

UN Global Compact Communication on Engagement 2018-2020

STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT TO UNGC

January 11, 2021

I am pleased to confirm that the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN) 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 is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. 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. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely,

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WHO WE ARE

CENN is a non-governmental organization working to protect our environment through fostering sustainable development throughout the South Caucasus. We specialize in a number of areas including combating climate change, sustainable management of resources, building and developing healthy and prosperous climate resilient communities, and empowering women and girls to participate in creating inclusive solutions.

Since 1998, we have worked with local communities and national governments through region-wide initiatives to engender green growth at every level. At CENN, we believe that sustainable development is best achieved through networking, cooperation, and engaging with all sections of society. We implement joint initiatives with equal participation across Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to find viable solutions to local and regional environmental challenges.

With representation throughout the South Caucasus, more than 60 full time members of staff, and a network of volunteers across the region, CENN has the capability and commitment to provide a service that is consistent, professional and of the highest quality. We create and deliver modern solutions for the public and business sectors and communities, assisting them in managing their environmental and related risks and helping them to achieve a competitive advantage through improved environmental and social performance.

OUR SLOGAN

Shaping the future by changing today.

OUR MISSION

Working with communities, governments, and businesses across the South Caucasus to create sustainable solutions for a healthy environment.

OUR VISION

To foster modern and sustainable development values, build bridges between communities, and develop a progressive society that values and protects the environment.

OUR GOALS

- Work with communities, governments and businesses to develop sustainable solutions, safeguard our environment and improve people's lives
- Be innovative and proactive in response to environmental concerns
- Build a strong and responsible civil society
- Provide open, inclusive and effective multi-stakeholder networking
- Support good governance and responsible businesses
- Lead by example

OUR COMPETENCES

- Civil society development and institutional strengthening
- Environmental research and policy
- Compliance management
- Education, knowledge management and networking

OUR THEMATIC DIRECTIONS

- **Resource Management:** land, water, forest, biodiversity, aquatic, mineral and energy resources

- **Climate Change (CC) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR):** CC adaptation and mitigation, natural hazards and risk assessment and analysis, CC resilience building and environmental migration
- **Rural Development and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA):** CSA strategic and actions planning, CSA resilience building, CSA knowledge management and extension
- **Gender and the Environment:** mainstreaming gender issues and applying gender-specific strategies to ensure equal gender participation and benefit sharing principles
- **Circular Economy through Compliance Management:** ESIA, ESDDS, and EA
- **Integrated Waste, Chemicals and Pollution Management:** air, water and soil
- **Sustainable Development and Socio-economic Integration**

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS

Youth Summer Green Camps

The intensive educational program of the Green Camps aims at raising the awareness of the young generation about environmental protection, sustainable development, science and technology, human rights, tolerance, promoting liberal values and creating new possibilities for future leaders. Green Camps, which usually last for about a week, bring together young participants from all regions of Georgia for a program loaded with environmental education as well as civic activism. During the camps, national and international experts conduct sessions and activities on a diversity of topics including, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate change, sustainable management of forest resources, sustainable waste management and circular economy, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues, natural disaster risks and mitigation measures, etc.

In 2018-2020, a total of 45 Green Camps were conducted for a total of 1,000 youth from all regions of Georgia. About 70% of the participants were girls. In addition to Green Camps, CENN projects have conducted dozens of one-day trainings in the regions of Georgia as well as webinars, amounting to up to 15,000 beneficiaries in 2018-2020.

Niko Ketskhoveli School Award

Active school children from hundreds of schools annually engage in year-long environmental competition (Niko Ketskhoveli Award) to solve local environment-related challenges. Since 2018, the competition has been SDG-themed and especially focuses on SDGs 15, 13, 4 and 5. In order to win the award, school students must solve a set of challenges connected to at least one of the 17 SDGs. Over a period of five years, up to 700 schools have been engaged in the competition, streamlining environmental education and activism in their daily activities and thus benefitting at least 4,000 people.

