



## Communication on Engagement (COE) with the UN Global Compact

Period covered by this COE: 01 July 2019 – 30 May 2021

### 1.0 CEO Statement of Continued Support

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to reaffirm Initiative: Eau's on-going support to the United Nations Global Compact and renews its commitment to its ten principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption.

Initiative: Eau is an American 501(c)3 non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to strengthening water, sanitation, and hygiene capacity in developing areas and crisis zones. Our programs are designed and implemented using proven methodologies infused with innovative ideas to address the real needs of beneficiaries through long-lasting, sustainable WASH solutions. We share the principles espoused by the UN Global Compact and bring our commitment to them into the work we do every day and into the partnerships that make our work possible.

This is our Communication on Engagement (COE) with the United Nations Global Compact, in which we describe the actions our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its principles. We welcome feedback on its contents and look forward sharing this information with our stakeholders.

Sincerely,

**Donald Joseph BROOKS**  
Chief Executive Officer



## 2.0 Description of Actions & Measurement of Outcomes

We support the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles and demonstrate our commitment to them by 1) incorporating them into our own ways of operating, 2) advancing them in our programming, and 3) supporting for-profit companies to do the same.

### 2.1 *Incorporating the Ten Principles into our ways of operating*

**Initiative: Eau has adopted an organizational Code of Ethics inspired by the United Nations' Supplier Code of Conduct, including clauses on human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. Our Code of Ethics:**

- Requires the protection and support of human rights;
- Prohibits harassment and harsh/inhumane treatment;
- Protects freedom of association and collective bargaining;
- Prohibits forced and compulsory labor;
- Enshrines equality and non-discrimination;
- Necessitates a safe and just work environment;
- Requires the elaboration of appropriate environmental protection protocols;
- Insists on the minimization of waste; and,
- Prohibits corrupt practices.

**Initiative: Eau holds its suppliers, contractors, and partners to the same standard.** Prior to entering into any agreement with business partners, regardless of sector, Initiative: Eau conducts due diligence. We both have strong policies, standard operating procedures and tools that provide requirements for due diligence on all our supply chain partners, award subrecipients and vendors. These include an assessment of human resources manuals, legal standing, financial practices, and running checks to ensure the entities are not on terrorist or criminal watch lists.

**To ensure adherence to this Code of Ethics, Initiative: Eau encourages its agents to report actions that go against the Code via our internal, anonymous policy violation reporting system.** Violation reports are handled seriously and elevated to appropriate levels for response. The violation reporting system protects against retribution to those reporting, while also protecting all from unfounded accusations.

### 2.2 *Advancing the Ten Principles in our programming*

**Initiative: Eau's promotes the human rights-based approach to global development, focusing specifically on the human right to clean water and adequate sanitation.** Our work contributes directly to the fulfillment of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/292, which recognizing the criticality of safe water in itself to life and in its necessity for the realization of all human rights. In the conduct of programming to advance the human right to safe water, we look to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key documents to shape how we operate. Taking inspiration from these documents, we work to advance key transversal human rights, such as the human right to dignity and respect, in everything we do; Initiative: Eau's work is founded in the principles of equitability and respect. Our programs are designed to benefit all people regardless of their sex, age, race, sexual orientation, nationality, socioeconomic status, education, or disability. As often as possible, we adapt our work to meet the specific needs associated with beneficiary population subgroups, ensuring equitable accessibility.

Examples of Initiative: Eau's programming advancing the human rights-based approach, focusing specifically on the human right to clean water and adequate sanitation, include:

- Supporting appropriate handwashing in Fada N'Gourma's (Burkina Faso) health centers**

Frequent handwashing is one of the simplest, yet most critical, behavior changes capable of reducing COVID-19 transmission. As a result, many health centers in Fada N'Gourma, capital of Burkina Faso's Est region, put in place handwashing stations in consultation blocs and at entry and exit points. Inspection of these handwashing stations in March 2020, however, revealed that all were without soap and several were without water. Lack of these inputs is caused by both material and managerial insufficiencies. To strengthen handwashing capacity in Fada N'Gourma's health centers, Initiative: Eau 1) distributed 10 cartons (~600 units) of soap to each of the six public health centers in city, 2) co-created and co-implemented a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to regularize handwashing station refilling and restocking and mandatory handwashing upon entry and exit, and 3) seconded a handwashing focal point to each of the six public health centers for two months to ensure SOP implementation and handover to health center staff. Through the project, the 10,044 average monthly patients of these six health centers directly benefited from decreased risk of hospital-acquired infection via improved WASH capacity.
- Supporting community preparedness for COVID-19 in the villages of Gando, Sabtenga, and Soumagou (Burkina Faso)**

