

Restless Development
Communication on Engagement (COE) with the United Nations Global Compact
Period covered by this COE: November 2019 – November 2021

CEO Statement of Continued Support

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Subject: **Communication on Engagement (COE) with the United Nations Global Compact**

With this letter I am pleased to reaffirm Restless Development's support for the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to continue our partnership with the Global Compact to advance these principles through the agency's work.

Our vision for 2030 is that young people everywhere are able to demand and deliver a just and sustainable world. But, in many places, instead of being listened to and supported to lead change, young people are often ignored and overlooked. Our mission is to change that by supporting young people to be leaders. This includes working with young people to identify problems and work on solutions in their communities, and it also includes supporting young people to advocate for long-lasting change that gets to the root causes of issues, like youth unemployment and climate change.

Restless Development formed in 1985 and have been working with young people ever since. We work with young people around the world and are led by nine Hubs spread across Africa, Asia, in the USA and UK.

This is Restless Development's Communication on Engagement (COE) with the United Nations Global Compact, which describes the actions that our agency has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its principles over the last two years.

Sincerely yours,



Alex Kent

Co-CEO

Description of Actions and Measurement of Outcomes

Protecting Human Rights

We continue to prioritise diversity and inclusion, the protection of human rights and the promotion of women's rights, gender equality and antiracism. This cuts across both our operations, including how we recruit and support staff, and our programmes.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Racial Equity in our Agency:

We now have a [global Diversity, Equality and Inclusion strategy](#), with clearly defined goals and metrics to hold us to account. This strategy pushes for diversity in our recruitment; our inclusive working culture; and our external relations - building partnerships with organisations who can strengthen our knowledge in this area. We have also become increasingly data driven; over the past two years we have collected and analysed diversity data, at both a global and Hub level. This looked at factors such as age, gender, disability, religion and education. This has in turn led to the development of Hub specific action plans, focusing in on relevant national issues such as tribalistic or caste discrimination or the promotion of local language.

In June 2020 we published a statement in support of Black Lives Matter and other movements actively **fighting racism**. Following this, we made a number of [concrete commitments](#) built off an extensive global listening exercise that we hope will be major steps in pushing the protection of rights and inclusivity of our work. Other examples include a diversification in our International team, and steps to remove internal 'white privilege', ensuring international staff do not receive preferential treatment over national colleagues.

Aside from these more operational changes, we have also taken a number of steps to **restore power to communities around the world**, providing an alternative to traditional power structures. We have started to design new programmes focusing on decolonising development; pursued funding and partnerships in line with our anti-racist journey; and in our external communications, actively commissioned more diverse voices.

Our Programmes:

Restless Development's programmes and initiatives are always based on gender awareness and a strong agency level commitment to **gender equality**. To support this, we have a specific Gender principle (and set of [sub-principles](#)) within our Programme principles, which guide the design and delivery of our work. For example, *"All programmes specifically address gender across the model, resourcing activities appropriately and not assuming that outcomes for all genders will be the same with the same activities"*. We have a Gender Committee, where staff from across our Hubs drive different initiatives to increase our understanding of our approach to gender and how we can become more gender transformative. Our Zambia Hub provides an excellent example of the progress we have made in making our programmes more gender transformative. Their recent annual review reflecting back on 2019/20 highlighted how gender transformation was at the centre of their intervention design and implementation. For example, in the Ubononshi Youth Empowerment programme, self reflection activities were found to allow boys, young men, girls and young women to reflect on gender biases that affect their lives.

More broadly, Within our Programme Principles we also have a principle focused on **'Inclusion and Participation'** which includes a commitment to ensuring all our programmes are inclusive, and engage young people regardless of their age, sexuality, gender, ethnicity and background. This also includes commitments to: making reasonable adjustments to our work; recognising diversity in learning requirements; and building the capacity of staff to work with a diverse range of young people.

We have seen an increase in **disability inclusion** across our programmes; for example, the [Peak Youth Tackling HIV](#) programme in Zimbabwe has worked with young women and girls living with disability, empowering them so they are less vulnerable to HIV and Gender Based Violence.

