

W. GIERTSEN ENERGY SOLUTIONS UN GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS (COP)

Period covered by our Communication on Progress (COP):

From: 15 April 2020

To: 13 July 2021

1. STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

12 July 2021

W. Giertsen Energy Solutions' vision is to enrich and enhance the lives of the people and communities in which we operate by providing the high value and quality solar powered solutions.

We have actively and proudly participated in the UN Global Compact since 2017 and we appreciate how the UN Sustainable Development Goals continuously challenges us to look at new ways to integrate the SDGs throughout our business practices.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption principles throughout the world. This pandemic has caused a lot of fear, isolation, and economic uncertainty – inspiring us to find creative ways to reach out and stay connected at the human level.

In this annual Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,



Willem Giertsen
CEO



W. Giertsen Energy Solutions AS
Nygårdsviken 1 • N-5165 Laksevåg-Bergen • Norway
Tel: +47 55 94 30 40 • E-mail: energy@giertsen.no
www.giertsenenergy.com • Org.no: NO 914 323 924 VAT

2. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS

Covid-19 has fundamentally reshaped the way we conduct business, the way we interact, and how we allocate resources and priorities. As many companies were scaling back and reducing their operations in response to decreased business opportunities, W. Giertsen Energy Solutions made the strategic decision to expand our investments in capacity building and product development toward Africa.

We recognize that these investments will not only produce value in the long-term but also engage business activities aimed at supporting decent work and economic growth. Furthermore, it enabled us to demonstrate our commitment to our operations in Africa during a difficult and uncertain time.

As strong advocates of Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP), we also believe that private companies have a unique space to occupy as a resource toward aid and development work, with:

-) *Increased diversity, initiative, and innovation as a driving force*
-) *Creating dynamics of solid, long-term partnerships*
-) *Focus on the double bottom-line and dimension beyond profit*





Through our commitment to the UN Global Compact, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and WGES' Vision and Values we have highlighted our progress toward these initiatives over the past year.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights and the respect for these rights is of inalienable importance to WGES, we liaison closely with the project host communities and local partners to ensure that there is no adverse impact on these rights.

A significant proportion of WGES' installations throughout the past 7 years have been in Somalia and other recent conflict countries. Understanding the importance of the human rights situation and mapping the risk possible in our installations is an active part of our project plan.

In addition, given the nature of work performed by WGES as an experienced and specialized system integrator providing solar powered solutions for a sustainable world – we design projects that ultimately help provide long-term support toward the end of poverty and hunger.

Most recently, we received a grant from Norad to identify the integration of PV systems into the Agri-business sectors in Africa. The outcome of this grant project will have a significant impact on reducing the cost of energy required to produce and subsequently reduce the cost of the end consumer consumption, enabling increased economical access to food and resources.



WGES believes that human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status and that everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination. Given the increased pressure and isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the recent/ongoing elections throughout Africa we are more vigilant than ever with our activities in this region.

We conduct business keeping this principle as a core of our practice.

We continue to take the following actions and policies toward the UN Global Compact issue area of human rights:

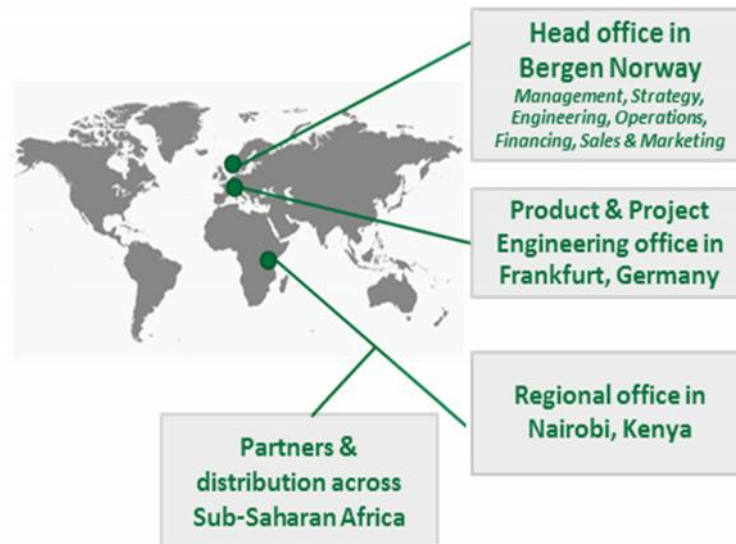
-) Abidance by the UN Supplier Code of Conduct
-) We will conduct business only with companies or entities that recognize and demonstrate that their employees are protected from the any form of abuse, physically, economically, socially or psychologically.
-) We offer a safe, suitable, and sanitary working environment to our employees at all of our various working locations.
-) Selection and monitoring of partners to ensure that the company monitors or eliminate ingredients, designs, defects or side-effects that could harm or threaten human life and health during manufacturing, usage or disposal of products



