



WFD

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

Period covered by this communication on Engagement:

From: 14 April 2019 To: 13 April 2021

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive Officer

13 April 2021

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, 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 organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organisation like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Anthony Smith
Chief Executive Officer



Part II. Description of Actions

WFD is a non-departmental public body with headquarters in the UK and offices in 25 countries around the world. Therefore, using the UNGC classification, we are a public sector organisation. As the UK's leading organisation dedicated to supporting democracy, our work is strongly aligned with the objectives of the UNGC and, more broadly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The aim of WFD is to assist, support and encourage the peaceable establishment and development of pluralistic democratic practice and political institutions. WFD's vision is the universal establishment of legitimate and effective, multi-party, representative democracy. WFD's mission is to contribute to this long-term vision by supporting inclusive and effective governance that strengthens policymaking, electoral processes, transparency and accountability, representation and citizen participation – at local, national, regional, and global levels.

To achieve this mission, WFD strengthens the capacity of key democratic institutions – including parliaments, political parties, CSOs, and electoral bodies – helping ensure they have the systems, knowledge, and skills to perform effectively. WFD also fosters improved democratic processes, bringing together individuals and institutions and encouraging them to work together to solve concrete problems, applying democratic values and practices.

1. Implementation of the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles through our strategy and operations

- a) In addition to promoting human rights as a key theme of its external programming with parliaments and independent institutions, WFD has further strengthened our internal commitment to the **Labour** and **Human Rights** principles in the UNGC. All UK-based WFD staff have the opportunity to join the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) Union, and are actively encouraged to do so. Regular meetings are held between union representatives and senior leadership within the organisation. Consultations are held with union representatives, and through broader staff engagement, on key human resources and labour-related issues and policy changes.

WFD has in place an effective Equal Opportunities Policy. During the reporting period, WFD has adopted a new online human resources system incorporating an applicant tracking system (ATS) to make the application process smoother both for recruiting managers and for applicants, further reducing barriers to employment. Appropriate adjustments are made to the interview process and/or tests for applicants with disabilities, and for successful candidates to enable them to deliver their work. WFD's senior leadership has completed online equality training and all staff were recently offered the opportunity to participate in unconscious bias training.

We have introduced a Modern Slavery Policy, which details WFD's no tolerance approach and provides staff with clear guidance on what is expected of them and the processes WFD has put in place to reduce the risk through our supply chain. WFD has strengthened its due diligence process for both upstream and downstream partners to provide greater assurance that WFD is not engaged with any forms of modern slavery. Clear reporting requirements are included in the policy, and staff are provided with training during the induction process.



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WFD has revised and improved our Code of Conduct, which gives clear guidance on the expectations of staff, experts and consultants, and implementing partners (including sub-contractors and sub-grantees) of the standards expected of them when working with WFD. This includes a specific requirement to contribute to a positive workplace environment built on mutual respect.

We have also strengthened our Safeguarding Policy and response mechanisms, and in 2020 safeguarding training was provided to Board members, senior leadership, and all staff. Whilst suppliers and partners are currently asked to complete a generic online introduction to sexual exploitation and abuse course, we are currently developing a tailored e-learning safeguarding course, which will be accessible to all WFD staff and partners. WFD is increasingly working with vulnerable groups in implementation of our activities. We have developed a range of tools to assist programme teams to identify safeguarding risks at the design stage, and integrate safeguarding into the development of programmes and specific activities to enable safeguarding risks to be reduced as far as possible in implementation of WFD's work.

WFD's Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy are incorporated into all sub-contracts and sub-grants with downstream partners, together with an obligation to comply with international labour standards promoted by the International Labour Organisation, including in relation to child or forced labour, and work towards compliance with the Ethical Trading Initiative and applicable living wage standards.

- b) WFD's main impact on the **environment** is through international travel undertaken in the course of delivering our work. WFD has strengthened its Environmental Policy, with staff required to incorporate environmental considerations into decision-making process for the necessity of travel and the mode of transport to be used.

During the last 12 months, with the COVID-19 pandemic, international and domestic travel undertaken by WFD staff and contracted experts has reduced significantly and has been restricted to that considered essential. WFD has moved to online and hybrid models of delivery in addition to in-person activities as permitted by local public health guidance in individual countries. This has provided us with the opportunity to reassess our delivery models, and going forward we will be strengthening our decision-making process on business critical travel. Whilst recognising that 2020-21 has been an exceptional year, we anticipate that going forward the environmental impact of travel undertaken in the course of delivering our work will reduce significantly from pre-COVID levels.

