

Hivos

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: 17 February 2020

To: 28 February 2022

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

The Hague, 08 March 2022
H.E. António Guterres
Secretary-General United Nations
New York, NY 10017 USA

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I am pleased to confirm that Stichting Hivos 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,



Michel Farkas
Acting Executive Director

Part II. Description of Actions

Human Rights

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

Hivos promotes human rights through its mission, which is to amplify and connect voices that promote social and environmental justice and challenge power imbalances. Hivos particularly empowers marginalized rightsholders to raise their voice and demand freedom of choice. Human rights are at the heart of Hivos' three impact areas: Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI), Climate Justice and Civic Rights in a Digital Age. Key programs through which Hivos supports rights-holders include:

- We Lead, an innovative and far-reaching program that aims to strengthen the influence and position of young women whose sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRH-R) are neglected the most
- Free to be Me, which builds and maintains a movement of self-confident and diverse LGBTIQ+ organizations and activists who advocate for their human and socio-economic rights.
- All Eyes on the Amazon, which supports indigenous communities to protect and defends their territories and to hold state and corporate actors to account for human rights violations and illegal deforestation.
- Voices for Just Climate Action, which aims to ensure a just response to climate change by strengthening the influence of people poverty and of underrepresented groups such as Indigenous peoples, the rural and urban poor, women and youth.
- Digital Defenders Partnership (DDP), which provides holistic security support to human rights defenders under digital threat.
- Resource of Open Minds (R.O.O.M.), which supports artists, culture and media producers, and creative hubs in particular in Africa to freely express themselves on social justice issues.

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

Hivos' work is guided by its values: Freedom & dignity, Responsible citizenship, Self-determination & diversity, Equality & justice and Sustainable use of our planet's resources. These values are put into practice in our work through policies and practices designed to promote human rights in our operations and to prevent complicity in abuses. These include our safeguarding, sexual harassment and integrity policies, our whistleblower and complaints procedures, code of conduct, corporate social responsibility policy and our Gender Equality and Diversity Inclusion strategy. These documents can be accessed on our website <https://hivos.org/who-we-are/our-organization/integrity/>.

Labour

UNICEF Netherlands, Save the Children Netherlands and the Stop Child Labour coalition, and partner organisations and country offices in India, Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam, together the Work: No Child's Business Alliance, work jointly towards our shared goal: children and youth are free from child labour and enjoy their rights to quality education and (future) decent work. Hivos is the lead organization and hosting the program management unit.

We work in six countries: Cote d'Ivoire, India, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam. In these countries we identified five sectors with a high incidence of child labour: garment, textiles and footwear, gold and mining, natural stones, cocoa and the informal sector including domestic and agricultural work. The Alliance joins forces with communities, schools, governments, civil society organizations, trade unions and private actors, bringing sustainable solutions for children and their families.

It is our strong believe that to combat child labour the international community – governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and the private sector – have a role to play. Important developments are underway, like Human Rights Due Diligence legislation for supply chains, but the problem of child labour is more complex and broader than just the international supply chain. An area-based approach is prerequisite to reach all children: not only the ones that are working in supply chains but all children in the area that are trapped in some form of work that interferes with their right to education, the right to learn and to play, and enjoy their childhood.

Which is why we believe in an integrated approach of 1) investing in quality formal, full-time education; 2)

supporting and promoting the norm that children should not work but be in school; and 3) enhancing company and government responsibilities to respect human rights in general and children's rights in particular.

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

In fighting child labour it is of utmost importance to uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. When adults can organize themselves and successfully bargain for higher wages and better working conditions, they do no longer need to compete with cheap child labour. It also works the other way around: where child labour is no longer accepted at a large sufficient scale and all children are going to school, adults will have better working opportunities. As workers' rights are being realized parents can earn and children can learn. Parents who are earning a living income are able to support their family and ensure that their children can go to school instead of work. If parents have a living income there is no need for children to make an extra contribution. Families will not depend on the child's income for survival.