W. Giertsen Energy Solutions AS
Nygårdsviken 1 • N-5165 Laksevåg-Bergen • Norway
Tel: +47 55 94 30 40 • E-mail: energy@giertsen.no
www.giertsenenergy.com • Org.no: NO 914 323 924 VAT

LABOUR

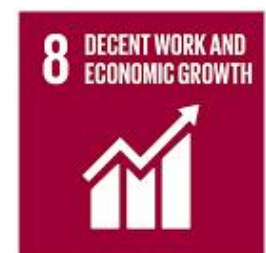
WGES officially incorporated in Nairobi, Kenya over this past year with WGES Africa Ltd. This incorporation is in addition to our incorporated office in Germany and headquarters in Bergen, Norway.



All our offices and personnel operate synergistically to design integrated solar energy solutions throughout Africa. A major portion of our project execution incorporates mindfulness and awareness of local labour practices and labor expectations locally and internationally.

To build organizational capacity and prepare for future progressive growth - Phase 3, WGES has hired a new CEO for the African business. He is originally from west Africa, with French as his native language. He has over 25 years of combined experience in business development, after sales service, product concept development, and photovoltaic technology, in addition to a long experience building successful distribution chains in Africa for major international companies.

As a part of our long-term plan to build local assembly and industrialization in Africa, his profile is directly aligned with these goals (especially important with the African Continental Free Trade Area coming into full force).



W. Giertsen Energy Solutions AS
Nygårdsviken 1 • N-5165 Laksevåg-Bergen • Norway
Tel: +47 55 94 30 40 • E-mail: energy@giertsen.no
www.giertsenenergy.com • Org.no: NO 914 323 924 VAT

As of July 2021, WGES has increased from 13 staff members in 2020 (10 men and 3 women), to 22 staff members (15 men and 7 women). In addition, we work with various project specific local subcontractors. There is still room for improvement to increase the gender diversity in our teams, something we will strive for in 2022-2023.

There are four positions at the senior management level, two of which are held by women (including our country manager in Kenya). Also, this was an increase from 2020 to 2021. It is also noteworthy that our senior management is a blend between African and European cultures.



WGES Africa Ltd. Team, Nairobi, Kenya

Through several Long-Term Agreements that we hold with various UN organizations along with our expanding Commercial and Industrial business focus, we continue to identify integrated renewable energy solutions and products especially developed for Africa with scalable use to the global community.

WGES employment policy and human resource structure is sensitive to the locations in which we operate as well as the partners that we engage with for local projects.

We take the following actions and policies toward the UN Global Compact issue area of labour:

-)] We abide by the UN and internationally recognized labor standards
-)] Abidance by the UN Supplier Code of Conduct
-)] Employees are compensated according to local and relevant working locations
-)] WGES does not tolerate any form of forced labour, child labour, or bonded labour from its partners, manufacturers or any entity doing business with WGES.



W. Giertsen Energy Solutions AS
Nygårdsviken 1 • N-5165 Laksevåg-Bergen • Norway
Tel: +47 55 94 30 40 • E-mail: energy@giertsen.no
www.giertsenenergy.com • Org.no: NO 914 323 924 VAT

-) All employment-related decisions are based on objective criteria, competence, experience and education.