Environment

We know that those who have contributed the least to climate change - young people - will face the biggest impact of climate change if we do not take steps to reduce our impact on the planet. Our ambition is to be an agency which will protect the natural environment and ensure its ability to support life for future generations, through our agency, operations, programmes and a Youth Collective. As an agency accountable to young people we need to mitigate our own impact on the environment, whilst proudly and pro-actively aiming to tackle climate change through our programmes.

Environment Principles:

We updated our [Environmental Principles](#) in 2019, which outline our commitment to protecting the natural environment in five focused ways: managing our carbon footprint; greener programming; building our staff knowledge and commitment; ensuring sustainable financing decisions; and engaging our Restless networks. Our principles have been driven forward by a global 'Green Network' of staff, with representatives from each Hub.

Specifically, we committed to a number of measures, and the progress against these is highlighted below:

- **Improving our Carbon Footprint tracker model:** We now have a carbon footprint dashboard based on a range of data, including waste, utilities and travel, expanded beyond the flight data we previously focused on. Data is also broken down by Hub and shared across the wider staff team.
- **Launch of green action plans for each Hub:** These are now in place in half of our Hubs across the world.
- **Re-induction sessions:** At the start of our 2019/20 financial year a session was held with staff in each Hub re-introducing them to our Environmental Principles as part of our annual reinduction process.

We are increasingly empowering young people to take a lead role in the decisions on climate that affect them most - for example, by supporting young climate activists, such as those attending COP in the UK in 2021, or by conducting youth-led [research](#) in Uganda on the impact of climate on young people's livelihoods. There are still further steps we can take to push the commitment into action; for example by ensuring all new programmes have strong environmental impact assessments.

Systems in place to track our environmental impact:

Agency Survey:

Through our annual Agency Survey we ask staff to assess understanding and perceived progress against our environmental commitments. The data below shows the percentage of respondents reporting that they either agree or strongly agree.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Restless Development understands and mitigates its impact on the environment across its agency, operations and programmes.	75%	74%	76%

I am aware of and understand our Environmental Principles and how I can contribute to their success	66%	74%	79%
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It is positive to see some improvements in the scores, especially in terms of staff's understanding of our Environmental principles.

Data from our **Quality Assurance framework** also demonstrates performance against our environmental commitments at the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

	% of Hubs achieving ES or KPI
Essential Standard	
Ethical fundraising framework	63%
Carbon footprint tool	25%
Green action plan in place	25%
% met across all Hubs	38%
Key Performance Indicators	
Actions from Carbon Footprint plan	13%
Sustainable financing in procurement	50%

The above presents a mixed picture with clear areas of improvement requiring focus, particularly in terms of the development of the carbon footprint tool and associated action plan.

Carbon footprint:

We have seen a significant reduction in our carbon footprint as a result of the hugely reduced number of flights being taken by both staff and volunteers. This relates to both travel restrictions in response to Covid-19, but also the end of the International Citizen Service programme, where young volunteers from the UK took part in 12 week placements in our Hubs. The final volunteers from the programme returned in the first half of 2020.

Our new Carbon footprint tracker tool takes data from a much broader range of categories, including flights, travel, utilities, waste and materials, as compared to figures from previous years based purely on flights. As a means of comparison our estimated Carbon Footprint for our second quarter in 2019/20 was 48,619kgs (with 2,364kgs relating to flights). This compares to an annual figure relating to flights only of 888,182kgs from 2017/18 cited in our last Annual Accountability report.

Building on the insights provided by this data, our Hubs are putting in place action plans to reduce their Carbon footprints.

Anti-Corruption and Accountability

As a values led agency, how we work is as important as what we do. We minimise our agency's negative impact in a number of ways, through our comprehensive safeguarding policy and systems; our code of conduct; our approach to programme design and implementation; and in the unique way we engage local partners through the Youth Collective.

Safeguarding:

We are committed to preventing harm, and to promoting the health, well-being and human rights of children, young people and adults. Our [approach](#) is one of continual learning and adaptation, which involves listening and learning from our experience, the experience of people we serve, our partners and the development sector at large. We have robust measures in place to equip us to prevent and respond to issues of safeguarding across our agency and activities. Our [safeguarding policy](#) details the framework through which Restless Development can establish a culture of safeguarding at all levels throughout the organisation and communities where we work.