Contrary to what many may think, poverty is often not the decisive factor in pushing children into work. Research shows that children's wages contribute only marginally to the family's income. Child labour also negatively affects adults' wages, thus creating even more poverty. "Child labour is most prevalent where adults cannot access their rights to decent work" (ILO 2018). Key reasons why children work and don't attend school include social norms and traditions, social exclusion, discrimination, and their parents having a low income. The lack of decent work for adults, weak labour laws, poor enforcement by governments, and failing labour inspections also contribute to the persistence of child labour.

The abovementioned misconceptions require a change in behavioural and social norms, which in turn means that all actors, including entire communities, civil servants and employers, need to transcend their political, economic, cultural, class, caste and other differences in favour of children's rights.

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Elimination of child labour and realization of ILO core labour standards incl. elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour are interlinked. While most people are familiar with the fact that child labour refers to children working under the minimum working age (ILO Convention 138), some might overlook the fact that the definition of child labour includes any children under the age of 18 engaging in hazardous work (ILO Convention 182). Therefore it is imperative to promote decent work for young people of legal working age. Moreover, it remains important to prevent and eliminate all other human rights violations at work. This is a combined responsibility of companies (responsibility to respect) and governments (obligation to protect).

The private sector has an important role to play in the prevention and elimination of child labour. We urge companies to display responsible business conduct by improving their due diligence processes and implementing Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP). This requires companies to focus on labour and human rights, based on international standards such as the ILO Conventions 138 and 182, UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) guidelines and the Children's Rights and Business Principles.

Governments should act in support of the elimination of child labour, monitor companies' behaviour towards child labour and fulfil their duty to protect children's rights by setting relevant policies and regulations on due diligence. We expect governments to hold companies accountable in line with the OECD guidelines, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Within the European Union (EU), several countries are working on or already have mandatory due diligence legislation for companies. We urge countries that have not (yet) implemented such rules to formulate ambitious Due Diligence legalisation that demands that companies across all sectors implement Human Rights Due Diligence systems, and ensure adequate monitoring systems are put in place.

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour

No child should be working - 160 million children between 5 and 17 years old are involved in child labour worldwide, accounting for nearly 10 percent of the world's children. Half of these children are aged 5 to 11 years. Moreover, almost half of these children, 79 million, are working in hazardous labour. No child should be forced to work or be in child labour. All work done by children under the age of 15 and dangerous work done by children under the age of 18 is considered child labour. We believe that all children who are out of school are potential child labourers.

Every child has the right to quality education and (future) decent work - Providing access to education for all children is one of the most effective strategies for eradicating child labour. Ensuring quality formal education and preparing children to enter decent youth employment will lead to development and better opportunities for everyone: the children, their families and the communities.

Together we can combat child labour - Through our area-based approach we tackle child labour at the root and bring sustainable change in the communities. With our Child's Rights and Business Principles we encourage (international) companies to assume their responsibility and help them in finding solutions for eliminating child labour in their supply chains. We also seek cooperation with governments, who have an obligation to protect child rights and are key in setting and reinforcing relevant policies and legislation regarding child labour, CSR, education, youth economic empowerment and social security.

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

We ensure that girls and boys, women and men - without distinctions of caste, religion, disability, or any other forms of discrimination and exclusion - participate and hold equitable and meaningful influence in all activities including decision-making. We make sure they feel safe and empowered to share their views and inputs. We engage men and boys as key stakeholders in promoting gender equality and inclusion and addressing gender-specific discrimination and disadvantages.

Environment

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

At the programmatic level, Hivos has prioritized Climate Justice as one of our three main impact areas. Our Climate Justice programs and strategy have as a vision: Justice, equity and human rights are at the core of global climate action, which is grounded in the priorities and agency of those disproportionately impacted by climate change and responds to their needs.

By putting key rightsholders and their priorities at the core of our work, Hivos promotes local and regional climate solutions that not only aim to address climate change impacts and mitigate GHG emissions, but that also consider and prevent any environmental and social consequences such solutions may have in local communities and ecosystems.