ENVIRONMENT

W. Giertsen Energy Solutions is an experienced and specialized system integrator; we provide solar powered solutions for a sustainable world. We provide solutions not only to the humanitarian sector, but also to private homes and businesses. Our key deliveries include integrated solutions, application engineering and related services for efficient, safe, affordable, and reliable solar power generation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had and is still having a profound impact on the environment and has re-shaped the way we prioritize and classify resources.

With the recent local and regional lockdowns, there has been increased demand and need for reliable energy sources. One sustainable solution for keeping energy cost down, while increasing access to energy is to install renewable energy solutions. WGES Africa Ltd. has developed and launched local product solutions to help satisfy this demand in a green renewable way.





Additionally, WGES was awarded a grant from Norad for a feasibility study focused on Affordable Energy for Agricultural Food Chains in Africa. This grant will enable us to explore the junction of renewable energy solutions, increased energy efficiencies, local capacity building/job creation and increased agricultural yields.



WGES has delivered and commissioned over 100 PV projects most in remote and hard to reach areas; our integrated solar solutions project portfolio includes: hospitals/health installations, energy generating installations, cool warehouses, portable cold room for temperature-controlled storage (i.e. fish, agriculture, dairy, pharmaceuticals), offices, solar home systems, power back-up systems, and solar water pumps and irrigation systems.

Our commitment to quality management and environment management is sustained through the successful renewal of our ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications.

We take the following actions and policies toward the UN Global Compact issue area of environment:

-) WGES QHSE Policy
-) WGES Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Practice
-) Abidance by the UN Supplier Code of Conduct
-) Selection of suppliers that monitor and ensure that they avoid environmental damage via regular maintenance of production processes and environmental protection system (air pollution control, waste, water treatment, etc.)
-) Selections of partners with ISO certification or other internationally recognized equivalent quality and environment standards.
-) Selections of suppliers with ISO certification or other internationally recognized equivalent quality and environment standards.
-) Provision of training for safe handling, maintenance and disposal of solar energy systems with local staff and partners.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

All the projects that W. Giertsen Energy Solutions undertakes are in partnership with international agencies, corporations, multi-national companies, etc. A major part of the project development and execution plan encompasses issues such as risk, ethics, and anti-corruption.

We conduct due diligence on all potential partners and suppliers to help ensure that they are also reputable in the business in which they operate.

WGES values its reputation as a company which is trustworthy, dependable and committed to quality in all dimensions.

We take the following actions and policies toward the UN Global Compact issue area of Anti-Corruption:

-) WGES Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Practice
-) Abidance by the UN Supplier Code of Conduct



