

Communication on Engagement (COE)

Submission from Virtue Foundation

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: January 2018

To: December 2019

Part I: Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

December 7th, 2020

To the representatives of the
United Nations Global Compact and Stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that Virtue Foundation 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 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. As a nonprofit organization working in a diverse spectrum of project areas and countries, Virtue Foundation has the opportunity to coordinate with a variety of partners and stakeholders, all of which help collaborate with our work towards furthering development on both a small and large scale.

Of the various kinds of sectors Virtue Foundation has worked with over the years, collaboration and partnership with business entities has proved vital to the success and impact of Virtue Foundation's mission. Through a variety of longstanding relationships, Virtue Foundation has been able to increase the impact and scope of its work by partnering with businesses on many of its projects, as shared in the document that follows.

Virtue Foundation, as an NGO with Special Consultative Status to the United Nations, will continue to show support to the United Nations Global Compact in the coming years, as it seeks to further the Global Compact's mission and global agenda.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Joan LaRovere
Vice President & Co-Founder
Virtue Foundation

Part II: Description of Actions in support of the Global Compact

The projects and initiatives of the Virtue Foundation agenda are multifaceted undertakings. As such, we look to partners to help ensure these endeavors are as impactful as possible. Business and the private sector have been some of the Foundation's longest standing partners in achieving the goals that Virtue Foundation has set forth, including achievements in health, education, development, and innovation. Through effective partnerships with business, Virtue Foundation has been able to continue to support and uphold UNGC Principles in both human rights and environment.

In support of Human Rights:

Good health and access to quality healthcare is a human right, and Virtue Foundation partners with businesses and the private sector to support this end.

1. Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia

The Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia is one of Virtue Foundation's largest and most involved annual Medical Missions. Each year, a large number of specialized surgeons, nurses, and administrative staff travel to Mongolia to provide free surgeries and medical care to underserved populations, in addition to advanced training to local medical staff.

- **Equipment/Supplies:** Every surgery and patient encounter involves a large amount of medical equipment, supplies, and instruments. To source these items, Virtue Foundation teams with pharmaceutical companies and medical device companies to secure the items necessary to travel to Mongolia and carry out hundreds of surgeries, as well as to build sustainable specialist healthcare services in the capital and more rural settings. These items are donated, sold at a discounted rate, or loaned for the duration of the mission through our corporate partners.
- **Grants:** Pharmaceutical companies partner with Virtue Foundation to financially support our extensive healthcare programming.
- **Manpower:** In some cases, a medical device company will send a representative to Mongolia to assist in cases that involve additional specialist input for a specific piece of equipment that has been loaned or utilized. This ensures that the item is being used properly, but also that cases go smoothly and more patients are ultimately seen.

2. Surgical and Medical Mission to Ghana

As part of the Institute for Innovation and Philanthropy in Ghana, Virtue Foundation hosts annual Mission trips to Ghana to serve communities in the northern half of the country, which has historically been underserved. As Virtue Foundation believes access to health is a human right, the Foundation has worked hard to provide northern Ghana with support in building up its health systems. The annual surgical and mission trips are comprised of several medical and surgical specialties, which collaborate on complex cases and aim to work alongside local medical staff in Ghana to ensure a long-lasting sustainable transfer of skills. In order for the volunteer medical staff to have the specialty supplies they need to take on the complex cases found in Ghana, our

teams partner with medical supply companies for sponsorship and donation of medical goods as a contribution to the Mission.

3. Virtue Foundation Data Mapping for Sustainable Development (renamed to Virtue Foundation Actionable Data Initiative in 2020)

Each year, incredible resources are committed to development. However, the investment of such assets may not always yield or accomplish the desired results in the most efficient way due to the lack of easily accessible information. The Virtue Foundation Data Mapping for Sustainable Development Initiative seeks to create a more efficient marketplace for the delivery of healthcare in underserved regions of the world. Born from years of on the ground medical missions, the project seeks to use predictive analytics and machine learning algorithms to analyze geospatial data, infrastructure, risk factors, and other environmental conditions to better predict need and match available resources.

We hope with this tool, inefficiencies in development will decrease, making programming and initiatives in several areas, including those programs which promote development and human rights in every aspect, more impactful.

Virtue Foundation has partnered with data and technology companies to advance this effort. Our corporate partners have provided staff, data, technology expertise and financial support of these efforts.

In support of Environmental Challenges:

Much of the Foundation's work is focused on health, and with that the reality of medical waste and lack of sustainability in the sector. Virtue Foundation has taken steps to address this in the following ways.

4. Medical equipment donations

Virtue Foundation seeks to address healthcare inequities in Ghana and Mongolia through regular infrastructure donations of healthcare instrumentation and equipment. The Foundation regularly organizes donations of shipping containers to help support district level hospitals and small community health centers in the northern districts. The donations are possible because of strong supporting partnerships with business and hospitals in Europe. Many of these items are used, but in nearly new condition. Virtue Foundation ensures these items are not discarded and instead utilized in the care of patients in geographic areas of need.

