



seed **madagascar**
sustainable environment, education & development



United Nations
Global Compact



COMMUNICATON ON ENGAGEMENT

By SEED Madagascar

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From: July 2017

To: June 2019

Part I. Statement of Continued Support

To our stakeholders,

SEED Madagascar is an award-winning, holistic international development charity who envisages communities and ecosystems thriving across Madagascar. Our central mission is to enhance the capacity of individuals, communities, organisations and government in fulfilling sustainable environment, education and development goals in southeast Madagascar.

We have been working in-country for the last 20 years across four key programme areas: conservation, community health, education and sustainable livelihoods. We decided to join the UN Global Compact in 2018 as our work aligned with the Ten Principles of the Compact; our mission looks to achieve those principles on a wider scale, outside of our organisation, and across communities and authorities in Madagascar.

We have included elements of the Ten Principles since the inception of SEED Madagascar, but for the purpose of this communication we cover our previous two financial years: July 2017 to June 2019. We strongly support the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact and endeavour to increase our impact related to these principles as we continue our work this year, and into the future.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Jacobs', written in a cursive style.

Mark Jacobs, Managing Director.

Part II. Description of Actions

- Participation in local and regional events. Attended UN Global Compact networking and education events.
- Internalised the Global Compact and engaged companies in the Ten Principles and Sustainable Development Goals 2030 through corporate fundraising and corporate reporting.
- Proposed partnership projects for corporate sustainability through corporate fundraising activities.
- Engaged staff and partners with the principles and our work towards them.
- We seek to join and/or support special initiatives and work streams.
- We seek to provide expertise, learning and training to partners on the Global Compact.

Actions within our work:

SEED Madagascar (from here onwards referred to as 'SEED') has a strong set of core values that both direct and underpin all of our work:

Passionate: We are passionate about conservation and development and the fulfilment of our mission to enhance the capacity of individuals, communities, organisations and government in fulfilling sustainable environment, education and development goals in Madagascar.

Collaborative: We foster mutually respectful partnerships with individuals, communities and organisations that share our vision and values, continually listening to their feedback and concerns, and supporting them to achieve solutions.

Community Driven: We are guided by the collective voices of the communities we serve in order to effect community-identified change at regional and national levels. As a culturally literate, capacity building organisation we work locally to build long-term sustainability into all that we do.

Dynamic: We strive to develop a forward thinking and creative organisation that can problem solve in relation to its cultural context. We develop an integrated and coherent range of programmes that are responsive to individual circumstances and emerging needs, and whilst maximizing funding potential, always strive to create needs-based projects over finance-winning initiatives.

Accountable: We will always be courageous and honest when assessing and reporting our work. We will employ a strong learning environment, be transparent and seek to disseminate both our informal learning and formal research to contribute to both local and international best practice.

Independent: We will retain our independence, remaining impartial to the changing political landscape at national and local level. We will always act in line with our mission and will not be pushed by any other agenda while also ensuring our cultural sensitivity safeguards the voices and concerns of the people and communities we serve.

These core values are reflected in SEED's Policies:

- SEED's Safeguarding Children Policy
- SEED's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
- SEED's Harassment & Bullying Policy
- SEED's Grievance & Complaints Policy
- SEED's Whistleblowing Policy
- SEED's Anti - Bribery & Corruption Policy
- SEED's procedures, handbooks and manuals, Internal Rules and all statements of intent including gender, diversity and value for money.

Please contact us if you wish to see a copy of our policies.

Human Rights and Labour

In 1992, the Constitution of Madagascar was adopted, this addresses the notion of universal suffrage, individual rights and the freedom of speech. Laws regarding a minimum age for employment as well as the prohibition of child labour were also passed. However, civilian authorities have in recent times have not maintained control of security forces with reports of arbitrary or unlawful detention and killings by government security force agents, political imprisonment, violence against women and children and the use of child labour (U.S. Embassy in Madagascar and Comoros, 2018).