Strong water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) capacities are critical to preventing COVID-19 transmission. In Burkina Faso, limited community- and healthcare facility-level access to safe water and awareness of appropriate hygiene practices remain challenges for COVID-19 control efforts, especially in rural areas. At the outset of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, Initiative: Eau conducted a diagnostic assessment of WASH needs in the village of Gando and of WASH and IPC capacities in the Sabtenga and Soumagou health centers. Based on our findings, Initiative: Eau recommended 1) new water infrastructure installations, 2) support for the creation and operationalization of health center hygiene and cleaning procedures, 3) healthcare worker trainings on hygiene, 4) distribution of UNICEF WASH kits for health centers, and 5) a community hygiene sensibilization campaign. Initiative: Eau designed a program to address identified gaps. Initiative: Eau implemented each of these recommendations in partnership with the Regional Directorate of Water and Sanitation for the Centre Est region. Through the project, Initiative: Eau was able to impact an estimated 3 519 beneficiaries directly through the infrastructure and training activities of the project. In addition, an estimated 16 174 individuals benefit indirectly from improved quality of health services in the Sabtenga and Soumagou health centers resulting from improved health center WASH capacity.
- Safe water for IDPs in Fada N'Gourma's Secteur 6 Nord (Burkina Faso)**

Conflict caused by violent extremist organizations in Burkina Faso's East region has led to mass population displacement to Fada N'Gourma, over 20 000 individuals as of September 2020. This rapid influx has placed considerable stress on the city's already insufficient drinking water infrastructure. Displaced populations have largely settled in unplanned, informal areas of the city, where drinking water infrastructure is especially limited. To respond this situation, Initiative: Eau, supported by the Rotary Club of Lewes, rehabilitated a nonfunctional handpump borehole in Fada N'Gourma's Secteur 6 Nord neighborhood. Specifically, Initiative: Eau 1) liaised with municipal and regional authorities to identify a suitable handpump borehole for rehabilitation, 2) engaged local water point mechanics and masons to execute required reparations, and 3) analyzed water quality to ensure suitability for consumption. The rehabilitated handpump borehole serves over 500 people in the neighborhood, both the displaced population and the host community, with safe water.
- H2O-reinforce.fada: Preventing unsafe water use and water point breakdown in Fada N'Gourma**

### **(Burkina Faso) through local capacity-building**

A 2018 Initiative Eau study demonstrated that over 22% of communal water pumps in Fada N'Gourma were broken, due in large part to a lack of local capacity to monitor and maintain them. The committees responsible for communal water points, Water Point Committees (WPCs), frequently lacked the necessary financial mechanisms to ensure the availability of funds for reparations in the event of breakdown and the capacity to conduct routine, preventative maintenance, causing a more rapid deterioration of the water pump's parts. To address this lack of capacity, Initiative: Eau implemented a project to establish and reinforce drinking water infrastructure monitoring and maintenance capacity through community member trainings. Specifically, Initiative: Eau 1) organized two 3-day "trainings of trainers" involving members from xxx WPCs, 2) distributed startup supply kits to each of 69 trained WPCs, and 3) organized a material handover ceremony with implicated WPCs, including press coverage. As of the 01 March 2020 follow-up visit, 1) all 69 water points were functional, 2) 100% of WPCs had met within the past 30 days, 3) 83% of WPCs have above 5 000 XOF in their safes, 4) 100% of WPCs still had all materials in the startup kit, 5) 100% of WPCs are collecting user fees, and 6) 100% of WPCs had conducted preventive maintenance within the past 30 days.

**Further, Initiative: Eau directly implements programs aimed at protecting and conserving the environment, while mitigating the environmental impacts of both our programs and operations.** In pursuit of our mission, we work to prevent water quality-related degradation resulting from human and industrial activity. We actively work with partners, including municipalities, national government structures, and researchers, to use data on pollution and contaminants in drinking water sources in decision making. Data collected by Initiative: Eau are leveraged to advocate for environmental protection as a way to improve and protect public health.

