



**UN Global Compact**

**Communication on Progress (COP)**

**Social Development Direct**

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## 1. Statement of Commitment & Continued Support

I am pleased to reaffirm Social Development Direct's support for the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. With this communication, we express our commitment to making the UN Global Compact and its principles part of the strategy, culture and day-to-day operations of our company, and to engaging in collaborative projects which advance the broader development goals of the United Nations, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals.

The following Communication on Progress describes the ways in which the principles have been embedded into our projects and our day-to-day operations over the past year. Notable achievements include the launch of a new 7-year programme, *What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls- Impact at Scale*, which along with other flagship projects like our *Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub (RSH)* and the *Disability Inclusive Development - Inclusive Futures* programme all aim to create a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world where everyone can realise their human rights and participate fully in social, economic, and political life. Internally, we have expanded our technical focus to include new portfolios in Equal Education and Green Economies and Infrastructure, alongside new strategies for Climate Justice and Digital Inclusion. Following last year's creation of an *Ethnic Diversity and Racial Justice Strategy*, our *Ethnic Diversity and Racial Justice (EDRJ) staff Working Group* continues to drive efforts at enhancing outcomes across the organisation on race and ethnicity, working closely with our other committees including the *Gender, Sexuality and Inclusion Working Group* and *Disability Inclusion Working Group*. For the first time, we collected equality data on protected characteristics to provide a baseline of the make-up of our workforce. This will enable us to identify where we need to focus our resources and set realistic but ambitious targets to increase diversity year on year. Over the past year we also signed up to the *Race to Zero* campaign, committing to halve our greenhouse gas emissions before 2030, achieve net zero emissions before 2050 and disclose our progress on a yearly basis. Finally, we continue to adapt to the rapidly changing world around us by introducing additional family-friendly policies and flexible working arrangements that support our workforce while reducing our impact on the environment.

We continue to be proud to work with partners to advance policies, laws, social norms, and institutions that work for everyone, and to promote a happy, resilient, diverse workforce that feels valued, safe and free to be themselves.

Social Development Direct remains committed to the United Nations Global Compact and its ten principles and we look forward to further strengthening our work in these areas, in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders.



**Sue Griffiths**

**Managing Director, Social Development Direct**

## 2. The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact

### ***Human Rights Principles***

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

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

### ***Labour Principles***

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 Environment Principles

### ***Environmental Principles***

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

Principle 8: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Principle 9: Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies Anti-Corruption Principles, and

### ***Anti-Corruption Principles***

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

## The Sustainable Development Goals



<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

### 3. How The UN Global Compact Principles Inform Our Work

Social Development Direct (SDDirect) incorporates the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles into our business strategies, policies and procedures as well as our general work culture. We codify these commitments into our *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework* and other relevant corporate policies, including our *Anti-bribery and Corruption*, *Safeguarding*, *Conflict of Interest*, *Environment* Policies, among others. We are further inspired by other UK and international duties, including the Ethical Trading Initiative and the UK Government's social value contracting model, through which we seek to assess and select our partners and suppliers on the wider economic, social and environmental benefits they bring by delivering a contract and entering into partnership with us.

We apply our CSR and business conduct standards to the way we serve and work with our clients, partners, and stakeholders around the world. The UN Global Compact's 10 fundamental principles apply to all our employees and collaborators, the Board and Executive Management Group, and all others acting on behalf of the company. Although we do not have subsidiary offices around the world, we make all efforts to ensure we strictly observe the laws of countries in which we work. This Communication on Progress details the specific actions and activities taken from July 2021 to June 2022.

### 4. Description of Actions

#### Human Rights Principles

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

SDDirect work with clients and partners to provide expertise on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) through research, evidence and learning, evaluation, technical assistance and programme design, delivery, and monitoring. Applying a human rights lens to all that we do, we work to build inclusive societies in which everyone is valued and empowered to make choices about their own development. Our vision of an inclusive society is one that respects and celebrates difference; strives for gender equality; and promotes equal dignity, active citizenship, and social justice for all – leaving no one behind.

