

COMMUNICATION
ON PROGRESS
2020 | 2021



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Epsilon Publishers Limited is proud of our commitment in embodying the spirit of the United Nations Global Compact whose fundamental pillars are to their strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. To this end, Epsilon Publishers have signed the letter of commitment to the United Nations Global Compact, pledging to align our efforts to operate responsibly and to advance societal goals in tandem with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

*Without change there is no innovation, creativity,
or incentive for improvement. Those who initiate
change will have a better opportunity to manage the
change that is inevitable.*

-William Pollard





A YEAR OF RESILIENCE
*The secret of change is to focus all of
your energy, not on fighting the old,
but on building the new.*
~ Socrates

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THE 10 PRINCIPLES

Human Rights

PRINCIPLE 1

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

PRINCIPLE 2

make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

PRINCIPLE 3

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

PRINCIPLE 4

the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

PRINCIPLE 5

the effective abolition of child labour; and

PRINCIPLE 6

the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment

PRINCIPLE 7

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environment challenges;

PRINCIPLE 8

undertake initiative to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

PRINCIPLE 9

encourage the development and discussion of environmentally friendly technology.

Anti-Corruption

PRINCIPLE 10

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



LETTER OF COMMITMENT

As the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world, it rendered a large proportion of the workforce unable to commute to work in efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus. Our team at Epsilon Publishers resulted in seeking alternative work arrangements and still keep the work running smoothly. As working from home became a policy priority for businesses and companies who could manage to, we resulted to doing the same.

Working from home through COVID-19 has provided us with an insight into how our good organisations can continue to work together amidst tough times. With the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, home working has given us the flexibility to continue business operations while prioritising health and wellbeing as part of our public health responsibility.

To keep our team in touch with each other, we resorted to having weekly meetings that aided all members to keep abreast of future and ongoing projects. This has enabled there to be accountability and it has created an awareness of what needs to be done thanks to the updates.

This notwithstanding, we were able to accomplish a lot during this period, and we endeavoured to keep the disruption to a minimum. We are pleased to share with you our milestones in this period, as well as what we hope to accomplish in the coming year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mumbi Gichuhi". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Mumbi Gichuhi
Managing Director
Epsilon Publishers Limited

The symphony publishers bring to people's lives

As voluntary signatories to the UN's Global Compact since 2016, we are committed to bringing our own Goals in line with the United Nations' drive to promote business practices that foster Sustainability while Reporting on their progress. Now, we have taken a step further in joining the UN's SDG Publishers Compact, working to create publications that educate, promote and inspire action.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Publishers Compact represents a unified commitment to working towards building a better future for all across the publishing industry. The compact aims to inspire Publishers to subscribe to a set of values by taking action in the pursuit of realising these sustainable development Goals during the course of the Decade of Action (2020-2030).

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The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) initiative describes a collection of 17 global objectives, created as a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The UN has set 2030 as a target by which these Goals should be achieved. All UN member states are compelled to encourage civil society and business at large to work together in realising these Goals.

The United Nations Global Compact outlines ten principles that encourage signatories to adopt sustainable policies that work to eradicate corruption, promote human rights, pursue best labour practices, and protect the environment within the business sphere.

However, these Goals cannot be realised without accurate, actionable Reporting. This Reporting allows the UN to monitor and evaluate organisations' progress in working to achieve these Goals by 2030 while adapting the framework to manage their implementation or hold non-compliant signatories to account.



Photo credit: istock/anna om





Reporting that drives SDGs

While many publishing organisations claim to subscribe to the UN's SDGs, in truth, the complex nature of the publishing industry means that some signatories may struggle to institute policies that work towards these Goals. To identify and evaluate the implementation of these SDGs, accurate, reliable, and comprehensible Reporting is critical in securing the feedback that allows organisations to monitor their progress. Armed with the data needed to evaluate their progress, Publishers can then take the action needed to bring their activities in line with the objectives of the SDGs. As signatories to both the UN's Global Compact and the SDGs for Publishers, we are committed to working with our partners and clients to ensure that their SDG progress Reporting needs are met. This allows international and local partners to ensure that their published content is in line with the UN SDG Goals and that the information they publish not only champions these Goals but also works to accelerate progress in the pursuit of meeting the UN's 2030 objectives.

SDG4 – Quality Education – is naturally many a publisher's most critical SDG objective. However, the evolving nature and role played by Publishers across the world mean that other SDGs are quickly becoming essential targets for many of them. Goals including SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production, and SDG13 – Climate Action are now important objectives for many in the industry.

How SDGs for Publishers aim to make a difference

The importance and role that Publishers play in the global community cannot be ignored. As the originators and disseminators of written information, publishing organisations hold the power to direct the global narrative and inform the world and the international community at large. It is their responsibility to ensure that content is published in a sustainable, ethical manner.

This holds even more weight in developing countries, where many people still rely more on published content than they do on digital media. From books and journals to brochures and leaflets, information drives our reasoning and informs our thinking.

