



96/3 Commercial Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6LX
Scotland, UK
+44.131.662.5160 tel
+44.131.662.6648 fax

mercycorps.org.uk

UN Global Compact: Communication on Engagement

Period covered by the Communication on Engagement:

From: 27th March 2020

To: 26th March 2022

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Executive Director

To our stakeholders,

I am pleased to confirm that Mercy Corps Europe 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.

Mercy Corps is a global team of humanitarians, working together to support communities - and the most affected with them - to move from crisis to opportunity in the face of conflict and climate change. Our mission is to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping build secure, productive and just communities; through our efforts to achieve this mission, we remain well-aligned with the principles set out by the UN Global Compact.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organisation like ours.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McKean".

Michael McKean

Interim Executive Director, Mercy Corps Europe

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

**Part II. Description of Actions; and
Part III. Measurement of Outcomes**

Mercy Corps is a global team of humanitarians working together on the front lines of crisis, disaster, poverty, and climate change to create a world where everyone can prosper. Beyond delivering aid to meet urgent needs, we develop long-term solutions to make lasting change possible.

Mercy Corps supports the UN Global Compact's Principles: in the work that we deliver; in the way that we work; and, in the partnerships we forge.

The period since our last Communication on Engagement has been defined by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, greater levels of conflict and the ever-intensifying climate crisis. A review of our globally applicable strategy was conducted in 2021, culminating in a strategic framework to guide Mercy Corps' work over the next decade – known as our Pathway to Possibility. This document sets out the central elements of Mercy Corps' approach including: what drives us, what outcomes we seek and how we will achieve them. Mercy Corps supports communities - and the most affected within them - to move from crisis to opportunity in the face of conflict and climate change.

As part of our commitment to climate change, Mercy Corps is merging with Energy 4 Impact to increase access to climate-smart, sustainable energy. Energy 4 Impact is a non-profit operating in Africa that works to reduce poverty by accelerating access to clean energy. By joining forces with Energy 4 Impact, with its strong portfolio and like-minded strength in market-based approaches, Mercy Corps will have greater opportunities to integrate energy access into our work globally to benefit the communities we serve. Collaboration is at the centre of what we do and by coming together on sustainable energy solutions, Energy 4 Impact and Mercy Corps can help unlock human and economic potential, kickstart market recovery and growth, and pave the way toward greater stability and resilience.

Mercy Corps' increased focus on climate change has encouraged a number of prominent projects with water sustainability, environmental disasters and pollution at their cores. Mercy Corps has over 40 years of experience in the most challenging contexts in the world and we know that, when disaster strikes, the effects can be devastating. We are well-positioned to provide urgent lifesaving relief and meet people's basic needs. Our climate commitments encourage us to work towards integrated, long-term solutions. For example:

- **SAFER – Goma, DRC.** Communities in the Congo are frequently caught up in violent clashes between armed groups, which can leave them suddenly homeless or without basic necessities, such as clean water. At the same time, the threat of floods and other environmental disasters looms large over the region. When the active volcano Mount Nyiragongo erupted in May 2021, more than 400,000 people were displaced from their homes. Mercy Corps leads other organisations as part of the SAFER Consortium, a life-changing group supporting the most vulnerable communities. Since November 2020, Mercy Corps has provided assistance to over 370,000 people in Goma, including access to safe drinking water and emergency cash and vouchers to help families in Goma purchase essentials like food and medicine. In FY21, our specialist early warning system alerted over 76,000 households about impending humanitarian crises, including the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, allowing families to prepare in advance.

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

- **Timor-Leste Pollution.** The scale of the plastic problem in Timor-Leste is enormous. One billion plastic bags and 125 million plastic bottles are used and discarded every year in the island nation, roughly 12.5 million kilograms of plastic waste annually. Communities struggle to deal with waste burned throughout the city and thrown onto roadsides and beaches. As well as risks to their own health, the plastics are harming marine life and biodiversity by threatening the country's natural resources. At the same time, the nation is also contending with the threat of the COVID-19 spread. With an already weak healthcare infrastructure, 72% of the nation does not have access to hand washing facilities with water and soap. Mercy Corps worked with local businesses, using an innovative recycling technique to turn plastic waste into a tool to fight against COVID-19. We recycled over 100,000 plastic bottles, transforming them into community handwashing stations.
- **Twinings – Guatemala.** Already dealing with COVID-19, a series of hurricanes and landslides came at the worst time possible for cardamom producers in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. The storms caused around 1.7million people to suffer major damages to their housing, roads and land. On top of this, many saw their crops completely destroyed by the storms, meaning that they were unable to even make a living. Mercy Corps worked closely with farmers in Guatemala to rebuild and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Mercy Corps, with the help of Twinings, worked with cardamom producers, distributing personal protection equipment, installing handwashing stations for more than 2,000 farmers, and disseminating information about COVID-19 prevention measures. At the beginning of 2021, we were able to resume our planned project to help cardamom producers improve their livelihoods.