In the same way we fight for improvements in the world around us, we are committed to an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity and equal opportunity. We value and respect the unique contributions of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. We leverage this to enhance our understanding of the needs of our clients and partners.

SDDirect believes in treating people with respect and dignity as an individual and as part of this, we do not tolerate unlawful acts of discrimination. Our expectations are articulated in a *Code of Conduct* and our *Safeguarding Policy* which sets out our commitment to the safety and rights of all individuals regardless of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, impairment needs or gender identity and intends that their welfare will always be our paramount consideration. In the delivery of our projects, as for all aspects of operations, SDDirect is committed to proactively protecting individuals from abuse with a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse. Our *Whistleblowing Policy* outlines our commitment to upholding ethical values and practices and promotes a business culture that enables staff, partners and others to feel comfortable raising concerns without fear of retribution. It allows for the reporting of concerns including, but not limited to human rights, corruption, fraud, human trafficking, slavery, health, and safety, safeguarding and terrorism.

## A. Update on policies, procedures & activities

Human rights are non-negotiable. SDDirect stands and works with individuals and groups that are at particular risk of violence, abuse, exploitation and harassment based on characteristics such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, impairment needs, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion. Many of our projects work with adults and children who are particularly vulnerable to protection concerns due to identity, social and geographical determinants. As such, SDDirect promotes human rights across all its operations and through its programming and are proud to uphold the rights of our staff, partners, and the people we serve. Below is a selection of relevant policies, procedures, activities undertaken over the last year that reflect our commitment to the UN Global Compact's human right principles.

### Preventing Gender-Based Violence, Sexual Exploitation, And Abuse

SDDirect is a leading global supplier of gender-based violence (GBV) programming, policy and research. We provide technical support and training at all stages of design, implementation and evaluation. This year we launched a new seven-year signature programme focusing on prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) through taking evidence-based pilot approaches to scale. Working in a consortium partnership, we aim for the programme to translate proof-of-concept evidence into robust, large-scale programmes and strategies, as well as designing, piloting and testing new theory-driven violence prevention approaches.

### Equal Education

This year we launched a new technical portfolio in equal education, a fundamental right enshrined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Our contribution to the education space is focused on those most at risk of being excluded or harmed from existing education models and sociocultural inequalities: girls, children with disabilities, marginalised youth, and their communities. Our areas of practice include disability-inclusive education, improved education in fragile and conflict affected situations, better prevention and response to GBV and violence in school, stronger safeguarding in school contexts, and mainstreaming GESI more broadly.

### Disability Inclusive Development

In line with the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*, we guide others working in international development on disability inclusion across sectors. This year, SDDirect participated in the *Global Disabilities Summit 2022* aimed at mobilising efforts for the implementation of the UN CRPD, the principle of 'Leave No One Behind', and building back better and more inclusively from COVID-19. Ahead of the summit, SDDirect made a number of public commitments on disability inclusion and organised a company-wide meeting on what these mean in practice for the organisation. The commitments are to:

- Tackle discrimination, stigmatisation, violence and oppression experienced by persons with disabilities by promoting attitudinal change in communities and across all development cooperation and recognising that persons with disabilities have multiple and intersecting identities.
- Strengthen the evidence base on disability inclusion, including in relation to data disaggregation.
- Increase meaningful engagement of persons with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities in our work, amplifying their voice and agency in all that we do.
- Address violence, exploitation and abuse of all persons with disabilities in situations of conflict and crisis.

The full commitments are available on the [Global Disability Summit Commitments Portal](#).

SDDirect continues to deliver technical work on disability inclusion, including through the management of the Disability Inclusion Helpdesk, which is part of FCDO's flagship programme on disability inclusion – the Disability Inclusive Development Inclusive Futures programme.

## Safeguarding

SDDirect continues to deliver technical work on safeguarding, including running a flagship programme which works with civil society organisations (CSOs) delivering aid in eight countries to strengthen their safeguarding policies and practices against sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH).