The UN SDGs for Publishers lays out a set of Goals for those entrusted with creating content that aligns their own Goals with those of the UN. The compact strives to ensure that signatories work to take the action that contributes to the pursuit of adopting these

SDGs, shaping an industry that subscribes to the basic tenants of developing a better world. The Compact fosters a commitment among Publishers towards publishing content that promotes equality, and Sustainability, adopting practices that have a minimal impact on the environment, and collaborating and educating all stakeholders within the industry.

In conclusion, as Publishers, it is our responsibility to ensure that our influence and reach are used for the good of humankind. In collaborating with both local and international institutions and partners, we are working hard to align our commitments to the UN's SDGs with all of our stakeholders.

Only by working together and implementing sustainable practices and policies will we achieve the Goals that will allow us to inform, develop and inspire activities and agendas that have the ability to create a better world for all of us.

Commitment of the signatories to the SDG Publishers Compact

- 1.** Committing to the SDGs: Stating sustainability policies and targets on our website, including adherence to this Compact; incorporating SDGs and their targets as appropriate.
- 2.** Actively promoting and acquiring content that advocates for themes represented by the SDGs, such as equality, sustainability, justice and safeguarding and strengthening the environment.
- 3.** Annually reporting on progress towards achieving SDGs, sharing data and contribute to benchmarking activities, helping to share best practices and identify gaps that still need to be addressed.
- 4.** Nominating a person who will promote SDG progress, acting as a point of contact and coordinating the SDG themes throughout the organisation.
- 5.** Raising awareness and promoting the SDGs among staff to increase awareness of SDG-related policies and goals and encouraging projects that will help achieve the SDGs by 2030.
- 6.** Raising awareness and promoting the SDGs among suppliers, advocating for SDGs and collaborating on areas that need innovative actions and solutions.
- 7.** Becoming an advocate to customers and stakeholders by promoting and actively communicating about the SDG agenda through marketing, websites, promotions and projects.
- 8.** Collaborating across cities, countries, and continents with other signatories and organisations to develop, localise and scale projects that will advance progress on the SDGs individually or through their Publishing Association.
- 9.** Dedicating budget and other resources towards accelerating progress for SDG-dedicated projects and promoting SDG principles.
- 10.** Taking action on at least one SDG goal, either as an individual publisher or through your national publishing association and sharing progress annually.

Source: SDG Publishers Compact, 2020



*Standing left to right: Peter Mugendi (Advisory board member) and Philip Gichuhi (Director)
Seated left to right: Kezi Mukiri (Advisory board member), Dr. Mbithe Anzaya (board chair),
and Mumbi Gichuhi (Managing Director)*

At Epsilon Publishers, our board charter provides that our advisory board members serve a three year term.

To this end, we bode a tearful farewell to our immediate board members; our chairperson Dr. Mbithe Anzaya, and the other two members, Kezy Mukiri and Peter Mugendi. We thank them most sincerely because they would also like to appreciate our previous board who helped us achieve our target to streamline our operations in line with the SDGs. We are pleased to report that this board achieved its mandate in that we surpassed all the objectives that we had set for the three year term.

We hosted a board-farewell high tea for them, as we also ushered in the new members. Helen Kithinji takes the place as the board chair. The other members are Lamusia Anzaya and Gacoki Kipruto.

The work is already cut out for the new board whose mandate is to help us scale and to continue to deeply entrench our publishing efforts in SDGs.

We are proud to maintain a female-led board, as well as having 60% female board representation. This is in keeping with SDG9 that speaks to decent work and economic growth, and increasing women's participation in the labour force. Integrating women business leadership is an integral part of achieving sustainable goals.

As women occupy only 15% of board seats worldwide, this presents a global challenge to which the women of the world must take a key leadership role. With this call-to-action, core business strategies will have more sustainability infused in them and it will help to build gender-balanced leadership teams while promoting gender equality.



Photo credit: June July

Standing left to right: Lamusia Anzaya(Advisory board member) and Philip Gichuhi (Director)
Seated left to right: Gacoki Kipruto(Advisory board member), Helen Kithinji (board chair), and Mumbi Gichuhi (Managing Director)



Photo credit: June July

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Soci@l media

As part of our weekly social media content strategy, we have been posting content online that is in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We share information on how businesses, policymakers and other stakeholders can implement the underlined principles in the goals.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, social media usage grew to new levels. It was important for us to keep highlighting the importance of SDGs, especially at a time like this.

We are equally committed to making the SDGs part of our readers' strategies, culture and day-to-day company operations.

The engagement with our audience has been positive. Our audience has demonstrated and is proof that by incorporating the SDGs into their organisations' strategies, policies and procedures, and establishing a culture of integrity, they are not only upholding their basic responsibilities to people and the planet but also setting the stage for long-term success.

The numbers

Twitter impressions
3K+ Per Month

LinkedIn impressions
8K+ Per Month

Engagement rate
+20%

SDG topics

- @ Goal description, targets, and indicators.
- @ Making global goals in local businesses and integrating them in organisations.
- @ Policy briefs for increasing SDG progress around the world.
- @ Impact of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- @ Weaknesses that COVID-19 has exposed and mitigation plans.
- @ Policies in regard to delivering on the 2030 Agenda in a post-COVID-19 period.
- @ How we can use SDGs as our compass for bolstering the global long-term COVID-19 recovery.