The Principles

Over the past two years, Mercy Corps Europe has carried out a number of activities in support of the UN Global Compact's ten Principles.

Human Rights:

Under the **Human Rights** pillar, the projects we deliver around the world continue to further our mission of alleviating suffering, poverty and oppression by helping build secure, productive and just communities. As stated in our [2020 – 2021 Annual Report](#), while our role as a humanitarian and development organisation in responding to the numerous crises around the world might seem obvious, it has been more essential than ever that we step up at increased scale, effectiveness and efficiency. Having reached 50 million people over the last year as a global organisation, we're striving more than ever to harness new partnerships, innovations, technology, ideas and improved ways of working to enable us to further increase our impact in many of the world's toughest environments.

The past two years will no doubt be reflected on as filled with pain and difficulty throughout the world. Mercy Corps has worked diligently throughout this time in an effort to further our mission and assist those suffering. In Palestine, as COVID-19 restrictions meant already vulnerable people were unable to work and earn income to feed their families, our team provided emergency cash assistance to help families buy food and essential goods. In Ethiopia, when lockdowns were stopping people from working, we helped to employ newly-unemployed people as cleaners within office blocks, not only helping them get back into work but making spaces safer to reopen for everyone.

Additionally, in March 2021, we marked ten years of the conflict in Syria – where over 6.2 million people are internally displaced, around a third of them children. Mercy Corps has been working with communities since the start of this conflict, providing clean water, food and urgent healthcare supplies where they were not previously available.

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

Mercy Corps also witnessed deeply distressing events in Afghanistan; with the shift to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan government we have now layered on the impact of our Afghanistan operations and programme activity being significantly paused for 6 months and updated our forecasts. It is a country on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe and more than 3.5 million Afghans have been displaced from their homes. With women and children accounting for 46% of all civilian casualties in the country in the first half of 2021, this leaves us gravely concerned. The international community must stay committed to the future of Afghanistan, as continued diplomatic engagement and international assistance over the near and long-term is absolutely essential to meet the growing needs of the population, now and in the future.

Being conscious of *how* we deliver our humanitarian and development programmes around the world is as important as the projects themselves. It is our responsibility to ensure team members, operations and programmes do no harm to the people and communities we work with or put anyone, especially vulnerable populations, at risk of abuse or exploitation. We take this responsibility seriously and we continue to invest in and strengthen our approach to safeguarding. We are committed to putting survivors first, providing them with the support they need, ensuring transparency with donors and local communities, and taking corrective action. For additional information about **safeguarding**, please [download our Global Safeguarding Report FY21](#), which provides an overview of our agency-wide approach to safeguarding, as well as our case numbers for our fiscal year 2021 (July 2020 - June 2021). As another example, we publish an annual [Modern Slavery Statement](#) on our website, which highlights the steps we are taking to ensure that modern slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in the supply chain that provide our goods and services.

Mercy Corps signed up to the The Misconduct Disclosure Scheme to address the specific problem of known sexual abusers moving between organisations undetected.

Key policies relevant to this area are: [Ethics Complaint and Whistleblowing Policy](#); [Child Safeguarding Policy](#); [Anti-Trafficking Policy](#). More policies are available on [Our Website](#).

Labour:

Operating in around 40 countries and with nearly 6,000 team members, the **Labour** pillar is equally important to Mercy Corps. Over the past two years, we have continued to improve the work environment for our team members. We are at our best when we bring the full diversity of our identities, experiences and perspectives together to tackle the world's complex challenges.

Localisation

We have committed to a localisation effort at Mercy Corps. Over the past six months, the Localisation Core Team and global teams have collaborated to advance localisation, representing diverse roles, teams, and backgrounds, and have been engaged in conversations about how to address historic and long-standing power imbalances within our organisation and sector. They've also explored ways to enable localised solutions for stronger and more sustained impact for communities around the world. One of our statistics that we are particularly proud of is that 86% of our team members are local to where they live and work.