This year, we have also done more work on strengthening our internal safeguarding protocols to ensure we are providing the most relevant and up-to-date systems and guidance to protect staff, representatives and anyone who engages with SDDirect from violence, abuse, exploitation and harassment caused by either SDDirect staff and representatives, or as a result of our activities and communications. We updated our internal Safeguarding Policy to recognise that violence and abuse can happen in virtual spaces and through media and communications; we strengthened our commitment to work with like-minded partners and also expanded the referral mechanisms in our projects. The policy also more extensively covers harassment in the workplace so there is utmost clarity on what constitutes inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour.

Safeguarding training continues to be mandatory for all new SDDirect staff, and annual refresher trainings take place for existing staff members. In addition, all consultants and associates who form part of our network, are required by contract to adhere to the Policy when collaborating with us.

This year we also developed specific guidance on SDDirect's use of photographs and images in its communications, media and publications activities, which accompanies our existing guidelines on general communications. We are keen to promote diverse representation, avoid stereotypes and tokenism, ensure informed consent and emphasise active citizenship in all its forms.

Finally, we continue to be part of a number of safeguarding networks active in the UK and internationally in order to keep abreast of changes in the sector and regularly engage with other companies and organisations on collective learning, evidence and practical experiences.

## Digital Inclusion

We are also active in providing advice on GESI in digital spaces. In today's world, tackling online violence and promoting access to (digital) literacy and skills is fundamental to the realisation of fundamental human rights, however this remains an underinvested area of work. Last year, we held our annual technical forum to examine the benefits and the risks of digital technologies for women, girls and marginalised groups.

## Diversity and Inclusion

SDDirect's organisational vision is a just and equal world founded on gender equality and social inclusion. In our technical programme work, we are committed to tackling systemic barriers to inclusion and participation as well as other institutional, structural and economic drivers of inequality and exclusion. We are also aware that we cannot be credible technical experts and advisors in this field without also making sure that this commitment is reflected in our company values, systems, and commitments. The resurgence of citizen mobilisation around racial justice and global inequality has galvanised our resolve to strengthen our own response, both externally and internally. Last year, we developed an *Ethnic Diversity and Racial Justice (EDRJ) Strategy* with a practical roadmap to enhancing outcomes across the organisation on race and ethnicity, both internally within our operations and externally as part of our work. Our *EDRJ staff Working Group* continues to lead conversations and efforts in this area, working closely with other internal committees including the *Gender, Sexuality and Inclusion Working Group* and the *Disability Inclusion Working Group* to keep momentum and accountability high on the agenda. All working groups meet regularly to review and discuss new initiatives and are comprised of representatives from our various teams, including executive management and human resources (HR).

## B. Measurement of Outcomes

- ✓ Working with a consortium of partners, we launched a new seven-year signature programme focusing on evidence-based prevention of VAWG.



- ✓ We launched a new technical portfolio on Equal Education.
- ✓ We continue to provide technical advice and thought leadership on disability inclusive development. Participated in the *2022 Global Disabilities Summit* making public commitments on disability inclusion.
- ✓ We continue to deliver technical work on safeguarding, including running a flagship programme focused on strengthening safeguarding and PSEAH policies of CSOs in eight countries.
- ✓ We updated our internal Safeguarding Policy and ran regular training sessions for staff.
- ✓ We developed an Ethical Image and Photograph Guideline to ensure our communications, media and publications promote diversity, agency, and accuracy.
- ✓ We expanded our work on human rights, and GESI in digital spaces and held our annual technical forum on the theme of *Digital Inclusion: A new frontier for our practice*.
- ✓ Our internal working groups on *Ethnic Diversity & Racial Justice*, *Disability Inclusion*, and *Gender, Sexuality and Inclusion* continue to provide a forum to promote understanding, knowledge, allyship and to continuously improve our internal systems to support social justice advancements.
- ✓ We continue to emphasise and actively promote our values to reflect our commitments to ethnic diversity and racial justice.
- ✓ We continue to actively participate in sector dialogue on neo-colonialism and racial justice, including as part of external networks. Some of our staff contributed to the UK Parliament's International Development Committee Inquiry into racism in the aid sector.
- ✓ We continue to provide thought leadership on human rights principles: SDDirect has an active library and social media presence, publishing contemporary thought pieces, blogs and technical resources around a broad spectrum of development topics within the UN Global Compact, alongside consistently producing new papers and other publications on our work. A selection of this year's work is listed below:
  - [SDDirect 2022 Pride Blog Series](#) | Social Development Direct, July 2022
  - [Towards more inclusive and feminist approaches in evaluation of HIV programming - transforming principles into practice](#) | Social Development Direct, December 2021
  - [SDDirect 2022 Disability Blog Series](#) | Social Development Direct, February 2022

