



ACTED Communication on Engagement (COE)

Covering the period from January 2019 to December 2020

Part I. Statement of Continued Support

To all stakeholders,

I am pleased to express ACTED's continued support to the UN Global Compact initiative and reaffirm the organisation's commitment to its ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. ACTED recognizes the importance the private sector can play in supporting societal change and strongly believes that, for the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved, civil society, public and private actors but also academics and the media should work together. To this end, ACTED welcomes the UN Global Compact initiative to catalyze collective action and revitalize the global partnership for the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this framework, you will find attached further details on the actions that ACTED has taken to champion the Sustainable Development Goals and supported the UN Global Compact principles over the period from January 2019 to December 2020. We welcome any feedback, and commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely,

Marie-Pierre CALEY
ACTED CEO



Part II. Description of actions

Since 2015, ACTED has been a member of the UN Global Compact, fostering synergies and innovative partnerships with the private sector and undertaking strategic actions towards the promotion, deployment and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in Europe, as well as throughout its countries of operation in Africa, Asia, Middle-East and America.

Indeed, ACTED believes that a global and aligned mobilization of actors – citizens, local authorities, companies, public authorities, civil society, producers, consumers, the media, and researchers – is requisite to reduce poverty, combat exclusion and climate change. Each and everyone can contribute, individually and collectively, to build a world without exclusion, without carbon and without poverty.

Therefore, ACTED partners with the private sector across all its programming area and is often engaged with the private sector in its interventions, either through strategic partnerships with companies or private companies foundations, ongoing mobilisation and reflection with private sector actors, or private sector development efforts in developing economies (with a focus on small businesses, micro entrepreneurs and small holder farmers). In 2019 and 2020, ACTED worked with a range of private sector partners to provide immediate relief and response in emergencies and projects for longer-term recovery and development.

Throughout 2020, the NGO was particularly mobilized against the COVID-19 crisis in its 37 countries of intervention, and joined efforts with private sector partners to respond support the most vulnerable in the face of this unprecedented crisis. For example, in Myanmar, ACTED, in partnership with a private partner, identified, engaged, and supported 10 local tailors and household producers in the Yangon area to shift activity towards the production of 8,000 masks to contribute to front-line COVID-19 response efforts. In Lebanon, ACTED worked with DigiMart, a B2B online platform, to connect Lebanese cooperatives with service providers/delivery agencies, to enable farmers from rural areas to sell their products in Beirut and increase their market coverage, which was particularly interesting for cooperatives affected by the negative impacts of the COVID 19 lockdown, and difficult economic context.

Throughout its interventions, ACTED also continued to stimulate entrepreneurship and supports Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to participate in the formal economy, including through provision of business advisory and financial services and advocating for an enabling business environment. While doing so, ACTED also promotes the UN global compact ten principles. Further, ACTED implemented interventions aiming at improving awareness on labour rights and encouraging labour law compliance amongst employers and employees. For example, over the past 2 years ACTED has implemented a project aiming at combatting child domestic labor in Haïti, through awareness raising and prevention activities at community level, as well as direct support to families / children at risk of child labor.

Throughout all its actions, ACTED aims to support local communities and contribute to social and environmental sustainability, while preventing the risk of harm to local communities and upholding its fundamental responsibilities in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, in line with the UN Global Compact. To support this approach, ACTED has strong internal policies (such as a Child Protection policy, a Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, an Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy, etc) which aim to eliminate the risk of poor human rights practices, and require its partners to similarly uphold the highest standards of conduct. This set of policies is regularly updated – in 2019, ACTED updated its code of conduct and anti-terrorism policy, to ensure that it applies the highest standards of behaviour to all its staff.

ACTED also recognizes that its activities may change the way people use and rely on the environment, or may affect or be affected by environmental conditions. As such, as part of its global strategic program framework, ACTED recognizes the need to promote environmental sustainability and prevent environmental degradation, and thus promotes sustainable and eco-friendly growth within its programming. In 2020, ACTED launched a revised global programmatic strategy, built around the 3 key objectives of its “3Zero vision” (Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon and Zero Poverty), adapting its programming to better address the environmental crisis. This notably included the introduction or upscaling of programming around circular economy, ecosystems management, citizen-driven climate action and sustainable infrastructure. As of December 2020, we estimate that around 11% of our programmatic activities fall under these thematic areas. For example, in Central Asia, ACTED is promoting sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices and the green economic development of the tourism sector.

In the same region, ACTED also increased advocacy efforts to promote sustainable development and circular economy, fostering exchanges among political representatives, economical actors, scientists and members of civil society in Central Asia to discuss climate change challenges. ACTED also supported awareness raising around climate change in Europe, working with like-minded European NGOs to encourage 9 million people across Europe, in particular youth, to develop concrete actions for safe, inclusive and 'climate-smart' communities.

More than supporting partners towards positive ecological changes, in line with our 3Zero global vision, ACTED also looks at itself and the ecological impact of our operations. Thus, ACTED's Environmental Safeguarding Policy enshrines our commitment to good environmental stewardship in our operations and programming and to minimizing the environmental impact of our operations. In line with this, we have been analysing our carbon footprint annually since 2017 and in 2020, ACTED formally committed to reduce our carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 in line with the IPCC recommendation and to measure the environmental and carbon impacts of our actions on a regular basis.

Part II. Measurement of outcomes

- Projects towards SDGs implemented with the support of ca. 10 corporate partners.
- 2000+ MSMEs and 65,000 + vulnerable people supported through income generation / wealth creation activities in 2019 (2020 data to be finalized)
- Continuous update of ACTED's internal policies, in line with the principles also figuring under the Global Compact including environment, child protection and anti-corruption measures.
- Participation in / support to Convergences annual forum (average of 5,000 participants) and integration of 3 Zero objectives into its global strategic programmatic framework, further supporting inclusive, cross sector partnerships to achieve SDGs
- Ca. 11% of programmatic activities including a "green" activity component in 2020