We are currently rolling out the Climate Justice agenda in 17 countries through eight key programs: Voices for Just Climate Action, GreenWorks; ENERGIA; : All Eyes on the Amazon; the Amazon Indigenous Health Route; RUAF - Global Partnership on Urban Agriculture and Food Systems; Food Change Labs; and The West & Central Africa Alliance for Biodigester Promotion .

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

Between 2008-2018, Hivos continuously measured its carbon footprint and offset its emissions. The organization compensated for its carbon footprint through the Cambodia Biodigester Program (2008-2011) and the Gold Standard Verified Emission Reduction in 2012-2018. We are currently measuring our carbon footprint for years 2019-2021 and plan to adopt a new Carbon Footprint reduction plan in 2022. This is in line with our new Strategic Compass, in which Hivos commits to reducing and compensating its carbon footprint, including a target to reduce flights by 40% in 2021, compared to pre-COVI19 levels, followed by a stronger reduction later.

Programmatically, Hivos and its projects also promote greater environmental responsibility globally. For example in our program All Eyes on the Amazon, we pay much attention to the role companies play in the destruction of the Amazon. We tend to find the link between companies in NL & Europa and the effect their practices have on the Amazon. Part of our efforts aim at Reshaping climate narratives at local, national and international levels. Created by the voices and movements of key rightsholders, these narratives connect to peoples' emotions and inspire behavioral change. This focus area harnesses the power of diverse citizen and civil society stakeholders to change dominant or mainstream narratives that legitimize the status quo and existing power dynamics. By working on strategic communications targeting popular culture, and amplifying diverse rightsholders' voices, we aim to "move the middle," mobilize people across the world, and strengthen the global climate movement. Some of the programs that work towards this purpose are: Voices for Just Climate Action, All Eyes on the Amazon, African Crossroads, and ENERGIA.

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

As a key strategy to promote climate justice and ensure a just distribution of resources, Hivos advocates for - and facilitates access to- climate finance, technology and markets by key rightsholders groups in the Global South. We believe climate finance, technologies, and decarbonization plans and policies must swiftly, adequately and fairly support the people and communities most affected by climate change and enable effective climate action at local levels. In this context, Hivos promotes investment in local climate solutions driven by priority groups, and stimulates job creation within countries' and regions' transitions to climate-compatible development pathways. Key programs through which we support this just energy and economic transition are:

- The GreenWorks program, implemented by an alliance led by Hivos, contributes to climate change mitigation by creating sustainable business and job opportunities for more than 9000 young women and men in the green economy in North Africa. To this end, the program focuses on: i) supporting the creation of "innovation clusters" that enable businesses in the green and digital economies to scale; ii) enhancing the capacities of Business Development Support Organizations and Employability Hubs to create jobs and develop private sector activities beyond program support; iii) training youth in 21st-century skills to afford them economic opportunities in future-oriented green sectors; iv) enabling social enterprises operating in the green economies to scale their businesses and create new jobs.
- ENERGIA: Hosted by Hivos since 2016, aims to contribute to universal, equal and equitable access to and control over sustainable energy for all, putting women at the center of its efforts. To do this, ENERGIA implements multi-year programs that: i) contribute to energy access for all by scaling up the delivery of energy services through women-led micro and small businesses; ii) advocate for and provide technical support to mainstreaming gender approaches in energy policies and programs; iii) provide the evidence base for improving energy investment effectiveness through research; iv) raise awareness and enhance knowledge of issues related to gender and energy through networking and knowledge products.
- The West & Central Africa Alliance for Biodigester Promotion (WCA Alliance): the WCA alliance, supported by the African Biodigester Component (ABC), is a consortium that aims to boost the growth and sustainability of a commercial biodigester sector in eight Sub-Saharan African countries. Implemented by Hivos and SNV, the WCA Alliance-ABC will strengthen the current intergovernmental framework that is addressing the poverty, energy needs and resilience of their populations by establishing national biogas programs in the member states.