## Labour Principles

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
Principle 6	The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

SDDirect aims to create a workplace that encourages diversity and equal opportunities for all. Keeping staff and consultants safe is an important aspect of this and duty of care is embedded in all aspects of our business operations. Our aim is that all SDDirect stakeholders feel respected and able to give their best. We are committed to transparency in all business dealings, including taking a zero-tolerance approach to corruption, bribery, fraud, tax evasion, human rights violations, sexual abuse, and modern slavery.



## A. Update on policies, procedures & activities

### Labour Standards – general

- We support staff's right to freedom of association, and we have an active and representative staff body - the Business Health Check (BHC) team - who liaises regularly with the Executive Management Group and Board on matters concerning staff and workplace issues. The BHC team offers staff the opportunity to raise issues in confidence and actively promotes dialogue and consensus-based policy change.
- We support adherence to global best practice principles in our supply chain through thorough due diligence processes and background checks that ensure our collaborators and sub-contractors adhere to the Ethical Trading Initiative and have in place high labour standards and social value. Our commitment to the universal labour principles is demonstrated by our *Ethical Framework* and *Safeguarding Policy*.
- We do not have subsidiary offices in countries where we work, however we have employees and associates who are based in some of the countries where we deliver our work. As such, we continue to ensure adherence to local labour standards via partnership with specialised payroll providers.

### Staff wellbeing

The wellbeing of staff is a priority area at SDDirect. We are committed to ensuring that staff work in an environment that understands their individual needs and encourages a healthy work-life balance.

Recognising the impact of isolation and broader well-being challenges that our workforce has faced over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are encouraging an occasional return to the office when safe, as well as organising regular opportunities for getting together. Social distancing and other relevant measures at in-person events continue as and when needed and we keep a close watch on government guidance in all work locations and ensure adherence to applicable guidance.

We continue to make available and regularly promote our Employee Wellbeing Programme, which includes advice and support via an externally hosted provider specialising in emotional support as well as everyday matters such as debt and financial management, legal and tax advice, family care, and others. Available 24/7, the advice is independent and confidential. To support mental health, we also signpost our staff towards other local information and organisations that can help.

SDDirect continues to have a flexible working policy, which was updated and strengthened in response to the increased need for home and remote working as a result of COVID-19. We have introduced a compressed hours policy to enable staff greater flexibility in how they balance their working hours with rest and or other responsibilities. This adds to our suite of family-friendly policies.

We also promote a positive line management culture that emphasises regular and supportive supervision. Line managers have access to training, articles and resources which help them to provide effective leadership alongside promoting emotional wellbeing within their teams.

### Duty of Care, Safety and Security

Over the course of 2022, we re-adapted our company approach to consider COVID-19 a mainstream risk along with other regular business continuity risks. Our Risk Committee continues to meet weekly with COVID-19 assessed and balanced against staff priorities and safety alongside delivery requirements. Our office in London is open but we have retained a hybrid working model that accommodates individual preferences and risk thresholds. As such, we have continued to make resources available to our staff to purchase equipment in order to continue to work effectively and safely when home.