Examples of Initiative: Eau's programming protecting and conserving the environment include:

- **Study IE17B1: Use of water and health data to augment urban drinking water service planning in Fada N'Gourma (Burkina Faso)**

Comprehensive and up-to-date data on drinking water infrastructure performance, water quality, and population health are critical to effective drinking water service planning and development. Such data are often unavailable in Burkinabè cities, however, due to insufficient data collection procedures, lack of coordination between sector actors, and inadequate human and financial resources. This is the case in Fada N'Gourma, capital of Burkina Faso's Est region, where such data are fragmented and incomplete. Funded by the Fulbright Program of the U.S. State Department, Initiative: Eau conducted a study to support Fada N'Gourma's urban drinking water development strategy through the integrated collection, analysis, and dissemination of water, infrastructure, and health data. Specifically, Initiative: Eau 1) mapped and administered an inventory survey at all xxx public water points in Fada N'Gourma, 2) monitored the infrastructure performance of and collected water samples from a random, representative sample of 106 water points every two weeks for a 9-month period, 3) analyzed collected water samples for seven water quality parameters, both microbiological and physicochemical, according to Standard Methods and established best practices, 4) analyzed inventory survey, infrastructure performance, and water quality data for relevant trends and key insights, 5) prepared preliminary and final reports presenting the study's findings and recommendations to improve drinking water service provision in the city, and 6) organized local and national roundtables with WASH sector actors to present the study's key findings and recommendations. Initiative: Eau's research found 1) high rates of borehole handpump and utility standpipe non-performance, 2) a water point accessibility rate of change of -5.79 water points per month, 3) water quality noncompliance for *E. coli*, total coliforms, turbidity, and electrical conductivity in

several types of water point, and 4) geographic clustering of specific quality non-compliances with specific water point types.

- **Assessment of plastic sachet water quality in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)**

Drinking water sold in plastic sachets constitutes a daily source of drinking water for many living in Burkina Faso, especially in its capital city Ouagadougou. To protect consumer health, the Government of Burkina Faso has established operating and licensing requirements for pre-packaged water producers and has mandated the National Public Health Laboratory (LNSP) to periodically verify the quality of water produced. Due to a) known government resource limitations to conduct water and food safety verifications and b) the frequent opening and closing of pre-packaged water production units, CENOZO launched an investigative report into the safety of water sold in plastic sachets in the city of Ouagadougou and the broader consumer protection mechanism put in place by the government. CENOZO engaged Initiative: Eau to assess water quality for 18 brands of plastic sachet water on the market. Specifically, Initiative: Eau 1) analyzed samples from each brand for seven water quality parameters, both microbiological and physicochemical, according to Standard Methods and established best practices and 2) prepared a final report presenting results and assigning each brand a qualitative potability rating based on observed water quality. Initiative: Eau's assessment revealed 1) total coliform contamination in one brand, 2) noncompliance for electrical conductivity in nine brands, and 3) noncompliance for pH in all but one (17) brand. Using the report, CENOZO conducted targeted follow-up with the brand producing water contaminated with total coliforms and with LNSP, and authored an article calling for the strengthening of quality control for plastic sachet water.

- **Hungry farmer paradox: Community-based climate adaptations in the Plateau Central of Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso)**

A researcher with the University of Santa Clara funded through the U.S. Department of State engaged Initiative: Eau to inventory and assess the capacity and safety of all modern drinking water infrastructure in four villages (Dawaka, Lallé, Talembika, and Yargho) in the commune of Zam in Burkina Faso's Plateau Central region. Specifically, the Initiative: Eau team 1) identified and administered a sanitary and inventory survey at all 45 public modern water points in the four target villages, 2) collected water samples from the 40 identified functional public modern water points, 3) analyzed collected water samples for nine water quality parameters, both microbiological and physicochemical, according to Standard Methods and established best practices, 4) analyzed sanitary and inventory survey and water quality data for relevant trends and key insights, and 5) prepared a final report presenting the assessment's results. Initiative: Eau's analysis found 1) five water points contaminated with *E.coli*, 2) 12 water points contaminated with total coliforms, and 3) five water points noncompliant for turbidity. Based on Initiative: Eau's findings, the independent researcher shocked the five water points contaminated with *E. coli* with chlorine, rendering them potable.

### 2.3 *Supporting for-profit companies to incorporate the Ten Principles*

**Initiative: Eau engages companies in Global Compact-related issues and proposes partnership projects on corporate sustainability.** Initiative: Eau has established and stewarded two corporate partnerships, with Tini Lux Jewelry and IDEXX Laboratories. We actively engage both in the human rights-based approach and environmental protection. Both Tini Lux Jewelry and IDEXX Laboratories have partnered with Initiative: Eau to address safe water access disparities. Our engagement is not only through their support of our programming, but also through dialogue and advocacy with our counterparts at both companies to look critically at their own practices. Initiative: Eau is working with both to explore becoming signatories to the United Nations Global Compact themselves.