Anti-Corruption

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

Hivos has zero tolerance for any form of corruption, and actively promotes anti-corruption efforts through its programs. Anti-corruption is at the heart of our efforts to promote transparency & accountability in the relations between governments, private sector actors and civil society. This includes our long track record on supporting open government efforts with a particular emphasis on preventing corruption in public expenditure through programs such as Making All Voices Count, Open Up Contracting and current projects such as Voices and Actions for Accountability in Malawi (VAAM), Openness 4 Covid-19 Response and Recovery in Kenya (O4C19) and Protecting Rights, Openness and Transparency Enhancing Civic Transformation (PROTECT).

Until 2020 Hivos implemented a 5-year program as a partnership between Article 19, IIED and Dutch MOFA to ensure citizens have equal and inclusive access to public goods and services and can meaningfully engage in public resource allocation and policy decisions. The project was implemented in Bolivia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Philippines, Tanzania

When governments spend taxpayers' money on contracts with private companies to provide public goods, services and infrastructure, there is too often room for bad planning, mismanagement and corruption. We worked with local civil society, media, activists and businesses to develop their ability to conduct oversight of these deals. They could effectively advocate to change policies and practices, or start strategic litigation, so public contracting became more transparent and accountable. The advocacy initiatives of 18 civil society partners have influenced authorities to take concrete steps to make public contracting processes more transparent, accountable and efficient.

Our code of conduct, integrity policy and our corporate social responsibility policy prohibit engagement in any form of corruption by Hivos staff and partners, and our whistleblower and complaints procedures and our standard purchase conditions establish clear and binding procedures to address corruption risks in our work.

Recently, Kenya's Nandi County has forged partnership with Hivos East Africa to champion open contracting as a critical pillar in its open government commitment.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Please use the box below to include the most relevant qualitative and/or quantitative indicators to measure the outcome of the activities described in Part II above.

Examples of measurement of outcomes include:

Number of new UN Global Compact business participants resulting from your organization's promotional efforts

- Our former Executive Director Edwin Huizing videotaped a statement about our commitment to the Global Compact. <https://twitter.com/GlobalCompactNL/status/1451127019031379969>

Expertise provided by your organization to further the aims of Global Compact Local Network in your country

- In the Netherlands Hivos uses its expertise to influence debate and policies & practices from government and companies. In the last two years these efforts included:
 - In May 2021, we petitioned Hivos' pension fund to stop investing in companies that make the people and planet sick. Obviously, this is not only because of us, but debate in NL is changing and our pension fund made some first adjustments.
 - In 2021, we co-created a magazine about the importance of SRHR. The magazine was presented to Dutch parliamentarians: <https://www.hivos.nl/assets/2021/05/SRGR-magazine.pdf>
 - Hivos is an active member of the Netherlands Human Rights Network (Breed Mensenrechten Overleg, or BMO). The BMO is a platform consisting of 17 organisations that work together to further the promotion of human rights in Dutch policies. Its current members are: Amnesty International; COC Nederland; Cordaid; Defence for Children-ECPAT; Free Press Unlimited; Hivos; International Campaign for Tibet; Justice and Peace; Arisa; Lawyers for Lawyers; Nederlands Helsinki Comité; Nederlands Juristen Comité voor de Mensenrechten; Oxfam Novib; Peace Brigades International; PAX; IUCN NL; Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). See also: <https://www.bmoweb.nl/>. In 2021, BMO launched a pledge for human rights at the time of parliamentary elections in the Netherlands and actively sought Dutch politicians to sign on.
 - Hivos and Cordaid launched Making Civic Space Resilient. In the report both organizations examine how people around the world deal with oppression and how they restore human dignity after it has been violated. The report aims to show people from different parts of civil society what can be done to increase their space to operate. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, we consulted our partners to take stock of the different ways the pandemic – and government measures to fight it – have affected civil society organizations (CSOs). In particular, the room they have to campaign for a more fair distribution of power, income and influence.
- When it comes to our Climate Justice work, Hivos is very active in the Netherlands in promoting the principles of justice and equity in addressing the climate crisis. Examples are:
 - Hivos is one of the initiators of the NL Energy Compact, a partnership of companies, governments and NGOs. The Compact was launched in September 2021 to accelerate the transition to sustainable energy in developing countries and thus fight climate change and poverty.
 - Hivos co-signed an op/ed piece, published in Dutch newspaper Trouw. In the piece (published before the COP26), we warn against how failing Dutch climate policies severely affects people around the world.
 - We regularly sign statements and letters addressed to Dutch politicians and cabinet members. We did so in the period leading up to the COP26 and during cabinet formations in the Netherlands.
- Hivos uses its vast network and the expertise of its partners to uncover human rights abuses. One example is the study, Indigenous Peoples and access to the justice system in Maranhão, which was the result of numerous conversations and lengthy research. It was carried out by the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB) and Hivos with the support of the Coordination of