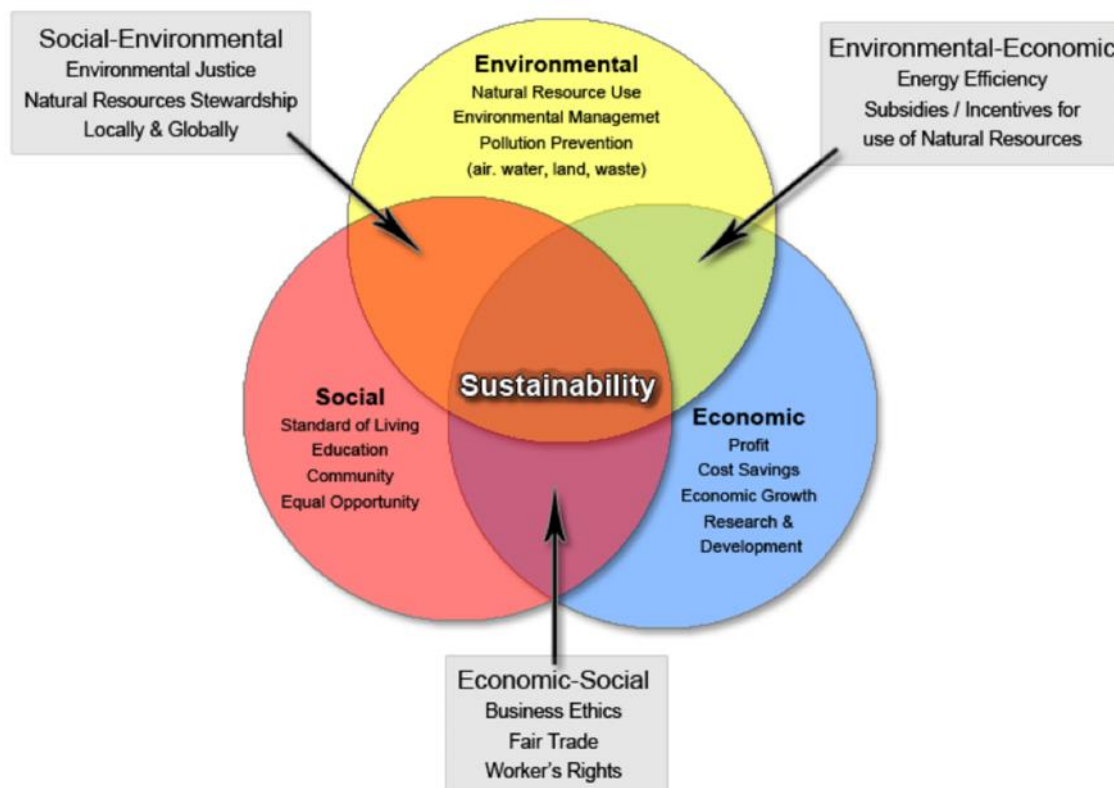
3. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

“Sustainability refers to a process or management system that creates a viable business, while providing social services through environmental protection and maintenance.”

SE Hub

W. Giertsen Energy Solutions endeavors to integrate the three spheres of sustainability (Environment, Social and Economic) into its business practices and strategies. We understand that long-term sustainable development and growth is dependent upon this comprehensive approach.

The Three Spheres of Sustainability



1

¹ Image reference: <https://empowering-changemakers.eu/social-challenges-and-the-quest-for-sustainability/>

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN 2021-2022:

-) Continued development of a WGES Supplier Code of Conduct encompassing the themes of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-corruption.
-) Development of people with disability inclusion policy.
-) Further increase of gender equality and cultural diversity in our operations.
-) Review and improvement of our Terms and Conditions to incorporate UN SDGs where possible.
-) Continued development of project management and execution strategy based on the Circles of Sustainability.



CONCLUSION:

Since WGES' inception, we have been designing and installing scalable renewable energy solutions for communities living in harsh conditions and hard to reach areas throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. As a result of our intensive experience, including over 100 installations, we have gained invaluable knowledge of the products and solutions best suited for this region.

WGES offers one-stop-shop solar scalable product solutions to its customers and serves as a dedicated and dependable partner for the entire project-life-cycle. It is important for us to work with partners also dedicated to making an important and serious positive impact in the countries in which we operate.

Through these experiences, we also have gained valuable insights regarding the power of partnerships between private entities and the public sector through investments in green business activities as a critical part of poverty alleviation.

W. Giertsen Energy Solutions has the potential to have an important and positive impact on global community lives and the environment. We aim to effectively execute our policy of transparency and social fairness through our quality management and project delivery strategies. In summary:

-) We are excited to contribute to a sustainable tomorrow.
-) We are committed to integrating international and globally recognized standards into our business practices.
-) We will seek to only interact with companies who promise and demonstrate delivery of ethical and practical solutions.

WGES is not only a low-carbon and environmentally sustainable, but also turns poverty, inequality, gender inequality, and lack of financial access into new opportunities for countries using our leadership and renewable technology.

The challenges facing our global African neighbors are complex and many. Covid 19, climate changes, biodiversity is compounded by the critical importance of Green Projects. We must work together with these countries to develop and build eco-friendly sustainable and resilient systems. In these challenging times WGES is committed to addressing short, mid and long-term strategies to deliver a greener, fairer and stronger future for Africa. Our world must become more Green one kind step at time.

For more information about W. Giertsen Energy Solutions please visit our website:
www.giertsenenergy.com.