5. Medical supply donations

In addition to the aforementioned equipment donations, Virtue Foundation partners with US based pharmaceutical companies and hospitals to receive items that are nearing expiration. In many instances, these items become unusable due to regulations but are still in ideal condition to be used. The Foundation is able to save these from being discarded and becoming waste by

collecting these items and using them in the immediate term during Surgical and Medical Missions to Mongolia and Ghana prior to expiry.

Part III: Measurement of Outcomes

The most relevant qualitative and quantitative indicators measuring the outcomes of Virtue Foundation activities include:

1. Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia- Measurement of Outcomes

Since the Virtue Foundation Surgical and Teaching Mission to Mongolia was introduced in 2009, the number of volunteers has grown significantly each subsequent year. With the availability of more surgeons to carry out increasingly advanced surgeries, more supplies are needed and more businesses are partnered with to fill the increasing supply requirements. This also means that more patients are ultimately served on the ground:

The reporting period saw increases in specialties participating in it's missions, increases in team size, and increases in the number of donations brought to Mongolia.

In 2019, Virtue Foundation returned to Mongolia with the largest group to date: 52 volunteers worked over 2.5 weeks in 6 clinical sites to serve over 950 patients. Virtue Foundation intends to continue returning to Mongolia and partnering with a variety of business entities to maximize impact on the ground. In addition, Virtue Foundation sponsored the advanced education of an ophthalmologist in Mongolia to specialize in retinal surgery. The doctor has since completed the training and now serves the Mongolian population in a public hospital.

2. Surgical and Medical Mission to Ghana- Measurement of Outcomes

Since 2010, when the Virtue Foundation first started its work in Ghana, the size and scope of the program has grown substantially. As patient turnout has increased over the years, so has the size of the team to accommodate the need for specialized and advanced services. The size of the team and the amount of partnerships needed to support the work in Ghana has thus grown in tandem.

3. Virtue Foundation Data Mapping for Sustainable Development (renamed to Virtue Foundation Actionable Data Initiative in 2020)- Measurement of Outcomes

As the Data Mapping for Sustainable Development Initiative grows from prototype into a platform, Virtue Foundation has learned the importance of up-to-date, accurate, robust data. Virtue Foundation believes that business entities have the potential to provide some of the most crucial data with regards to economic indicators, contributing greatly to constructing a more accurate and clearer image of the actual state of development in our data maps. This will allow us to more fully see the dark spots most in need of our interventions in healthcare and the white spots more ripe for economic development. As such, the Foundation has consulted and partnered with several business entities to determine what kind of data they might be able to contribute to the project as a whole, moving the project forward towards completion. We have also established new partnerships with businesses in data analytics, machine learning, and cloud computing towards this goal.

4. Medical equipment donations- Measurement of Outcomes

In 2018, Virtue Foundation and The Hospital of Wolfsberg, in Austria, again partnered for a which donated an entire shipping container worth of hospital beds, operating room equipment, tables, and other large infrastructure to support rural hospitals in northern Ghana. This was a large undertaking and only possible with the support of countless private entities and businesses, which helped to pack, load, and transport these items to their final destination. The items helped to support the Upper West Region, Ghana.

5. Medical supply donations- Measurement of Outcomes

Virtue Foundation continues to partner with dozens of private companies and pharmaceutical entities to receive in-kind donations of supplies and medications to use on annual Medical and Surgical missions. As the number of volunteers traveling to provide medical services has increased substantially, so has the number of partnering entities that provide supplies.

Part IV: Conclusion

As the Virtue Foundation plans its projects for 2020 and beyond, business and the private sector will continue to be considered key partners and facilitators in the Foundation's work. It is clear by their past involvement with Virtue Foundation that these entities have much to contribute, and can truly have a significant impact supporting the activities of both nonprofits and the mission of the UNGC.

In connection to the United Nations Global Compact, Virtue Foundation will continue to show support to the UNGC as the Foundation continues to partner with businesses seeking to further support human rights and the environment. Together, the impact can be twofold, while promoting a sense of collaboration and partnership across two different, albeit linked, sectors.

About Us:

The Virtue Foundation

The Virtue Foundation is a non-profit organization with Special Consultative Status to the United Nations. The Virtue Foundation mission is to increase awareness, inspire action and render assistance through healthcare, education and empowerment initiatives. Comprised primarily of volunteers, Virtue Foundation is guided by the principle that true global change must begin within each of us – *one person at a time, one act at a time.*

Objectives

Virtue Foundation seeks to provide both short-term impactful and long-term sustainable development solutions to communities across the globe. Our goals are to remedy pressing, immediate community concerns while establishing lasting partnerships to create and implement initiatives for development and advancement in the areas of health, education and empowerment.

Guiding Principles

Virtue's innovative model of sustainable development includes five guiding principles:

- Invest in local women leaders as agents of change to sponsor development projects.
- Create collaborative models among local and international organizations to maximize efficiency and impact.
- Collaborate with local leaders, NGOs, and other global partners to map specific evidence-based interventions through interdisciplinary research and analysis.
- Build capacity and train local professionals in and through evidence-based, high-impact service delivery.
- Facilitate public-private partnerships to create and implement appropriate and sustainable solutions for development.