Indigenous Coalitions and Organizations of Maranhão (COAPIMA), Greenpeace Brazil, and the Coalition of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB). The investigation shows the degree to which Indigenous Peoples lack access to the judiciary system. The report points out shocking omissions in preventing and investigating crimes against the Indigenous People of Maranhão.

- Each year, Hivos mobilizes the Dutch public to take to the streets and defend human rights. We are supporter of the Women's March, joined the Climate March and are part of several Pride marches. All bring thousands together to raise their voice and demand justice on a variety of issues.

Concrete actions taken by UN Global Compact business participants with whom your organization engaged regarding their COP

- Nothing to report

Partnerships formalized with mutual aims to advance the UN Global Compact principles

As mentioned elsewhere recently Kenya's Nandi Country has forged partnership with Hivos East Africa to champion open contracting as a critical pillar in its open government commitment.

The WNCB program partners are part of several initiatives and partnerships to address these principles. We are part of Dutch sector agreements, which are voluntary multi-stakeholder approaches to promote international responsible business conduct. These agreements involve partnerships between businesses, trade associations, government, unions and NGOs. Together, these partners work to identify and prevent abuses like exploitation, animal suffering and environmental damage. Partners are actively engaged to advance the implementation of due diligence in conformity with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECD Guidelines) and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) in Dutch 'high-risk' sectors. Hivos took active part in the agreements in the following sectors: garments and textile and gold. More indirect through partners in the WNCB program we are also involved in insurance and pension funds and natural stones/TruStone. Moreover, WNCB partners are part of the Dutch Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (DISCO); a public-private partnership active in the Dutch cocoa and chocolate sector working to sustainably improve the livelihoods of current and future cocoa farming families. Signatories of the initiative are jointly responsible for reaching the shared vision for a sustainable cocoa sector.

Hivos launched a 5-year program 'Free to be Me' in early-2021 (program page). The program is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the 'Power of Voices' subsidy framework to strengthen civil society. Consortium partners are: Positive Vibes, ILGA World, and Hivos as lead party. Global Interfaith Network (GIN), Workplace Pride and Sogicampaigns are our technical partners. It is being implemented in fourteen countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This program in particular addresses socio-economic issues: Free to be me is the first program of its kind to pave the way for targeted lobby and advocacy to get SOCIESC issues mainstreamed in economic development programs. Although a disproportional number of LGBTIQ+ people are poor, unemployed and economically disadvantaged, few actors have addressed this either sporadically or structurally. Our alliance aims to fill this gap through a combination of national-level approaches and foundational work at the global level.

Another example is our ENERGIA's Gender and Energy Compact. Hivos believes that sustainable change will only happen if people undertake concerted and collective action, we bring together all relevant stakeholders in effective multi-actor initiatives. They allow rightsholders and their organizations, government and business representatives, creatives and technologists to co-create fair and inclusive solutions to complex problems. Having started out as a small group of individuals, over the years ENERGIA has created a vast network with a variety of actors and stakeholders and has forged multiple alliances to advance gender inclusion in the energy sector. Hivos' collaboration with ENERGIA works towards universal, equal and equitable access to and control over sustainable energy for all by putting women at the center of its multi-actor initiatives with over 30 partners worldwide.