In mid-2022, we enhanced our safety and security measures by signing a new membership with a worldwide, globally recognised travel, health and security services provider which delivers quality health care and medical and security assistance services 24 hours a day through a global network of assistance centres and thousands of doctors, security and logistics experts on standby. Our approach ensures comprehensive, specialised resources are on hand to support and protect our personnel during business travel.

### **Employment and Recruitment**

SDDirect is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination as outlined in the Universal Declaration and other international and national laws such as the UK's Equality Act 2010. HR processes have been enhanced to support further advances in our diversity and inclusion commitments, including promoting diverse interview panels to reduce conscious or unconscious bias, targeted expansion and diversification of our workforce and network, and generally ensuring the organisation is a safe and inclusive space for diverse voices. With Diverse Talent being one of SDDirect's four strategic objectives, we continue to have critical and open conversations on race and diversity. This year, SDDirect's EDRJ Group has prioritised the implementation of equal opportunities monitoring as an important tool for measuring progress towards our goals and ensuring we work towards a more diverse workforce and inclusive environment. For the first time, we collected equality data on protected characteristics to provide a baseline of the make-up of our workforce. Over time, this will enable us to identify where we need to focus our resources on strengthening diversity, assess the value of particular strategies, measure our progress, and set realistic but ambitious targets to increase diversity year on year.

SDDirect is a Disability Confident Employer, and we are committed to continuously strengthen the level of our ambition in challenging attitudes towards disability, removing barriers to people living with disabilities and actively recruiting and supporting employees living with a disability. Our internal *Disability Inclusion Working Group* is working towards our Level 1 commitments to strengthen recruitment practices and support to staff. The Working Group reports to our Executive Management Group.

### **Ethics in research and programming**

SDDirect is committed to ensuring that all our work is carried out to a high ethical standard, is always respectful of the rights of participants in our research projects and ensures adherence to internationally accepted research ethics. When conducting research with human participants, our aim is to respect human dignity, privacy, and autonomy; minimise harm and risk; take special precautions with vulnerable individuals or populations; etc. We have in place an Ethical Framework that sets out our principles, approach, and methods for maintaining high ethical standards for our internal operations at SDDirect and during research, programme design and implementation. This year, we increased the rigorous of our approach to reviewing and advising on ethical risks at the bid and design stage by introducing an Ethics Advisory Group. The role of the Ethics Advisory Group is to:

- Identify areas of ethical risk and provide clear guidance on how to mitigate these
- Put forward recommendations about whether to proceed with a piece of work or decline if it is not possible to carry out the work ethically.
- Advise when active programmes would benefit from having their own Research Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board.
- Identify when a piece of work needs to build in time/budget to go through a national ethics review board.

## **B. Measurement of Outcomes**

- ✓ We continue to support staff's right to freedom of association with an active and representative staff body (Business Health Check team) and regular conversations with the Executive Management Group.

- ✓ We undertake continuous and thorough due diligence in our supply chain, focused on high labour standards and social value.
- ✓ There has been an expansion of staff wellbeing and family-friendly policies, including flexible hours policy, hybrid working models, support for effective home working, and employee wellbeing programme.
- ✓ Increased Safety and Security protocols and Duty of Care provision have been made.
- ✓ We launched an equal opportunity monitoring initiative with collection of baseline equality data to inform our way forward on diversity and inclusion commitments.
- ✓ We strengthened our recruitment systems to actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, including people living with disabilities and those who identify as Black, Asian, from a Minority Ethnic group, or from a low- or middle-income country (LMIC).
- ✓ We launched an annual Business Health Check survey to gauge sentiment and understanding of workplace issues, and benchmark progress against commitments, including on diversity and inclusion.
- ✓ A new Ethics Advisory Group was set up to ensure our work is carried out to a high ethical standard.
- ✓ A companywide survey conducted to monitor staff satisfaction levels in 2021-22. Key results included:
  - 91% felt satisfied or very satisfied working at SDDirect
  - 100% of staff felt aligned with the company's core values
  - 100% of staff felt that the goals of the company and strategy are clear
  - 89% of staff felt valued by colleagues and senior management
  - 91% of staff felt that SDDirect has a positive organisational culture.