There are a number of upcoming localisation learning workshops where staff can learn more on this ongoing process.

Gender, Diversity and Inclusion

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

Mercy Corps works to build a better world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, free of exploitation, harassment and bias. Toward that end, we have made it a global priority to assess — and where necessary strengthen — our culture, policies and procedures related to gender, diversity and inclusion, as well as sexual misconduct in any form. We are committed to creating an inclusive, psychologically and physically safe and accountable work environment where every voice is respected and heard. Getting this right is critical to achieving our vision for transformational change.

Achieving this takes hard work and determined effort. Our multi-year **Gender, Diversity and Inclusion initiative** ensures broad ownership across the organisation and in our programmes, and has been an important part of our determination over the past two years to further improve the working environment for our team members. We are committed to strengthening our culture and identifying steps to building an even more inclusive work environment.

Mercy Corps' Gender Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy (2020-2023) was published in October 2020. It lays out a plan to remove barriers, address root causes of inequalities and model the power of diversity and gender equality in who we are and how we show up as a partner. It was a joint effort by the Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion TSU (GESI) Teams. This strategy is a call for collective action for all of Mercy Corps to address gender inequality, lack of diversity and social exclusion in our organisation and in our programs. This strategy maps out steps for three years and what success looks like on a long-term basis. Helping achieve this vision with the women, girls, men, boys, LGBTQI+ persons, and gender nonconforming persons in communities where we work requires a cohesive and coordinated approach across teams and functions, signaling the critical importance of shared responsibility to achieve true gender equality, diversity and social inclusion. It also lays out a framework, definitions and key advancements we have made in both our programs and our operations, as well as explaining why the two are inextricably linked.

[Mercy Corps' Vision for Racial and Ethnic Diversity](#) was published in Summer 2020. It highlights Mercy Corps' aim to diversify our global leadership team, foster an inclusive workplace environment to support diversity, and create equitable pathways for diverse talent.

Onboarding and Hiring

We are committed to the continued strengthening of our application, interview, reference and onboarding processes. We have implemented processes and procedures for vetting new team members including safeguarding-screening questions for both candidates and references. Team members who are terminated for engaging in sexual misconduct or exploitation are ineligible for rehire at Mercy Corps. We will inform any employer who seeks a reference or employment check from us that this is the case.

Key policies relevant to this area are: [Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Beneficiaries and Community Members Policy](#); [Sexual Misconduct Workplace Policy](#); [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

Environment:

The **Environment Pillar** is of great importance to Mercy Corps and has recently had increased relevance with our work. We acknowledge that our work to support some of the most vulnerable communities on the planet can also have a negative impact on the environment. When we work in remote environments, our work needs electricity, and in the most remote locations, that electricity has traditionally come from diesel generators. The aid industry is waking up to the need to operate responsibly amidst our climate crisis, and Mercy Corps' work with clean energy (for instance, switching to solar panels for energy generation in off-grid locations) is positioning us at the forefront of this challenge.

Mercy Corps made an important commitment to reduce our own climate impact. Mercy Corps will cut our carbon footprint in half by 2030. We have also set an interim target of a 25% reduction by 2024. These reductions will be measured against our baseline in FY19, and address all of our activity as an organisation, from buying goods and services to travel and fuel consumption. There is no greater collective challenge than the climate crisis. Mercy Corps is committed to playing our part in helping to reduce emissions, alongside our core work of helping communities adapt urgently to the changing climate, and expanding access to climate-smart, sustainable energy.

Merger with Energy 4 Impact

Energy 4 Impact and Mercy Corps merged to increase access to climate-smart, sustainable energy, improving the lives of millions of people around the world. Through this merger, Mercy Corps intends to plug Energy 4 Impact's market-oriented delivery of energy access into new geographies, and a broader range of programmes, unleashing energy to drive forward agricultural development, economic growth, humanitarian recovery and climate resilience, building initiatives where energy access is the engine for successful sustainable development.

Cop26

The UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) took place in Glasgow towards the end of 2021. The real focus for Mercy Corps at COP26 was to call attention to the urgent needs in the communities where we work who are already dealing with the immediate impacts of the climate emergency, and to highlight the inexcusable gap in funding for those most vulnerable to climate, particularly in fragile and conflict affected places.