The initiative especially focuses on rural and vulnerable communities, aspiring to leave no one behind. In 2018-2020, out of 500 schools from all regions of Georgia, there were 16 schools in communities of ethnic and religious minorities, 44 schools in IDP settlements, 5 schools in eco-migrant settlements, and 5 schools with disabled youth.

The competition contributes to solving actual problems: e.g. (1) in 2018-2020 up to 3,000 tree saplings were planted (including, in co-operation with the National Forestry Agency); (2) over 4 tons of waste has been removed from recreational areas; (3) due to the activism of the schoolchildren in the scope of the project, the Krtsanisi Forest Park development program was initiated, resulting in the conservation of 245 hectares of urban forests.

With the help of expert support and supervision, the competition helps schools to engage in research and advocacy, prepare for development programs, introduce new technologies, organize educational, clean-up and tree-planting activities, and promote environmentally friendly attitudes. Via the competition, the schools make positive changes to combat climate change, including:

- Recycling paper, plastic and glass waste
- Banning single-use plastic usage at their school or eco club
- Advocating for the conservation of recreational forests
- Adopting recreational forest sites and conducting regular tree planting activities
- Independent monitoring of littering in public spaces
- Organizing school-based nurseries to support the conservation of red-listed species

Georgian schools often act as the only active organizations at the community level; however, they generally lack opportunities for extra-curricular activities and volunteer programs. In this light, the competition is extremely popular and has been successful in mobilizing groups of active school students (organized as eco clubs) in the regions of Georgia.

Upscaling WASH Initiatives by Providing Essential Social Services for Women and Youth in Disadvantaged Rural Communities of Georgia

The project was implemented from 2018 to 2020 under the support of the New World Program, Coca Cola, and Global Water Challenge (GWC) and aimed to improve WASH conditions in rural schools and households of disadvantaged multi-ethnic communities in Georgia by implementing innovative WASH projects and empowering women and youth. The project aimed to support technology transfer and innovation in the WASH sector and to offer pro-poor benefit distribution by providing essential social services to excluded communities

Results:

- Creation of foundation for informed decision-making and prioritizing WASH issues in rural schools;
- The WASH sector is prioritized by the relevant authorities;
- Public awareness on WASH in rural schools is increased;
- Capacity of people involved in WASH (i.e. local authorities, state-owned and private service providers, WASH councils of local communities) is increased;
- Newly introduced WASH technologies are practiced in different regions of Georgia.
- Approx. 5000 people (at least 10 public schools and at least 5 vulnerable communities) has benefit from improved access to safe water and basic sanitary needs;
- The private sector contributes to the implementation of the WASH project;
- Women and youth are engaged in advocating WASH issues;
- Acquired knowledge, habit changes and life skills on WASH are practiced by women and youth from vulnerable multi-ethnic communities.

Water for the Poor: Eliminating Discrimination and Inequalities in Access to Water and Sanitation in Vulnerable Multi-Ethnic Rural Communities

The project was implemented in 2017-2020 with the support of the EU Commission. The overall objective of the action was to protect and promote the right to health and to adequate living standards of citizens in vulnerable multi-ethnic communities of Georgia. The specific objective of the action was to protect health and social rights and improve well-being of the women and youth in vulnerable multi-ethnic rural communities of Kakheti (Akhmeta, Sagarejo and Lagodekhi municipalities) and Kvemo Kartli (Dmanisi, Marneuli, Tetritskaro, Tsalka municipalities) regions through reduction of discrimination and introduction of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) standards.

Results:

The project has advocated and lobbied for protection of health and social rights of vulnerable groups through enforcement and improvement of WASH related legislative and policy instruments. Local actors are mobilized to: identify the key types of HR violations and priority measures to be addressed, organize community led WASH advocacy campaigns and set up multi-stakeholder task-forces - Regional WASH Advisory Committees - for a structural dialogue on WASH.

