



# Communications on Progress Report 2021

United Nations Global Compact

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## Statement of Continued Support

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

I am pleased to confirm that Farsight Services Limited (Seefar) continues to support the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. With this letter of commitment, we once again express our intent to implement those principles. We are committed to making the UN Global Compact and its principles integrated in the strategy, culture and day-to-day operations of our group, and to engaging in collaborative projects which advance the broader development goals of the United Nations, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals. Seefar will make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We recognize that a key requirement for participation in the UN Global Compact is the annual submission of a Communication on Progress (COP) that describes our efforts to implement the Ten Principles. We support public accountability and transparency. We therefore committed to reporting on progress within one year of joining the UN Global Compact and annually thereafter according to the UN Global Compact COP policy. This includes:

- A statement signed by the chief executive expressing continued support for the UN Global Compact and renewing our ongoing commitment to the initiative and its principles. This is separate from our initial letter of commitment to join the UN Global Compact.
- A description of practical actions (i.e., disclosure of any relevant policies, procedures, activities) that the company has taken (or plans to undertake) to implement the UN Global Compact principles in each of the four issue areas (human rights, labour, environment, anti-corruption).
- A measurement of outcomes (i.e., the degree to which targets/performance indicators were met, or other qualitative or quantitative measurements of results).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JT'.

Jacob Townsend

CEO

## About This Report

The Seefar 2021 Communication on Progress Report accounts for our activity and progress throughout the year as a social enterprise. It highlights how we have continued to develop and align our global projects to coincide with the framework of the Global Compact and the Ten Principles covering Human Rights, Labour, The Environment and Anti-Corruption. Seefar recognises that the majority of UNGC members function as mainstream businesses while also focusing on incorporating the Ten Principles. Seefar is a unique entity in the ecosystem of change. Though we are also a business, operating as a social enterprise allows us to actively maximize our financial return and funding so as to create the opportunities to have a greater positive impact on the lives of the people we work with in helping them build a better future on a local level. Seefar also recognises the impact of COVID-19 on its staff members and has taken active steps to safeguard its staff in accordance with the ten principles.

The Seefar 2021 Communication on Progress Report will also relate to the day to day operations of our staff and how we strive to create a balanced working environment for our 150+ staff who work remotely in 39 countries by strategically integrating the UNGC Ten Principles.

## About Seefar

Seefar was founded in April 2014 as a social enterprise by people who had reflected on how we could combine the best parts of a private sector focus on results with a social purpose dedicated to vulnerable people. We apply commercial strategies to social progress without focusing on being a profit-driven enterprise.

Seefar's vision is for a world in which vulnerable people have more opportunities to advance themselves. The purpose of our social enterprise is to work with those people to build a better future.

We focus on problems and timeframes that are difficult but tractable; tractable because we can see possibilities to transform them; and transformational in measurably improving people's lives. We map our path with thematic and geographic mission statements. We walk these paths by nimbly combining rigorous learning and flexible sourcing of external funds. We measure our performance by our impact on beneficiary communities and the way in which our services change the lives of individual women, men and children.

## Human Rights

**Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.**

**Principle 2: Make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.**

Respect for human rights is fundamental to the sustainability of Seefar and the communities with which we work. When it comes to our staff, contractors and all who are involved in our projects, Seefar is committed to ensuring that people are treated with dignity and respect. Seefar is seen as an expert on human rights compliance by our public and private sector partners.

Our work is centred on four themes related to human rights:

- *Security and justice*
- *Protection for displaced people*
- *Fighting modern slavery*
- *Climate and the environment*

Examples of our work advancing human rights globally include:

- **Empowering survivors of modern slavery in India to access their full human rights.** We achieve this through our LIFT program, which helps beneficiaries to stabilize, recover and sustain themselves
- **Equipping vulnerable migrant workers with access to their full set of legal rights.** For example, Seefar's ethical recruitment program supported thousands of migrant workers to understand their basic human rights.
- **Advising the world's biggest companies on human rights due diligence:** Seefar is working with a consortium of top Consumer Goods companies to implement innovative approaches that safeguard fundamental human rights throughout corporate supply chains.
- **Delivering counselling and strategic communications projects to help refugees, displaced persons, migrants, and other vulnerable people to gain access to (and knowledge of) their rights and available humanitarian support.**

## Implementation:

In addition to our work advising partners on human rights and implementing programs that safeguard the rights of vulnerable people, Seefar is also committed to respecting the human rights of our staff, consultants and the communities we work with.