Pathway to Possibility – our strategy

Mercy Corps considers the climate crisis to be an immediate threat to all humanity and has seen first-hand how it is disproportionately affecting the communities we work with. We are committed to playing our parts in reducing emissions in addition to our core work of helping communities around the globe adapt urgently to climate change, as well as expanding access to sustainable energy. As mentioned above, a review of our globally applicable strategy was conducted in 2021, which culminated in a strategic framework to guide Mercy Corps' work over the next decade – known as Vision 2030 - which puts helping communities adapt to climate change at the centre of our work.

Climate Commitments

In 2020, Mercy Corps signed the InterAction-led NGO Climate Compact, alongside 30 other organisations, intended to spur large-scale change across the international aid and development sector and support other global goals like the Sustainable Development Goals and UN Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Mercy Corps has also signed the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations, which provides a clear vision and principles to guide humanitarian action in the face of the climate and environment crises.

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax

Mercy Corps' Environmental policy has been in force since 1st July 2018 and is being revised on an annual basis.

Anti-Corruption:

Mercy Corps has policies and procedures to prevent fraud, bribery, corruption, terrorism and money laundering. There is a zero-tolerance approach to fraud. The Anti-Corruption policy is applicable to team members, consultants and partners. The policy is not just a simple statement of no-tolerance, but it includes more formal guidance and steps that individuals can and should take when confronted with such issues. Over the past two years, we have strengthened our Ethics team, and clarified the way that suspicions of corruption can be reported under the **Anti-Corruption Pillar**.

Reporting

The Integrity Hotline comprises two different reporting avenues. The first is an email address: integrityhotline@mercycorps.org. The second is [our third-party reporting platform](#) where individuals can anonymously report online, or by phone.

Reports can be made directly to the Ethics and Compliance Department which has been significantly strengthened in the past two years. The Ethics and Compliance Department oversees the Intake and Investigations Team, which includes at least six dedicated full time case managers and investigators. The Team is tasked with the intake and investigation of all reports of ethics violations, including fraud and corruption, safeguarding complaints, and global human resources matters involving code of conduct violations. This team also oversees the Integrity Hotline. In addition to the headquarters-based team, Mercy Corps has field Ethics and Assurance Officers in several countries.

Departmental Changes

There have also been a number of new hires and additional committees in 2021 and 2022 which are involved with Mercy Corps' ethics, safeguarding and anti-corruption endeavours. A new Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer (CECO) was appointed in October 2020. The CECO is responsible for the oversight of the newly formed, standalone Ethics and Compliance Department and reports to the CEO and Board of Directors. Since June 2021, the CECO also oversees the Safeguarding Prevention team. The global team now comprises 21 team members (with vacancies currently being advertised at the time of writing), which includes a focus on strengthening the anti-fraud and safeguarding prevention teams. The Global Director of Fraud and Corruption Prevention has now been appointed.

The Joint Ethics and Safeguarding Committee (JESC) was set up in June 2020 and is responsible for overseeing management and advising the board on all ethics matters. The committee oversees ethics-related policies, including safeguarding, and management's implementation of ethics systems (reporting, investigation, training, accountability, case resolution and annual ethics reporting to the board).

Also in FY21, Mercy Corps introduced a global Community Accountability Reporting Mechanism (CARM) policy which makes it mandatory for all programmes to have systems in place for community members to provide feedback and complaints in a manner that is safe, confidential, transparent, and accessible, enabling Mercy Corps to respond and make any necessary programmatic or safeguarding adaptations and to ensure the safety, security, and empowerment of community members. Key policies related to this area are: [Anti-Bribery Policy](#); [Anti-Corruption Policy](#); [CARM Policy](#) and more information can be found about our suite of ethical policies here: <https://europe.mercycorps.org/en-gb/who-we-are/ethics-policies>.

London Office
2nd Floor | West Wing
The Hop Exchange
24 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TY
+44.203.908.0170 tel

Netherlands Office
The Hague Humanity Hub
Fluwelen Burgwal 58
2511 CJ Den Haag
Netherlands
+31.70.217.10.80 tel

Geneva Office
5th Floor
23 Avenue de France
1202
Geneva
Switzerland

Portland Office
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland OR
97204 USA
+1.503.896.5000 tel
+1.503.896.5011 fax