



2022

UN Global Compact Communication on Progress Report



ABOUT

NSCE

Our Vision:

NSCE is one of the leading Arab and African consulting firms in the field of sustainable development in Africa and the Middle East.

Our Mission:

NORTH SOUTH CONSULTANTS EXCHANGE (NSCE) IS COMMITTED TO:

- Improving the quality of life and economic welfare of people and communities throughout the middle east, Africa and Central Asia.
- Providing professional services to help governmental and international agencies succeed in achieving their public policy and developmental objectives.
- Providing practical, measurable and highly valued solutions to a variety of organizational problems.

For more information

Please visit <https://nsce-intercom/> or follow us on



LinkedIn page

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/9222829/admin/>



Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/north.south.consultants>

LETTER FROM The CEO

North South Consultants Exchange is positively supporting and engaging in the Seventeen Principles of the United Nations Global Compact with specific focus on Human Rights, Labor featuring vulnerable groups like youth and women, Environment and Anti- Corruption. Through describing our progress, we highlight the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture, and daily operations. We confirm our commitment to share this information with our stakeholders through our primary communication channels.

NSCE is determined to make its core values and code of conduct centered around high ethical standards and in accordance with applicable laws. The company's focus is maintained on intertwining the principles of the UNGC with our code of conduct, through continuously supporting directives and guidelines.

NSCE has supported, contributed to, and managed countless projects related to empowering women, educating communities on gender, human rights and social equality for youth and minority groups by providing them with the tools required for their progression. NSCE designed and developed a gender mainstreaming strategy in the form of a comprehensive toolkit to raise awareness and build capacities of practitioners, civil society and local communities, facilitate the involvement of women in access to finance and markets, and promote gender equality and to reduce poverty among women and rural populations in Egypt, Africa, Central Asia and Middle East.

Thankyou,
Zohra Merabet



Zohra Merabet
Executive
Director

THE Ten GLOBAL COMPACT

PRINCIPLES

NSCE conducts business in accordance with the laws and regulations and follows international guidelines and recognized principles for corporate responsibility, including standards for human rights, labor rights, the environment and anti-corruption. NSCE's culture and values are aligned with the UNGC Ten Principles and are at the heart of how we conduct business. We have integrated these Ten Principles into existing policies to be implemented in our daily activities. The ten principles can be clearly seen in our Code of Ethics, our business strategy and policies. The following report provides an overview of how the Ten Principles have been implemented across business and service lines:



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



Labor 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



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

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



Human Rights Principles

- Our sustainable development projects are handled by special labor who demonstrate skill.
- Our business model is put in a way that parallels human rights with the well-being of our company.
- Complying with business ethics is a natural by product that preserves proclaimed human rights, even when the local legislation is not meeting the protection of human rights, labor rights and environment interests.
- Any employee should be subjected to what they perceive as any form of harassment discrimination or violence in the workplace; that employee shall follow the same procedure for filing a complaint for sexual harassment.
- All sexual harassment cases will be dealt with in accordance with Egyptian laws.

It is the policy of North South Consultants Exchange to provide a safe working environment for all employees and persons who might be affected by Company operations. It is also our policy to safeguard the health and welfare of all employees. The standards of safety, health and welfare practices will meet, and may well exceed, the minimum standards specified by the statute and codes of practice. The responsibilities and arrangements for carrying out this policy are detailed below and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action which may lead to dismissal.

Internal Implementation:

Internal Implementation:

- NSCE is providing Life, health, and accident insurance coverage for all employees plus pension plans.
- Employment at NSCE is based on equal opportunity which complies with universal Human Rights Declaration.
- Internal working conditions are centered around safety considering health, insurance, lighting, and equipment provided to employees.
- NSCE sticks to the specific working hours for the day, week, and month. This system is put based on the ILO conventions and recommendations on labor standards.

External Implementation:

Our work in sustainable development makes us determined on human's welfare constant improvement which is the foundation of development. Thus, our focus through work commits us to respect and prioritize implementation of human rights internally and externally.

NSCE mandate is helping vulnerable groups including women, youth, refugees and unemployed. We have been implementing projects and seeking funds to help promotion and employability of women and youth groups.

Achievements:

- NSCE has successfully concluded 'Market Study of Refugees' Access to Finance in Egypt. Egypt hosts refugees and asylum-seekers from 57 different countries, this assignment is to contribute to a larger intervention to be undertaken by the IFC to increase access to financial and non-financial services for the refugee populations in Egypt, especially from Syria.
- we are currently part of WFP framework contract (LTA) for the evaluation of WFP worldwide programs. The main areas in which we did position the consortium for WFP evaluation assignments are North Africa, Sahel, Africa at large, Central Asia, and the Middle East.
- NSCE has successfully concluded 'UNICEF Humanitarian Response Country Programme evaluation'. During the validation presentation to UNICEF country and regional offices as well as UNICEF development partners. The UNICEF regional and country managers have praised the report describing it as one of the best and informative evaluation reports for their programming.
- From 2018 to 2021, NSCE implemented the "Visit Badrashin!" project in the villages of Abu Sir, Saqqarah and Dahshur in Giza. Visit Badrashin was an eco-responsible tourism project funded by the EU that aimed to contribute to the sustainable rural development of Badrashin district, through building the capacities of local women and youth to develop market-oriented micro and small enterprises in the touristic areas in Badrashin. NSCE conducted a market study and analysis, and well as local date and tourism value chains studies, to identify the assets of the area and the needs for intervention. It based its development strategy on 3 pillars: capacity building and product development, destination marketing and tourism, and local governance and enabling environment. The capacity building activities included training on responsible tourism, entrepreneurship, leadership, marketing and digital marketing, costing and pricing, as well as technical trainings in handicraft, food processing and food safety and hygiene. NSCE and its associate partner Fair Trade Egypt worked with local NGOs to develop unique handicraft products from *halfa* and *greed*, that met a great commercial success. Several public events, known as the Badrashin Country Fairs, were organized, to promote local touristic services and products among domestic and international visitors. NSCE and Greenish conducted a study of the solid waste situation in Dahshur and will soon implement a new project tackling this major challenge to rural development. Although the project ended, NSCE still supports this new dynamic in Badrashin by co-organizing new events, maintaining the destination website and developing new interventions.