We are committed to identifying, preventing/ mitigating adverse human rights impacts resulting from or caused by our business activities before or if they occur through human rights due diligence and mitigation processes. Seefar's Human Rights Policy is guided by international human rights principles encompassed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization's

Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the United Nations Global Compact and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Seefar conducts in-depth analysis and due diligence before initiating any projects with subcontractors or forming new partnerships.

Our Human Rights Policy is supported by several other policies and procedures. Where relevant, these policies were updated in light of COVID-19 to ensure they remained current and effective despite the pandemic;

- Human Rights Policy
- HR Grievance Report Form
- Safeguarding Policy
- Formal Grievances and Monitoring SOP
- Incident Reporting SOP Incident Report Form (also used as an internal process for whistle-blowing)
- Incident Management Process SOP
- Gender Policy
- Disability Policy
- Global Security SOP
- Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption SOP
- Anti-money laundering and terrorism SOP
- Seefar's COVID-19 SOP

## Measurement of Outcomes:

Seefar maintains a zero-tolerance policy on any form of human rights abuse. We continue to make all efforts to ensure that we mitigate, if not eliminate any forms of such violations. To monitor and assess this process, Seefar has implemented an 'auditing framework'. This enables us to conduct an in-depth review of each project every 3 months with direct input from the Project Manager and Local Project Coordinator with support/ monitoring from the Operations department along with the Safety, Security and Resilience Advisor.

In the past year, Seefar's Safety, Security and Resilience Advisor undertook a systematic review of our policies and implemented improvements at the global level as well as for individual projects.

When Seefar undertakes procurement or is completing due diligence activities, our SOPs include systematic and technology-powered screening for blacklisting and documented human rights violations.

As discussed in the previous report, Seefar's specialist ethical recruitment agency TERA operates a multilayered monitoring system to ensure our beneficiaries are fully safeguarded and have access to their full set of human rights (see also Labour). The system has reported a 100% success rate in safeguarding workers. Those steps are as follows;

- Screening at multiple points during the recruitment process;

- Weekly check-ins from our Worker Welfare Officer to ensure worker safety.
- Pre-departure training that ensures workers fully understand their rights and support systems;
- Monitoring of industry best practice and legal regulations in India and the UAE;
- Interlocking grievance mechanisms to ensure human rights are always respected.

## 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

Eliminating forced labour, preventing the exploitation of labourers, ensuring the freedom of association is respected and eliminating employment-based discrimination are all part of Seefar's vision to ensure that vulnerable people can have more opportunities to advance themselves. Since the founding of Seefar in 2014, we have conducted labour migration and strategic communications projects in Indonesia, West Africa and Afghanistan (to name but a few). Seefar has worked with more than 100,000 migrants in the past five years. Modern slavery is a global issue deeply connected to labour migration. Migrants and those pursuing work abroad are often at risk of financial, emotional and physical exploitation.

In the last year, Seefar has undertaken new activities related to Principles 3, 4, 5 and 6. These include:

- Publication of the "Be compliant" initiative. This includes 1) an engaging two-page pull-out targeting private sector actors that highlights commercial arguments for ethical recruitment and labour compliance, and 2) an online interactive tool that models ethical investments and gains. Seefar has released a toolkit to help employers in the GCC engineering and construction industry understand how to improve worker welfare while maximising commercial gains.
- Leveraging our ethical recruitment agency TERA to reach and protect over 2,500 prospective and current migrant workers. Our work enables low- and semi-skilled people seeking work abroad by enabling them to benefit more from their employment while eliminating exploitation.
- Conducting research and advocacy activities with over 200 stakeholders related to forced labour and modern slavery, for the purpose of eliminating forced labour and ensuring worker protection.

- Engaging the Consumer Goods sector through new partnerships to integrate labour compliance and human rights due diligence throughout corporate supply chains and across borders.

## Implementation:

All of Seefar's staff and projects are supported by policies and standard operating procedures that protect and support our staff, contractors and the people we work with.

- Human Rights Policy
- Gender Policy
- Disability Policy
- Safeguarding SOP
- Personnel Grievances SOP
- Global Security SOP
- Formal Grievances and Reporting SOP
- Conflict Resolution Process (provides structured support and guidance to staff on managing less serious internal conflicts to improve working relationships)
- Seefar's COVID-19 SOP

These policies and procedures are reviewed quarterly to ensure that they are kept relevant to be applicable to any new (and older) projects that Seefar undertakes.