## Environmental Principles

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

SDDirect is highly conscious of the impact our business operations and activities may have on the environment and is making concerted efforts to implement and accelerate effective policies and processes to reduce our impact and foster a culture that sees environmental sustainability as of central importance to the work we do. The company seeks to inspire an attitude where environmental concerns are embedded in the company's priorities and impacts the way the company works on a day-to-day basis.

Through our technical work, we also continue to engage in environment and sustainability-focused work, often mainstreaming this within our wider focus on gender, disability, and social inclusion. Over the last year, we have produced research and guidance on women's economic empowerment and [climate change](#) and the [net zero economy](#), [disability inclusion in climate change](#), and integrating a gender lens in voluntary carbon markets. Our core team includes specialists on gender equality and social inclusion, with experience in climate change, renewable energy and inclusive cities and infrastructure.

Our approach to climate change is rooted in the understanding that the risks and impacts of

climate change are experienced differently based on gender relations and social norms. It is grounded in structural gender, power and intersectional analysis. Our work aims to enhance the sustainability of investments to provide better returns; reduce risks; and drive positive social and environmental outcomes for communities, governments, and businesses.

## A. Update on policies, procedures & activities

### Green Economies and Infrastructure Portfolio and Climate Justice strategy

Climate change is already having profound impacts on the people and communities that we work with. Women and girls, people with disabilities and other socially excluded groups are often most affected by climate change as they are more likely to live in poverty, and less likely to have access to the information and resources they need for adaptation. Their voice and inclusion are critical to finding the solutions and taking the action the world needs, yet they are often excluded from discussions and decision-making.

In recognition of the critical intersections between climate change, gender equality and social inclusion, this year we identified green economies, climate justice and environmental sustainability as a renewed technical priority for the company. Our [Green Economies and Infrastructure](#) portfolio recognises that cities and infrastructure are drivers of national economies, critical to people's health and well-being and crucial in tackling climate change. Harnessing the economic benefits of cities and infrastructure through inclusive design, planning, delivery and governance can be a game changer for gender equality and women's economic empowerment and ensuring cities work for everyone, building resilience and supporting citizens to adapt.

Our work on green economies and infrastructure, and climate justice more widely, brings our gender equality and social inclusion expertise to the climate change response. In line with our cross-cutting Climate Justice strategy, we are working to embed an understanding of climate change, mitigation and adaptation throughout our work. This year we presented our work at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP26) and published a climate justice focused blog series around COP26 to draw attention to the gender equality and social inclusion dimensions of the climate crisis.

### Race to Zero

In 2019, SDDirect re-established an *Environmental Committee*, following our 2019 Annual Technical Forum on climate justice, and developed an Environmental Policy in 2020. Since then we have been working continuously to improve the way our business operations impact on the environment and bring green solutions to the international development sector. This year, alongside our new technical focus on climate justice, SDDirect signed up to the Race to Zero, thereby committing to halve our greenhouse gas emissions before 2030, achieve net zero emissions before 2050 and disclose our progress on a yearly basis. As such, we have started to work on identifying indicators and a baseline for emission reductions.

SDDirect also applied and became a member of Heart of the City [Foundations for Responsible Business Programme](#) – a community for businesses based in and around the City of London which are on a responsible business journey.

We assessed which areas of our work had the greatest impact on the environment and what steps staff at SDDirect could take. This included:

- Scrutinising our supply chain
- Starting a journey towards becoming paperless researchers
- Considering alternative travel options to reduce our consultancy carbon footprint
- Lobbying our company's pension scheme requesting they offer greener investment options.

### Responsible business initiatives

By engaging staff in eco-conscious initiatives, we kick started a broader conversation about how

we reduce environmental risks at a systemic level at our organisation. In keeping with our drive to be an environmentally sustainable business, we continued to provide access to a UK-government sponsored cycle to work scheme.

