS are based on respect for the individual, which implies acceptance and tolerance of diversity among colleagues and clients.



# Labour



## Principles

1. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
2. Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
3. Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour
4. Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

## Actions and outcome

NIRAS' employees are crucial to our business and at the core of our endeavours. We strive to secure our employees' work-life balance and prioritise easy access to management support, information and guidelines. NIRAS' management and labour representatives cooperate on issues such as employment conditions and working climate. In 2019, NIRAS focused on how to prevent and handle stress amongst employees. We launched courses for managers and held meetings for employees to minimize stress cases and to handle them professionally.

During 2019, we initiated several actions regarding the health of the employees. We have expanded training facilities on office locations, continued financial support for sports activities, given the canteens a sustainable profile and supported social events for employees. These initiatives focus on both physical and mental health.

NIRAS gives a special priority to young professionals. Each year we offer international career opportunities for 15-25 international graduates by giving them the chance to work on our projects worldwide. In 2019 we continued to develop our internal Young Professional Programme and concluded one course. Furthermore, we initiated a new course which will be concluded in 2020.

## Reference to policies

NIRAS wishes to take a holistic approach, making space for "the whole person" within a safe and healthy workplace, where employees are satisfied with their jobs and can develop. NIRAS has zero tolerance towards sexual harassment or bullying. NIRAS' projects and in-house operations must be executed in such a manner that we to the highest possible extent secure the health, safety and welfare of all stakeholders or any other parties that could come into contact with our activities. Employees, who travel abroad, get comprehensive security assistance.

NIRAS' employees are free to join trade unions and enter into collective bargaining with management. All our employees have individual contracts, and the employment conditions comply fully with current national legislation and requirements.

## Environment



### Principles

1. Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
2. Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
3. Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

### Actions and outcome

NIRAS develops sustainable solutions for our clients and our organisation. We integrate environmentally friendly technologies into an increasing number of client projects. These sustainable solutions encompass buildings, industry and construction as well as water, energy and wastewater systems.

An improved procurement policy will ensure that we prioritize suppliers with a green and sustainable profile when we negotiate new contracts. In 2019, we signed a new agreement with a canteen supplier focusing on food waste, local raw materials and reduced meat consumption, and another agreement with a Nordic Ecolabelled cleaning supplier that uses environmentally friendly cleaning products. Furthermore, all NIRAS offices in Denmark have replaced the copy paper with CO2 neutral, FSC certified and 100% chlorine-free paper.

In 2019, we have installed electric vehicle charging stations at our parking lot to give our employees the opportunity to opt for more sustainable means of transportation. It is also NIRAS' plan to supplement our pool of company cars with electric cars in the time to come. In 2019, NIRAS also had intelligent management and monitoring installed at the gas plant in Allerød as part of the continuous optimization and improvement of our technical plants.

### Reference to policies

NIRAS takes our responsibility towards climate change, environment and society seriously in our approach to our services and operation of our business.

NIRAS maintains an open dialogue with clients and stakeholders and seeks solutions that are compatible with the principles of sustainable development.

NIRAS supports the International Federation of Consulting Engineers' (FIDIC) recommendations on the environment and sustainable development.

## Anti-corruption



### Principles

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

### Actions and outcome

NIRAS' Integrity Management System (IMS) is currently being reviewed and updated, latest in December 2019, when among other things NIRAS' Principles on Safeguarding were elaborated and uploaded to NIRAS' website, and when also NIRAS' quality control including anti-corruption procedures within financial management were strengthened.

NIRAS' Compliance Unit has been further extended with two new employees. The Unit is divided into two sub-units dealing with compliance issues outside the Nordic countries and within the Nordic countries respectively.

In 2019, we continued the development and expansion of NIRAS' anti-corruption training programs. By the end of 2019, about 500 employees had been enrolled as participants.

NIRAS' employees are constantly taking increased steps to root out any kind of corruption. Consequently, this stern stance has resulted in an increased number of reported cases for further investigation. Fortunately, NIRAS has not in 2019 experienced any severe internal violation of our Business Integrity and Ethics Policy.

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that corruption has taken or is taken place in public or donor funded projects, NIRAS is obliged to report such incidents to the respective donor or public organization's anti-corruption/ fraud office, who then, if it find grounds for the suspicion, will initiate its own investigation. In 2019, NIRAS was approached twice by government agencies asking for bribes. NIRAS immediately reported the matters to the concerned donor organizations, funding the project in question.

NIRAS has met the performance and targets for 2019 satisfactorily.

### Reference to policies

On behalf of all companies in The NIRAS Group we hereby declare that NIRAS has a zero-tolerance policy to corruption, tax evasion and fraud as well as to any form of modern slavery, discrimination and harassment. NIRAS' anti-corruption policy includes an obligation of NIRAS to fight corruption in all of its forms.

NIRAS Business Integrity and Ethics Policy as well as NIRAS' Code of Conduct are compiled into NIRAS' Integrity Management System. The System and Policy are in compliance with the international anti-corruption instruments defined by OECD, FIDIC, Transparency International and the United Nations.

## Sustainable Development Goals



NIRAS' mission is to secure sustainable progress. We have integrated the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in our strategy within all our services. The 17 SDGs set an ambitious agenda for the whole world. The goals can only be achieved if governments, NGO's and the private sector work closely together.

Consequently, we pursue new services and solutions in cooperation with our clients in order to contribute to the fulfilment of the development goals. In many ways, most of the 7,000 ongoing NIRAS projects reflect one or more of the 17 SDGs set by UN in 2015. A few recent examples are:

- **SDG 4 – Quality Education**  
In Ethiopia, NIRAS is working to improve the technical and vocational education and training sector in order to enhance employment and income generating opportunities for the youth.
- **SDG 5 – Gender Equality**  
In Ukraine, NIRAS is implementing one of the largest gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) projects in the world, funded by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The aim is to encourage gender equality and GRB in all levels of the Ukrainian government.
- **SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation**  
In South Sudan a large water and development project led by NIRAS has secured clean water to lean water for 330,000 people and given 60,000 access to improved sanitation.
- **SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy**  
NIRAS has led a new, innovative project in Denmark to extract biogas from sewage treatment plants, thereby leading the way for the waste water sector to become producers of green energy.
- **SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities**  
NIRAS assisted the Greenlandic municipality Avannaata Kommunia in incorporating the SDGs in their new and sustainable strategic policy plan for 2020. The SDGs frame many of the municipality's challenges, ranging from healthcare and education, to infrastructure, climate, fishery and tourism.
- **SDG 12 Responsible Consumption**  
NIRAS has helped farmers in Laos to find new livelihoods and sources of income while simultaneously improving sustainable management practices of land and forest.
- **SDG 13 – Climate Action**  
NIRAS is working to integrate and modernize the complex hydrometeorology systems in Myanmar to predict and prevent water-related natural disasters that affect millions of poor people in the region and thus improve their livelihoods.