## Measurement of Outcomes:

Measurement and Outcomes for Seefar staff:

- As Seefar staff are predominantly telecommuters, we encourage the use of our internal mentoring program. This enables us to assist staff in using their time optimally, avoid build up of stress and anxiety, further develop our ethos of teamwork and assist in meeting work demands and deadlines. This has assisted Seefar in continuing to monitor productivity while also ensuring that national/ international labour laws are respected.
- Seefar also provides a supervisory system to our staff. This system has proved very effective throughout 2019 as it allows individuals the opportunity to seek advice in areas such as communication issues, potential bullying and harassment issues.
- Seefar operates multiple grievance channels to capture any potential issues of labour violations, including Principles 3-6. These include online and phone-based systems with submissions enabling respondent anonymity. With these systems in place, there were no reports in the last year of violations of national/ international labour laws.
- Seefar continues to engage directly with its staff for feedback on our labour monitoring systems. We believe in encouraging our staff to offer comments and feedback either through their supervisors or by utilising our feedback forum which is a part of our database system.
- Monitoring and outcomes for TERA India The TERA India Manager / Ethical Recruitment Officer (ERO), who manages TERA India's operations and is responsible for implementing all recruitment activities.



- Training, Logistics and Marketing Officer (TLMO), who is responsible for delivering pre-departure training, providing worker recruitment logistical support, and conducting marketing
- The Worker Welfare Officer (WWO) is responsible for worker welfare data collection, project monitoring, and serving as a 24/7 contact for workers to support while they are abroad. This role operates and is supervised independently from the ERO and TLMO as one of our ethical controls.

## Environment

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Seefar business activities do not have any significant negative impact on climate and the environment due to a number of factors;

- Seefar staff work remotely
- We provide services rather than product creation
- Up to 80% of Seefar's 150 staff work in their own communities
- Seefar hires local teams in communities for all of our projects

However, we are aware that in this time of climate change there has been a significant shift in global attitudes towards environmental responsibility and Seefar recognises its obligation to work towards a more positive impact.

As all of Seefar staff work remotely (telecommuters) we identified a number of areas where we are already having a positive impact on the environment;

- Less gasoline consumption.
- Reduction in carbon emissions.
- Improved air quality.
- Minimal necessity for paper printing.
- Reduced impact on infrastructure.
- Stimulation of small town development/reduction in urbanisation.
- All of our research is uploaded via software.
- Less energy consumption.
- Reduced consumption of the SUPs and packaging associated with running a conventional office.

- Reduction in food packaging and greater opportunity for eco-friendly dietary habits.
- As a remote organisation, all of our work is shared online.
- Limitation on use of bottled water at annual summits.

Seefar realises that these are small measures and that there is a wider scope to which we must adapt to by educating our staff, contractors and those participating in our global projects.

Furthermore, The Seefar Foundation works in more than 30 countries with some of the most vulnerable populations whose situations are impacted more and more by climate change. Climate Change has become a hidden driver of migration, human trafficking, displacement and social exclusion in many contexts, as well as being one of humanity's greatest challenges in its own right.

The Seefar Foundation anticipates in 2022 being able to enter into partnerships with a range of implementers that are able to deliver the above initiatives. Specifically looking to address the following:

- Rewilding at scale
- Low carbon regenerative plant-based agriculture and/or Biocyclic Farming
- Industrial vermicomposting
- Permanent carbon sequestration
- Supporting populations to adopt low-animal-product diets (especially in middle and high income countries)
- Removing plastic from supply chains
- Plastic recycling initiatives
- Producing low-cost and reliable electric transport for middle-income countries
- Mobilising communities for environmental initiatives
- Low tech water desalination
- Family planning and educating girls in low and middle income countries

Outside of these partnerships, Seefar has also begun independent development of commercial products and services that contribute to carbon sequestration and other positive environmental effects:

## Implementation:

In 2021 Seefar has begun to draft an environment policy where Seefar recognises that our activities have an impact (though minimal) on the environment. This policy serves as a blueprint to help us create and integrate environmental management systems that will assist our staff (including Seefar field staff) in reducing our carbon footprint.

In all Seefar activities, working practices and business relationships, we are endeavouring to become more committed to protecting, conserving and enhancing all aspects of the environment over which we have control or can influence in our projects. The main factors we are looking at:

- Reduce the impact of energy use in our home office
- Reduce paper usage
- Source environmentally benign cleaning products

- Procure sustainable stationery products
- Reduce the impacts of transportation usage
- Reduce the total amount of waste produce
- Safely store and carefully use chemicals
- Increase the number of people working from home
- Encourage less climate intensive dietary habits.
- Offset Carbon emissions through the purchasing of verified carbon credits.

Seefar continues to gather data and discuss our own emissions at quarterly summit meetings. Continually addressing our carbon footprint year on year and developing our internal environmental policy which determines where best to focus resources and effort towards mitigating global warming and having a more positive impact on our working/ home environments.