The safety of our people has taken precedence during the COVID-19 pandemic. As an agency we were swift in responding to concerns from staff members, volunteers and stakeholders. We ensured that all of our people returned to their home countries where it was safe to do so, including our 50 overseas volunteers on the ICS programme. We continued to support our people with COVID preparedness and offered expertise when a response was necessary. We continue to support staff as a first responder as well as offering ongoing psychosocial support.

Restless Development has seen a considerable **decrease in the number of safeguarding related incidents during the 2019/20 period**. This could be due to numerous factors including the COVID-19 pandemic reducing face-to-face activities internationally and a reduced capacity globally. However, we have seen a lot of progress in the area of safeguarding in this period.

This year our safeguarding preparedness was owned by our hub leadership teams. We have shifted the ownership of safeguarding away from a centralised system towards a more tailored approach of case management and incident response. Hub safeguarding working groups have been pivotal in leading operations towards safe programming whilst ensuring staff receive appropriate support. Each Hub Director is a Lead Safeguarding Officer.

We have a **Code of Conduct** which provides guidance for all staff and volunteers on the standards we expect them to uphold. We have a wide variety of prohibited behaviours which include sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. Our [Code of Conduct](#) is available to view online.

We also have a [whistleblowing](#) process as part of our full set of safety, security and safeguarding policies. A confidential email provides a safe means to raise concerns outside of main reporting lines.

A review of our safeguarding processes was conducted in 2019 and made a series of recommendations to build expertise and capacity in the agency. A commitment to implement 75% of the recommendations has been achieved.

Programme design and implementation:

At the heart of our [Programme Principles](#) is a commitment to do no harm to those we work with. Prevention of harm is a primary objective of our safeguarding principle, throughout programme design, inception and implementation. Our national and programme level risk assessment templates guide our teams through a thorough process of consulting relevant stakeholders; identifying and prioritising risks and threats; and planning mitigation. One final step is a commitment to share the findings with our staff and young leaders.

Dynamic accountability and transparency:

Accountability and transparency are core values of Restless Development. We want everyone we work with, especially young people, to be engaged and informed participants in all we do. Radical Transparency is one part of our [Dynamic Accountability model](#).

We share a wide variety of documents and information relating to governance, finance, programmes, policies and performance through a dedicated [accountability](#) page on our website. This also includes organisation commitments, such as those underpinning our anti-racism work; key principles guiding our work such as on gender and the environment; our code of conduct and employee handbook so that we are transparent on our internal operations; our global salary

scales; and minutes from our trustee meetings.

We also commit to sharing information with individuals through our [Open Information Policy](#), which clearly sets out the information we will make publicly available, either on our website or by request (including in other languages or formats to ensure accessibility). It also sets out exceptions, why these are exceptions and the appeals process if individuals are not satisfied with the decision and response they have received. Staff are trained on our Open Information Policy on an annual basis as part of our all staff reinduction to ensure they are confident and equipped to manage requests from our stakeholders and to proactively share information we commit to making available.

We take part in the International [Aid Transparency Initiative \(ATI\)](#), a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative that seeks to improve the transparency of aid, development, and humanitarian resources in order to increase their effectiveness in tackling poverty.

Supporting local organisations:

Over the past year we have accelerated our strategic commitment to strengthen youth civil society. We are responding to what youth civil society tells us they need through our youth-led research ([‘Shifting the Power’](#)) by bringing donors, young leaders and many more together to envision new ways of supporting this dynamic sector as leaders, not recipients of change.

Data Protection:

Restless Development takes protecting the privacy of individuals we work with seriously and takes all reasonable steps to ensure their information is secure. It's important that they feel completely comfortable and confident that their personal information is safe in our care. We have a [Privacy Statement](#) which sets out how we will meet our responsibilities to keep personal data safe and secure

Our International Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible and have ownership for ensuring we are acting in accordance with our legal requirements in the countries we operate in. They have designated the implementation and delivery of our Data Protection Policy to our Senior Leadership Team. They are responsible for ensuring this Data Protection Policy is implemented, ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities within the Policy and are effectively equipped to meet these responsibilities.

All staff within Restless Development are responsible for the understanding and implementation of the guidelines. Failure of individual staff members or volunteers to comply with our policies will result in disciplinary action. We will ensure all individuals receive training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.