In 2020, WFD undertook a procurement process for a new travel provider. Environmental considerations were incorporated into the decision-making process, and the new provider will enable us to restrict or prompt travel bookers to opt for greener travel options, monitor our environmental impact more closely and take effective decisions based on accurate data. In March 2021, WFD was awarded a Bronze Certificate in recognition of its '*Tread Lighter Index*' rating and it is now working to deliver an action plan to reach Silver by 2022.

WFD's headquarters is located in a UK public building which is subject to an ongoing Government Offices Net Zero Programme and a set of Greening Government Commitment Targets, the latter of which has resulted in a 46% reduction in emissions since 2010.

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- c) WFD has strengthened its processes to reflect our commitment to **Anti-Corruption**. WFD's revised Code of Conduct includes agreement by staff and downstream partners to comply with WFD's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, and Anti-Terrorism Policy, and to conduct themselves in a manner that avoids conflict of interests. WFD provides training for all new staff on these requirements and requires completion of an e-learning course on bribery. We also have in place a Gift and Hospitality Policy, which all staff are required to adhere to.

In partnership with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), WFD has adopted a Counter Fraud & Corruption Strategy that emphasises deterrence, encourages prevention, promotes detection, ensures effective investigations and applies sanctions as appropriate.

We have revised our reporting process, with a clear Reporting Concerns (Whistleblowing) Policy, which is available to all staff, promoted on our website and at events or activities, and included in our sub-contracts and sub-grants to downstream partners. In 2019, WFD set up a Policy & Practice Hub on our internal intranet site to provide a 'one-stop-shop' for staff. This provides access to all WFD's core policies along with who to contact within the organisation should staff have any questions, guidance on implementation of the policies, and the reporting process should staff have any concerns.

The Senior Responsible Officer for each office within WFD's network is required to complete and sign an annual compliance declaration. Each office also carries out a Country Office Self-Assessment, which evaluates the office's adherence to WFD's minimum operating standards, triggering a review by WFD senior officials and internal audit as appropriate.

2. Encouraging our partners to participate in the UN Global Compact

- a) Through our work with the UK's newly-established Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and formerly its predecessors – the Department for International Development (DFID) and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) – WFD has been complying with and embedding their Supply Partner Code of Conduct into our work. As part of this, we have started to make our downstream partners aware of the UNGC, and raising awareness of good ethical conduct. Our sub-contracts and sub-grants include specific provisions on ethical behaviour, what is expected of downstream partners and their staff, and includes provisions for sanctions should ethical standards fall below what is expected. All our sub-contracts and sub-grants now include our policies on: Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption; Reporting Concerns (Whistleblowing); Safeguarding; Anti-Terrorism; and Procurement. WFD's Code of Conduct is also included in the sub-contracts and sub-grants. By signing the sub-contract or sub-grant, downstream partners agree to abide by the contents of the policies and code of conduct. Organisations are provided with a link to an e-learning training course on bribery and corruption. As noted above, whilst suppliers and partners are currently asked to complete a generic online introduction to sexual exploitation and abuse course, WFD is developing a tailored e-learning safeguarding course, which will be made available to our downstream partners.



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Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

As outlined in Part II, WFD is the UK's leading organisation dedicated to supporting democracy, our work is strongly aligned with the objectives of the UNGC and, more broadly, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).


During the reporting period, WFD has developed a bespoke monitoring and evaluation system, the Evidence and Impact Hub (EIH), which is used to provide up-to-date information regarding progress on programmes across our portfolio of interventions. The EIH also provides data on the number and sex of participants in WFD's work. This enables us to reflect on how our programmes are implemented and undertake deep dive reviews as necessary.

The new human resources system, which incorporates the ATS, is still relatively new to the organisation. We intend to undertake analysis of the impact this has on the applications received and obtain feedback from a selection of applicants directly.

Since WFD procured a new travel provider there has been minimal work-related travel undertaken. As international travel begins to open up again, WFD will utilise the available data to assess our environmental impact. We will keep this under close review and take action as necessary.

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