SEED has a zero-tolerance for the negation of human rights and has created policies to ensure safe and responsible working conditions. Working as both an independent organisation, and in some cases, with qualified partners on various projects, SEED undergoes a stringent due diligence activity for each partner, ensuring that they uphold the same standards and policies on these issues.

As with human rights, to prevent labour abuses occurring in regard to our work we have put in place a number of policies and procedures to ensure prevention. We also educate staff, volunteers and the communities and authorities with which we work on such procedures to ensure abuses outside of our direct work are negated to the best of our ability too.

Environment

A large part of SEED's work concerns the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. The theme of environmental conservation spans the majority of our projects and is a contributor to improving sustainable livelihoods for rural communities. We recognise the crucial role that climate stability takes in the lives of the people with which we work, and how a global commitment to tackling the climate will improve the situation more keenly for Madagascar than many other countries.

We focus on involving local communities in our conservation work as these are the people who know the most about the local environment and conservation priorities. SEED brings people together to discuss these important issues and then provides much-needed support to allow these areas and resources to flourish for generations to come.

Our environmental work covers both broad habitat restoration and protection projects such as reforestation and specific flora and fauna research projects on endangered and threatened species. Embedded within our other projects are environmental protection and conservation measures, such as the implementation of sustainable agriculture practices in our lobster fishing project, promoting resistance to mite infestations in our beekeeping project and wetland management in our women's weaving project.

Humans have an intrinsic link to the environment, a link that can easily be overlooked for those who do not experience such direct contact on a daily basis. SEED therefore works to build a strong relationship between people and impact, both within the communities we work with, and with the partners who support us on these projects by presenting tangible and visual results.

This year, we will also be launching SEED's Positive Footprints Programme to improve our own organisational sustainability.

Anti-Corruption

Madagascar currently ranks 158 out of 180 on the World Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International, 2019) and is recognised as a country in which corruption and bribery are common. In order to operate legally, effectively and mitigate risk in this context it is vital that SEED has a clear and public commitment to a zero-tolerance stance on bribery and corruption. Our policy takes from the legal framework, the Bribery Act 2010, which makes it a criminal offence for organisations, and persons acting on their behalf, to engage in bribes

or corrupt practices. Through this policy and its underpinning procedures, SEED will at all times attempt to ensure that staff are aware of and follow this policy and that no one acting on its behalf engages in these practices. Cultural considerations of gift-giving and nepotism are considered within this legal framework to ensure that SEED operates at all times within the law and in the spirit of this policy, even within an environment that has different cultural and societal norms.

SEED is committed to operating with the highest standards of integrity and promoting a culture in which transparency and accountability flourish. It is committed to tackling bribery and corruption at the highest level and clearly articulates its zero-tolerance policy on bribery externally and internally within orientation, training and procedures.

In order to prevent bribery or corrupt practice, SEED undertakes the following activities:

- Assesses where the organisation is at risk of corrupt practice
- Ensure procedures proportionate to the risk are in place
- Show a clear commitment to the prevention of bribery
- Use due diligence when assessing all staff, stakeholders and partners
- Communicate and raise awareness among employees
- Monitor and review procedures.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

- Over this communication period we have engaged in partnerships supporting us to further our work contributing to the Ten Principles.
- Our specialist role of Corporate Liaison Officer attended five UN Global Compact networking and education events throughout the reporting period.
- We have internalised the Global Compact, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals, by aligning our projects to the goals and communicating their contribution to individual goals on a project by project basis. We report upon our work towards these in our Annual Reports.
- We have engaged with new and existing corporate partners on their support of the Compact and the SDGs by working with us.
- We have continued internal communication and began to adapt our monitoring, evaluation and learning processes to more fully consider the Compact in our project reporting.
- We have sought to join and/or support special initiatives and work streams.
- We have offered our expertise, event learning and training to our partners on the Global Compact and the Ten Principles. We shared knowledge and information with one existing partner in 2018 and with two new partners in 2019.