



## COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

# TRÓCAIRE

### Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From: June 2019 To: May 2021

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

27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

To our stakeholders:

*I am pleased to confirm that Trócaire 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, covering the period June 2019 to May 2021.*

*In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the implementation of the ten principles and to engage with the UN Global Compact. We welcome any feedback on its content.*

*Trócaire remain concerned at the actions of irresponsible businesses that are resulting in the displacement of communities, violent evictions, pollution of land, destruction of livelihoods and loss of shelter, with a disproportionate impact on women and indigenous communities. Killing of land/ environmental and indigenous defenders continue to increase year on year and human rights defenders are increasingly being labelled as terrorists and criminals. The principles of the Global Compact stand in opposition to this corporate impunity.*

*A fundamental shift in corporate accountability is needed to address the adverse impacts of corporations and this requires a multi-faceted approach. Trócaire believes that, alongside implementation of the Global Compact and its principles, it is necessary to develop a legally binding treaty on the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises and to implement existing human rights obligations in relation to corporate activities. Stronger regulation is needed internationally to provide a legal framework to ensure corporations do not violate human rights in their operations.*

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Caoimhe de Barra'.

Caoimhe de Barra  
Chief Executive Officer  
Trócaire

## Part II. Description of Actions

Actions taken over the last two years by Trócaire in support of the UN Global compact and its principles include the following:

- Engage companies in Global Compact-related issues
- Provide commentary to companies on Communications on Progress

Below we provide an update on the five specific commitments made by Trócaire in our Letter of Commitment in 2019:

### 1. Develop guidance on implementing human rights due diligence in Ireland:

In 2020 we worked with legal experts and human rights defenders as part of the Irish Coalition on Business and Human Rights to develop detailed legal guidance on mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence in Ireland. This guidance will be published in 2021.

### 2. Promote the values of human rights, gender equality and indigenous rights in business activities:

Trócaire held regular meetings with decision-makers and politicians on issues of human rights, gender equality and indigenous rights in business, including with our partners from the Global South. This included presenting to the [Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs Oireachtas](#) (2019) to make recommendations on the need for human rights and environmental due diligence in Ireland.

In 2020, Trócaire held a seminar focused on women land and environmental defenders, with expert speakers including Dr. Anita Ramasastray, Chair of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and Bertha Cáceres, Chair of COPINH in Honduras and daughter of the murdered activist Berta Cáceres. [Further information.](#)

Trócaire engaged in ongoing advocacy for human rights defenders who are being attacked and criminalised. Some of the human rights defenders we are acting in solidarity with are included in the articles below:

[Good news for human rights defender Rosalina](#)

[One year on and Honduran Environmental Defenders still in jail without trial](#)

We launched the “[Face of Resistance](#)” photo exhibition, featuring portraits of women human rights defenders, many of whom risk their lives to defend their communities and promote human rights and respect for the environment in corporate activities.

Finally, Trócaire sits on the Implementation Group for Ireland’s National Plan on Business and Human Rights, which includes representatives from civil society, the business community and Government Departments. In this forum we provide feedback to the business community, based on the experiences of our partners.

### 3. Provide guidance and recommendations to ensure human rights are embedded in corporate practice, through research, briefing papers and advocacy:

Trócaire developed a series of reports focused on making recommendations for improved regulation of corporate practice with respect to human rights and the environment. This included:

[Women Taking the Lead: Defending Human Rights and the Environment](#)

[Towards a Transformative Treaty on Business and Human Rights](#) (as part of the Irish Coalition for Business and Human Rights).

Trócaire provide ongoing briefing papers on issues of Business and Human Rights, including legislative reform. We recently submitted a contribution to the EU consultation on Sustainable Corporate Governance, providing details guidance on potential EU legislation to ensure human rights are embedded in corporate practice.

4. Consider how the principles can be further applied within our supply chains, with particular regards to modern slavery and trafficking in persons:

Safeguarding people from exploitation and abuse caused by our representatives, programmes or activities remains a core commitment for Trócaire. Trócaire recognises that modern slavery and trafficking in persons is both exploitive and abusive. We focus on measures to prevent abuse from occurring (including screening of organisational representatives). This equally applies to any independent consultants that we hire. Trócaire has a case management process in place to respond to safeguarding concerns.

Trócaire's Counter Modern Slavery and Trafficking in Persons Statement is included in both the organisational Code of Conduct and Global Safeguarding Policy. In addition, Trócaire includes an awareness and scenario-based exercise on modern slavery in Code of Conduct training.

Trócaire's also supports partners to build capacity in preventing and responding to abuse and exploitation. Building on this Trócaire could further enhance our safeguarding partner training to include a specific section focusing on the prevention of modern slavery and trafficking in persons and on the international systems in place for reporting concerns.

Trócaire engages with suppliers and contractors through a Supplier Code of Conduct (<https://www.trocaire.org/procurement/>) which has been updated to specifically refer to the UN Global Compact. Currently the Supplier Code of Conduct is primarily used as a tool for briefing and educating suppliers however Trócaire will consider options to more actively engage with suppliers and check compliance.

5. Continue our commitment to creating equality of opportunities and to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the workplace:

Over the past two years we have continued to build on the principles of fairness in aid remuneration particularly with regard to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 (decent work and economic growth), which calls for "equal pay for work of equal value" and SDG 10 (reduced inequality), which calls for "equal opportunity and reduced inequalities of outcome" through the benchmarking of our reward frameworks and actively sought feedback through external employee engagement surveys.

We have actively worked in aligning with the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, notably Standard 8 ("staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably") and Standard 3 ("humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects") through the provision of flexible working practices that have sustained people's livelihoods in the global COVID pandemic, whilst ensuring equitable and fair treatment.

We have also reviewed our attraction and our recruitment policy and ensure decisions are made on the basis of the role and objective reasons and not on the basis of personal circumstances.

Finally, in 2021 Trócaire established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group which will advise the organisation on strengthening our policies and practice so as to promote greater equality, diversity and inclusion both within the organisation and with respect to our communications with the public and key stakeholders across the island of Ireland.

### Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

In 2020 Trócaire engaged with 287 policy contacts on issues of business and human rights in Ireland and produced 9 written inputs on business and human rights. We engaged in outreach and had over 30 events with supporters and volunteers throughout Ireland on business and human rights, with 2,745 engagements with campaigners.

A reference to the UN Global Compact is now included in Trócaire's Supplier Code of Conduct.