Some of the key areas to be discussed will be;

- Building and strengthening a culture of awareness
- Reducing our airmilage
- Incorporating our environmental policy into Seefar projects
- Educating business partners to adhere to the UNGC Environmental Principles
- Reevaluating our waste consumption and management
- Exploring how we can integrate climate change and migration for future work
- Look to reducing paper usage and waste for field events
- Encourage the use of trains rather than flights when attending European based seminars/ meetings

## Measurement of Outcomes:

Seefar began to implement measurement of outcomes for the UNGC Principles on Environment, though they are admittedly at their nascent stages. Measurement systems will continue to develop over the next 12 months and will be fully operational by the time of the next COP report.

One major change implemented in the last year was systematically calculating the environmental impact of HQ travel and using carbon footprint as an input for decision-making.

In addition, Seefar's Environment policy draft will be reviewed and in place in the second half of 2021. Once the policy is in place and Seefar's staff aware of its content, the issues of climate change will be addressed at our next corporate meeting at the end of 2021.

We also intend to research methods to appoint key staff as 'Climate Change Evaluators'. The overall objective being to promote the culture with the organisation and ensure a monitoring and evaluation system is installed in 2022.

Seefar welcomes this challenge and looks forward to being able to report a more positive impact to the UNGC, our partners and donors in our next COP report.

## Anti-Corruption

### Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Seefar is an international social enterprise and our staff, contractors and the people we work with are obliged and committed to complying with the respective laws of all countries where we conduct our work and business respectively. This also applies to abiding by any and all anti-corruption laws internationally. Seefar conducts a stringent interview process when hiring new staff. This is partly due to the fact that we take care in hiring/ contracting individuals who we determine can meet the criteria in upholding our own set of ethical values and principles.

Seefar staff are fully aware not to accept any form of facilitation payments of any nature. We recognise that facilitation payments are a form of bribery and though this culture may exist in a number of the countries we operate in, it is not something to be condoned.

### Implementation:

In addition to the requirements defined by national and international law, Seefar has established a robust compliance framework which includes several integral policies and procedures to mitigate any/all risks of bribery and corruption;

- Anti- Bribery and Anti - Corruption Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Formal Grievances and Misconduct SOP
- Incident Report Form (also used as an internal process for whistle-blowing)
- Incident Reporting SOP
- Incident Management Process SOP
- Anti-money laundering SOP

All Seefar staff (including field staff) receive awareness training in anti-bribery and anti-corruption and are encouraged to report any such incidents should they occur. Also, each respective project receives a rigorous risk assessment by Seefar's Safety, Security and Resilience Advisor to mitigate any such incidents. Each risk assessment is customized to the region/ country where the project is being conducted and accounts for the laws of that region/ country.

### Measure of Outcomes:

Seefar operations department monitors any anti-bribery and anti-corruption related incidents should they occur. Such incidents are collated and analysed by project teams and the operations department. Recommendations arising from the analysis will feed into an annual review of Seefar Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption Policy.

Seefar keeps detailed plus accurate financial records, and has appropriate internal controls in place to act as evidence for all payments made. To our best ability, we will declare and keep a written record of the amount and reason for hospitality or gifts accepted and given, and understand that gifts and acts of hospitality are subject to managerial review.

Seefar uses an 'auditing framework' which enables us to conduct an in- depth review of each project every 3 months with direct input from the Project Manager and Local Project Coordinator with support/ monitoring from the Operations department along with the Safety, Security and Resilience Advisor. As part of this framework, attention is given to reviewing the progress of each project and if those projects/ field staff are continued to be protected from any forms of bribery or corruption. Due to the nature of our business, our culture promotes, and policies demand that any instance of possible unethical behaviour is reported. Any such cases are then compiled through our database and dealt with by management on a case by case basis.

## Outlook on 2022 and Beyond:

Seefar recognises and welcomes the challenge of strengthening our resolve towards the 10 Principles of the UNGC into the next decade. We take stock of the positive impacts that we have achieved as an SME in 2021 and look forward to identifying creative measures and developing new opportunities to further enhance the UNGC Principles in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Seefar understands that both the 10 Principles and the 17 SDGs are essentially linked and that focusing on any one category will invariably affect another. Social impact aligned with the 10 Principles and 17 SDGs is at the core of our work and operations. We look forward to new reporting systems launching in the next year that will enable us to better measure our impact and alignment with the 10 Principles, including the net effects of our personnel, activities, and operations. With new strategic initiatives planned on the environment, climate, labour, and education, we pledge to build on our existing work and advance efforts to achieve the SDGs within our personnel, projects, and among our partners.