The project has empowered women and youth groups through capacity and institutional building (creation of Rural Women Councils - RWCs), provision of knowledge materials on human rights and WASH, technical support and sub-grants to resolve water conflicts and inequalities in vulnerable communities. Specific WASH measures has been implemented to address immediate WASH needs of selected vulnerable schools, shelters, kindergartens, orphanages and health centers in multi-ethnic communities with participation of local actors.

The project has advocated for state and non-state financing of WASH issues. An active media advocacy campaign throughout the project has ensured increased public awareness about Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) conditions in the target communities and visibility of the project.

Georgia Community WASH Initiative (GC-WASH) to Eliminate Inequalities in Access to Water and Sanitation in Vulnerable Multi-Ethnic Rural Communities

Project was implemented between 2017 and 2019 under the support of the New World Program, Coca Cola, and Global Water Challenge (GWC). The project has improved the well-being of vulnerable multi-ethnic communities via introduction of WASH standards and empowering local women and youth to advocate for their needs.

- Assess WASH conditions of vulnerable groups. Identify and implement priority measures to improve access to safe water and sanitation.
- Build capacity and empower vulnerable groups (focusing on women and youth) in multi-ethnic communities to advocate for their rights to health and adequate living conditions and support adoption of improved hygiene behaviors
- Communicate WASH needs of vulnerable communities to create an enabling policy and institutional environment and attract financing.

Results:

- WASH conditions of the 20 vulnerable groups in Dmanisi, Marneuli, Tetrtskaro, Tsalka municipalities are assessed and communicated to relevant authorities and public. Access to water and/or basic sanitary facilities is provided through implementing priority measures to improve WASH conditions in selected hotspots which includes schools, kindergartens and shelters;
- Communicate WASH needs of vulnerable communities to create an enabling policy and institutional environment and attract financing;
- Capacity building and empowerment of vulnerable groups (focusing on women and youth) in multi-ethnic communities to advocate for their rights to health and adequate living conditions and support adoption of improved hygiene behaviors.

Waste Management Technologies in Regions (Phase II)

The project was implemented in 2017-2020 with the support of the USAID. WMTR II program assisted the Government of Georgia (GoG) to modernize the country's waste management sector and support sustainable development and inclusive economic growth, ensuring responsible management of natural endowments that has minimized adverse impacts from waste on human health and natural resources.

The program mainstreamed innovative approaches, apply new technologies, and streamline strong partnerships, to achieve, sustain and extend set objectives and solve development challenges. WMTR

It was built on lessons learned and knowledge and experience accumulated over phase I of the program and was organized in the following main directions:

- Implementation of an Integrated Waste Management System
- Private Sector-Led Recycling
- Illegal Dumping Penalties and Tariff Policy
- Public Outreach

Results:

- Integrated waste management systems adopted and as a result, natural resource management is improved;
- An increase in the amount of recyclable waste originating in Georgia sorted, sold, recycled and aggregating is achieved;
- Waste management systems are properly funded through public tariffs and fines, which are imposed in targeted municipalities to reduce public littering/dumping;
- An increase in the number of people who report a willingness to sort is achieved.

Sustainable Low Emissions Transport

The project was implemented from 2017 to 2019 with the support from UN Environment. The overall objective of the action was to assist the Government of Georgia to harmonize Georgian legislation with EU equipment and project human health and environment from negative impacts of harmful emissions from the road transport sector, mitigating climate change by improving vehicle fuel economy and reducing Short-lived Climate Pollutants and promoting investments for walking and cycling infrastructure. This has led to increased auto fuel economy and lower CO₂ and emissions from the transport sector. In addition, this work has contributed to the implementation of the Global Strategy to introduce low Sulphur fuels and cleaner diesel vehicles of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC).