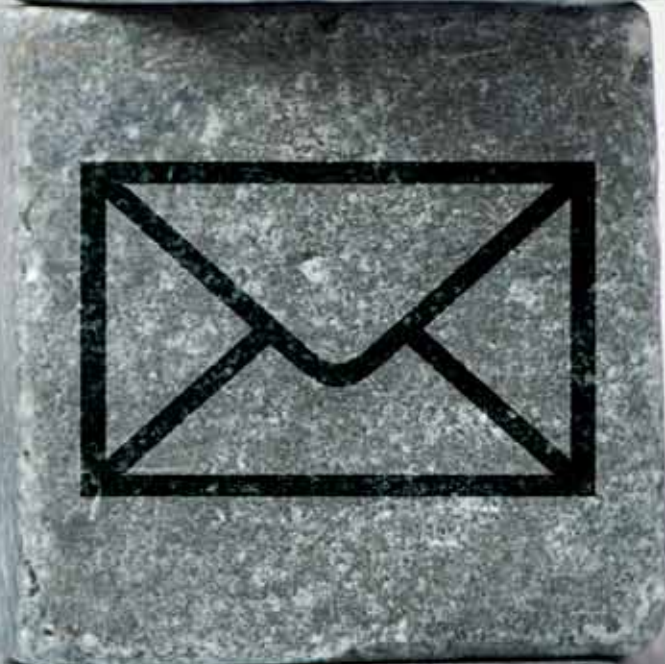
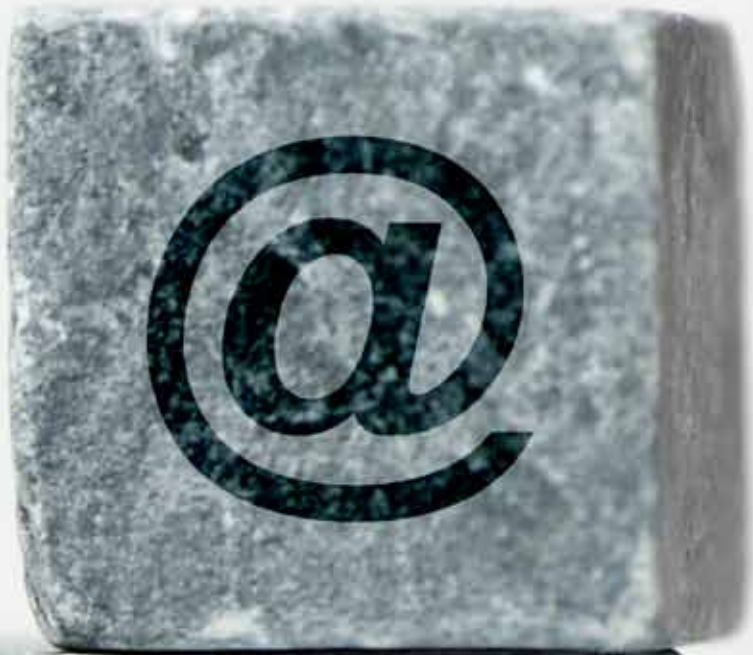




Photo credit: istock/misshibiscus

We were privileged to enter into a partnership with a Washington based organisation called InAble. It is an organisation that ardently advocates for the adoption of education policy in support of the use of computer assistive technology in special schools for the blind in Africa. Their work includes using this technology and combining it with effective training and utter dedication in providing visually impaired students with the opportunity to learn computer technology.

Our role as publishers in partnership with InAble will include working with them to share our publications that are accessible to persons with print disabilities. Partnering with InAble shattered our myth about people with disability. We thought that this only extended to people who need the braille to read. However, people who are unable to read because of their disabilities also include, for example, those with no arms and so they cannot turn pages, people with dyslexia and so on.

In our partnership with them, we shall give them the books that we publish, and they shall upload them on a reading platform where people with disabilities can access free of charge.

As InAble envisions a world where individuals with disabilities have access to the same educational, technological and employment opportunities as the non-disabled, we are glad to be part of this journey as aligns with InAble's objectives which are:

To introduce publishers to the global scarcity of books for people with print disabilities and its impact in Kenya.

To explore the international and national legal frameworks for ending the book famine around the world and in Kenya.

To introduce publishers to accessible publishing and the preparation of accessible content for people with print disabilities.

To explore the role of publishers in contributing towards the campaign to end the book famine in Kenya.

Partnerships



Photo credit: istock/suteishi

Looking ahead

Our focus for 2021-2024 is to focus on SDG 17 which provides for strong global partnerships and cooperation. We want to seek to entrench ourselves in more partnerships. We believe being publishers puts us in a unique position in that we assist institutions and organisations to communicate the role that they play in advancing the SDG agenda.



Epsilon Publishers Limited

Gemina Court

George Padmore Road

P.O. Box 1175-00606

Nairobi Kenya

+254 (0) 733 333 600

publish@epsilon.co.ke

www.epsilon.co.ke

 [epsilon publishers](#)

 [@epsilonkenya](#)

 [epsilon publishers](#)