

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)



International Institute of Humanitarian Law
Institut International de Droit Humanitaire
Istituto Internazionale di Diritto Umanitario

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From: 01/01/2019 To: 31/12/2020

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the President of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law

11 October 2021

To our stakeholders:

With the present letter, I am pleased to confirm that the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (hereinafter "the Institute") 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. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Edoardo Greppi

President, International Institute of Humanitarian Law

Part II. Description of Actions

The International Institute of Humanitarian Law is an independent, non-profit, humanitarian organization, founded in 1970. With its headquarters at Villa Ormond, Sanremo (Italy), and a liaison office in Geneva (Switzerland), the Institute's primary activities are:

- the delivery of regular and ad hoc courses on Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, Refugee Law, and related fields of law.
- the dissemination of materials and research relevant to the above-mentioned areas of law.
- the exchange of expertise and best practices among lecturers and participants of the workshops.

The Institute has earned a solid reputation grounded on independence, academic rigor, and creative learning methodologies. Governments, international organizations, and NGOs continue to entrust the Institute with building the capacity of their officials and staff through participation in quality courses informed by years of expertise. A growing number of donors committed to the promotion of International Law support the activities carried out by the Institute and its Department of International Refugee Law.

The Institute has adhered to the UN Global Compact in 2018 and has been fully committed to promoting and implementing its Principles ever since. Specifically, between 2019 and 2020, it has engaged in the following activities:

- It has promoted a human-rights based approach in the identification and protection of refugees, migrants, internally displaced persons, and stateless people (hereinafter "persons of concern") throughout its constant outreach to relevant stakeholders, such as government officials, members of the civil society, private businesses, the academia, journalists, and representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- It has designed, organized, and delivered 31 capacity-building courses in 5 different languages on the social, environmental, and economic human rights issues faced by persons of concern and their protection. These initiatives saw the participation of 1.020 relevant stakeholders who, throughout their work, could have a positive impact on the enjoyment of human rights by persons of concern. Hence, the Institute has sought to positively influence the attitude of key individuals involved in the protection of persons of concern while strengthening their skills and knowledge in the field of human rights and humanitarian protection.
- It has provided a framework for dialogue and cooperation among the above-mentioned stakeholders throughout its educational and outreach activities in order to stimulate the sharing of best practices and a profound engagement of the international community in the support of persons of concern.
- It has advocated with governments for national legislative reforms in the field of human rights and access to the international legal framework governing the protection of persons of concern.
- It has firmly promoted gender equality both within its operations—by systematically ensuring a gender-balanced selection of participants and facilitators—and in its outreach to partners with specific mentions to female participation in calls for applications.
- It has participated in the Academic Network on the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) to contribute to its understanding and implementation and to receive inputs for sustainability actions by other stakeholders. Moreover, on the occasion of the 1st Global Refugee Forum, which took place in Geneva on 16 – 18 December 2019, the Institute committed itself to: i) develop courses in line with the objectives, principles, and areas in need of support of the Global Compact on Refugees, and provide scholarship opportunities to candidates from the Global South; ii) develop courses on refugee protection dedicated to government training institutions and the academia, supporting the latter in the realization of sound and sustainable teaching programs on displacement, pursuant to the Global Compact on Refugees.

- It has systematically upscaled its commitment to capacity building and cooperation in the field of protection of persons of concern with a plan to expand the number of its courses, to expand its outreach to more countries and relevant actors, and to increase the courses offered in a language other than English (Arabic, French, Spanish, Russian). Specifically, in line with its commitment to the UN Global Compact, the Institute is aiming at increasingly involving private sector actors in its training and peer-to-peer sharing of experiences. With the planned expansion of its institutional engagement capacity, the Institute will consolidate its outreach and cooperation with private law firms, which can positively contribute to the protection and advocacy of persons of concern.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Since its foundation in 1978, the Institute has trained more than 9.400 government officials, private business actors, and members of civil society. Only between 2019 and 2020, it has received more than 2.800 applications and was able to enroll 1.020 persons from more than 124 countries and to support the majority of those based in the Global South with scholarships. Most participants were located in Africa (47%), followed by the Middle East (14%), Latin America (14%), Europe (14%), the Asia-Pacific region (10%), and North America (1%). The courses were conducted by around 100 facilitators from more than 30 countries. Of the 54 facilitators that delivered workshops in 2020, 54% were females.

The impact of outreach, advocacy, and capacity-building activities on human rights and international protection issues is inherently difficult to measure. However, specific post-session and post-course surveys and follow-up outreach revealed the positive outcomes of the workshops in practice. Most attendees stressed the applicability of the acquired knowledge and skills to their day-to-day work and professional roles. This was also reflected the average rating of courses by the participants which amounted to 9 on a scale from 1 to 10.

More importantly, after attending the training, several participants have directly contacted the Institute with queries, some of them confidential, on practical issues pertaining to human rights and the protection of persons of concern. Some stakeholders asked for advice on individual cases, mostly related to refugee status determination and deportation. Others inquired on best practices from other countries and guidelines on procedures, in particular, with regard to safeguards. Some academic institutions reached out to request assistance in the development of Refugee Law curricula within their courses. Finally, stakeholders involved in policymaking sought inputs on laws and by-laws related to refugees and migrants and the ratification of statelessness conventions.

The Institute will further improve and continue its follow-up efforts with participants after workshops end in order to maximize impact. This will include piloting follow-up surveys for course attendees, as well as conducting post-training interviews. The focus will be placed on countries undergoing policy changes and playing key roles in the context of the Global Compact on Refugees.