Results:

- Technical Regulation (By-Law) for Introducing EU Emission Standards for Road Transport (Light-Duty and Heavy-Duty) in Georgia is Developed and submitted to the government for approval;
- Reduced emission from negative impacts of harmful emissions from the road transport sector.

Youth for Sustainable Development: Building the Foundations of Democratic and Peaceful Societies through Environmental Activism, Phase I

The project was implemented in 2019 with the support from EUMM. The overarching goal of the project was to contribute to confidence building between Georgian and Abkhazian-speaking youth via awareness raising, environmental activities and networking.

The project's specific objective was to create a stable framework for on-going and future communication between schools and students. The primary indicator for the specific objective consisted of the number of school-based Eco Clubs who commit to continuing to cooperate on environmental projects and initiatives, as this establishes the ability to conduct future activities and the sustainability of the project.

Results:

Project outcome to create a stable framework for ongoing and future communication between schools and students has been achieved. All activities target at reaching Output 1 (Environmental awareness of schoolchildren and teachers is raised) and Output 2 (Communication network for collaboration and confidence building is established) of the project were successfully completed: a training of trainers (ToT) followed by 12 trainings (7 in Zugdidi and 5 in Gali) by local trained teachers and students were carried out (with 32 participants, Women 18); eight (8) schools were engaged in the project; eight (8) school-based eco-club are created; eco-club members and other schoolchildren – in total, 120 people –actively participated in the project; in total 30 Eco Club initiatives and 5 school based campaigns were implemented; a concluding joint workshop in Armenia was arranged (with 21participants, Women 18; action plans (8) were developed through workshops for providing sustainability of eco-clubs and eco-teams, ethnic diversity was maintained and equal gender participation was achieved by eco-clubs (Georgians 70%, Abkhazians 30%, female 60%, male 40%); five (5) joint activities were implemented by Georgian and Abkhazian speaking schoolchildren, in total 433 people from target communities were involved in the project initiatives (including joint actions).

Optimizing the Potential of Local Assets for Rural Development of Keda Municipality

The project is being implemented in 2017-2021, with the support from EU commissions ENPARD program in Georgia. The overall objective of the action is to reduce poverty in Georgia by addressing economic, social, and environmental concerns in rural areas; making use of local potential for sustainable and inclusive growth.

The specific objective of the action is to diversify local economic activities, fostering investment and empowering competitive agricultural and environmental practices in Keda Municipality via bottom-up strategic planning of rural development. The proposed project aims to catalyze existing preconditions for growth, and optimize the potential of local assets for diversifying the rural economy in Keda Municipality.

Expected results:

- Keda Local Action Group (LAG) is strengthened and enlarged with equal gender participation;
- Gender and Youth Sensitive Keda Rural Development Strategy is developed;
- Rural economic diversification and inclusive growth opportunities are demonstrated and offered via implementation of innovative (smart, sustainable, resilient) projects.

Promoting Sustainable Forest Management for Climate Resilient Rural Development in Georgia

The project is implemented with the support of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and will run from 2018 to 2022. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the reduction of rural poverty and delivery of commitments taken by the government of Georgia under the SDGs, NDC, and EU AA with regard to sustainable green growth. The outcome of the project is to create an enabling environment and effective interagency coordination for improved forest and watershed management, sustainable rural energy solutions, and diversification of rural income opportunities. The project will be implemented nationwide in Georgia with pilot actions in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Adjara AR, Kakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti.

Local LEADERS Embrace Sustainable Development in Multi-Ethnic Tsalka Municipality

The project is implemented in 2018-2022 with the support from commissions ENPARD program in Georgia. The overall objective of the action is to improve the economic and social integration of vulnerable households in disadvantaged rural regions of Georgia via social inclusion, capacity development and sustainable growth. The specific objective of the action is to improve social integration, access to basic social services and economic opportunities for vulnerable households (i.e.

high-mountainous communities, ethnic minorities, eco-migrants, and IDPs) in Tsalka municipality via participatory planning and implementing a rural development strategy. The proposed project will support local actors to overcome existing development constraints including the (i) absence of community institutions and participatory governance; (ii) absence of a common vision and participatory initiatives for rural development; (iii) ineffective agricultural practices, lack of innovative approaches, new technologies and business linkages with market players; (iv) limited access to information, education and employment opportunities and lack of women, youth and vulnerable groups (VGs) involvement in rural development.