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a unique opportunity to explore alternative implementation modalities the delivery of our consultancy services which do not rely as heavily on travel. The inability to travel in our work prompted our programmes to pivot to a combination of remote working and working through local partners and consultants. We have not seen this transition to undermine the quality of work delivered and will be bringing learning from this shift into future bids, programmes, and operations. We are a small company with limited flying, nevertheless we continue to be conscious of our carbon footprint and, even with business travel starting up again following the peak pandemic months, we will continue to pursue air travel only when truly required and advisable for project or business purposes. Instead, we rely on our decentralised network of partners and collaborators. Indeed, a further benefit of cutting down on international travel has been to empower local and regional consultants/partners and develop a larger network operating directly from the global south.

## B. Measurement of Outcomes

- ✓ Launched green economies, climate justice and environmental sustainability as a renewed technical priority for the company
- ✓ Signed up to the Race to Zero campaign, committing to halve our greenhouse gas emissions before 2030, achieve net zero emissions before 2050 and disclose our progress on a yearly basis. As a first step, we have started to work on identifying indicators and a baseline for emission reductions.
- ✓ Presented our work at COP 26 and published a climate focused blog series
- ✓ SDDirect's *Environmental Committee* continues to be active and drive our environmental principles and adopt responsible practices for a transition to the net-zero, resilient economy.
- ✓ Joined the Foundations for Responsible Business programme, a community of small to medium sized businesses (SMEs) intent on promoting greater environmental responsibility in London
- ✓ Rolled out a number of workplace initiatives for environmentally responsible business practices, including continued access to a cycle to work scheme, maintenance of a hybrid working model, a more robust waste management system, enhanced remote implementation methodologies, continued lobbying of our pension provider to improve the range of 'green' pension investments, and reduced/conscious international travel
- ✓ A selection of this year's thought leadership / blog series on environmental principles:
  - [Climate change and gender-based violence: what are the issues and what can we do about it?](#) | Social Development Direct, November 2021
  - [Our organisational approach to climate justice: developing greener practices](#) | Social Development Direct, June 2022
  - [COP26 Gender Day Showcase](#) | Social Development Direct, November 2021

## Anti-corruption principles

<b>Principle 10</b>	Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery
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SDDirect is committed to conducting all its business operations in an honest, fair, transparent and ethical manner, in full adherence to Principle 10. SDDirect's policy is to comply with all applicable UK (including but not limited to The Bribery Act 2010) and international anti-corruption laws and



not to engage in any corrupt activity. SDDirect does not accept any form of corruption and/or bribery in or in connection with its business activities.

As part of our participation in the UN Global Compact, we work to continuously improve our standards and keep up to date with evolving international standards of best practice.

### **A. Update on policies, procedures & activities**

SDDirect has clear *Anti-bribery & Corruption*, *Anti-Terrorism* and *Anti-Money Laundering policies* which all staff are required to read, understand, and follow. All staff read the policies during their induction in the first weeks of their employment and must take part in mandatory training on <http://www.doingbusinesswithoutbribery.com/>. Prior to any contracts being entered into with, and/or any payments being made to a Third Party Associate, SDDirect performs appropriate due diligence and obtain their written agreement to act in accordance with anti-corruption principles. We also emphasise a strong culture of reporting across the company, supply chain, and operations. The executive management team monitors the implementation of the Policies and coordinates periodic training for SDDirect Personnel and Third-Party Associates, as appropriate to the risks faced by them.

This year, we enhanced our due diligence process for partners or sub-contractors from and/or operating in sanctioned and Fragile or Conflict-Affected States.

### **B. Measurement of Outcomes**

SDDirect's Risk Committee monitors all incidents of corruption and reports them on a regular basis to the Board of Directors.

SDDirect is pleased to report that there have been no incidents of corruption, fraud or other breaches alleged at the company from either internal or external agencies during the last year.