Expected results:

- Tsalka LAG is established with equal gender and youth participation, represents VGs and is engaged in the rural development process following the participatory approach and LEADER principles;
- A gender and youth-sensitive LDS is developed and incorporates the specific needs of VGs;
- Employment and livelihood opportunities are created and the quality of life is improved, particularly for the poor and marginalized population, through financing projects prioritised by the Tsalka LDS and building the capacity of local stakeholders;
- Socioeconomic integration of vulnerable households is improved by empowering women and youth.

Synergies and Digital Transformation of SMEs for Smart Economic Growth in the Caucasus

The project is being implemented in 2020-2021, with the support from USAID, E&E Bureau International Development Group Advisory Services, LLC. The objective of the project is to support the growth of SMEs involved in the sustainable tourism value chain (VC) by developing and promoting the Caucasus regional tourism brand and market, sophisticating businesses and expanding linkages in the region and beyond. The project will promote multi-destination tourism in the Caucasus and will help diversify the regional tourism industry while capitalizing on the Caucasus region's natural and cultural assets and contributing to regional trade integration and social and economic growth.

Expected results:

- Improved Marketing and Branding of the Caucasus Region as a Unique Tourist Destination using Modern ICT Tools
- Improved Business Sophistication by Promoting ICT Tools and E-Commerce Solutions and Digital Transformation of the SMEs involved in the Sustainable Tourism VC
- Enhanced Market Integration and Expanded Linkages for SMEs in Sustainable Tourism VC via Improving the Services of Business Associations, Caucasus Branding and Marketing Campaigns and Women and Youth Engagement

Continued Support for the Introduction of EU Emissions Standards for Light Duty and Heavy-Duty Vehicles in Georgia

The project is being implemented in 2020-2021, with the support from UN Environment Programme. The overall objective of the action is to develop a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) for introducing EU emission standards for road transport in Georgia in order to assess the potential economic impacts of introducing import restrictions based on EU vehicle emission standards in Georgia. Provide support to the Government of Georgia in harmonizing Georgian legislation with EU requirements.

Expected Results:

- Develop a CBA study on introduction of EU emission classes,
- Reduced emission from negative impacts of harmful emissions from the road transport sector.

Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development (SEED) Program for Green Growth in Borderline Communities

The project is being implemented in 2019-2022, with the support from EU Commission. The overall objective of the project is to develop the entrepreneurial potential of young people from the EaP region in the field of social entrepreneurship, with a view to contributing to social cohesion, employment, inclusion and reduction of inequalities. The specific objective of the action is to facilitate employability of the youth in Georgia and Armenia by capacity building, promoting sub-national, national and cross-border cooperation actions, supporting the establishment of favourable ecosystems for social entrepreneurship (SE) and green innovation (GI) as tools for social transformation.

Expected results:

- Multi-stakeholder platforms (Caucasus, Geo & Arm, and sub-nationals) on SE&GI are established and effectively promote creation of enabling environment for SE&GI of youth in the South Caucasus region;
- Disadvantaged youth from target regions of Georgia and Armenia (especially, girls, various vulnerable groups – PwDs, minorities, IDPs, ecomigrants) are empowered for effective transition to work through capacity development activities;
- Benefits of innovative SE solutions are demonstrated through implementation of pilot social initiatives in Georgia and Armenia;
- Awareness is increased and benefits of SE for youth transition to work are recognized, links are established and networking is active among the stakeholders to upscale best practices and ensure sustainability of the action.