- 35 startups has been graduated from the Handicrafts Incubator in Upper Egypt after completing the different phases of the program in six months as part of Tanmia wa Tatweer's Egypt Entrepreneurship Project with the objective of supporting the handicrafts sectors and supporting robust entrepreneurs from Upper Egypt build, operate, and sustain their start-ups from the ideation phase up to the early growth phase to become successful investment, commercial, economic projects and businesses. Tanmia W Tatweer" project implemented by the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology is funded by the Danish-Arab Partnership Program through the African Development Bank; to support entrepreneurship and encourage innovation in Upper Egypt. The TwT Handicrafts Incubator in Upper Egypt is one of its important programs directed at encouraging innovation and supporting startups in the geographical scope of the governorates of Fayoum, Beni Suef, Minya, Assiut, Sohag, Qena, Luxor, and Aswan. Startups received capacity building trainings, mentoring, technical trainings and participated in technical workshops for product development under the incubation program, all implemented by qualified experts with intensive expertise in the handicrafts sector and entrepreneurship. The incubator team provided capacity building trainings, mentoring and technical support to 72 startups in the handicrafts sector from Upper Egypt. 38 startups participated in the incubation phase, and 35 startups graduated from the incubator and pitched their projects, with 17 of them eligible for grant funding equivalent to 2550 euros according to evaluation criteria set by ASRT and the AFDB Bank in the pre-incubation phase with the objective of supporting startups expand their projects and penetrate the market.

- The Arab Academy for Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Center (AASTEC), North South Consultants Exchange (NSCE) has implemented an agribusiness incubator project in Upper Egypt under the Tanmia w Tatweer “Egypt’s Entrepreneurship Development” Project funded by the Danish-Arab Partnership Programme(DAPP) through the African Development Bank (AfDB). The incubator supported startups in the agribusiness field through technical support offerings including legal, financial, product development, marketing and leadership training among others. Startups were also paired with mentors throughout the duration of the incubation process for one-to-one customized mentorship sessions and support. In addition to the technical support, a selected number of incubated startups were offered financial support in the form of a grant to help grow their business. Startups graduating the incubator program were also provided with the opportunity to pitch their ideas to and network with investors and relevant governmental agencies through a Demo Day organized by the implementing partners

MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES:

The company evaluates and monitors the performance through specific tools:

- NSCE has an ISO certificate “ISO 9001:2008” as compliance to high level of consultancy service for improving quality of life and economic welfare of people and communities throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia.
- NSCE has a liability insurance for all documents, deliverables quality.
- Regular feedback forms of events attended, and experience gained through different events/workshops & trainings.
- The existence of a specialized unit to monitor all the activities of Human Rights, actions, activities, and practices inside the organization.
- Receiving letters from our client by end of each project showing their satisfactions.
- Employee performance appraisal and individual improvement regarding this specific subject.



PRINCIPLE 3: BUSINESSES SHOULD UPHOLD THE FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND THE EFFECTIVE RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING;

IMPLEMENTATION

NSCE builds on a long tradition of establishing trust in its collaborations with social partners to create stable and open relations. The company respects the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining for all its employees. As far as national legislation allows, NSCE promotes this fundamental right by applying its own Code of Business Conduct to all employees.

PRINCIPLE 4: THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR;

IMPLEMENTATION

Besides emphasizing its clear commitment to the Code of Business Conduct, in which NSCE and all employees commit to 'complying with all employment and labor laws' including those related to the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor under applicable laws. NSCE is regularly audited by the specialized authorities in relation to labor and work conditions "Ministry of labor". NSCE by any means is not involved and in any activates related to forced or compulsory labour.

Employees are expected to avoid any personal, financial, or other interests that might hinder their capability or willingness to perform their job duties.

PRINCIPLE 5: THE EFFECTIVE ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR;

IMPLEMENTATION

This principle does not apply to the condition of NSCE as a consultancy company.

PRINCIPLE 6: THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION;

IMPLEMENTATION

NSCE's office manual of procedure is a tool that puts the company on track against any discrimination acts. NSCE follows fair employment procedures as per its internal manual, which gives every incumbent the chance to apply fairly to any position in NSCE without discrimination in color, religion, gender, or nationality.

Any kind of discriminatory behavior, harassment or victimization are not allowed. Employees should conform with company equal opportunity policy in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

The Employee Code of Conduct company policy outlines the company expectations regarding employees' behavior towards their colleagues, supervisors, and overall organization.

All employees must follow the company code of conduct. They should avoid offending, participating in serious disputes, and disrupting the workplace.

Company employees are bound by their contract to follow our Employee Code of Conduct while performing their duties.

All employees should treat company's property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care.

All employees should read and follow NSCE's company policies. If they have any questions, they should ask their managers or Human Resources officer.

NSCE may have to take disciplinary action against employees who repeatedly or intentionally fail to follow the company code of conduct. Disciplinary actions will vary depending on the violation.



Environmental Principles

PRINCIPLE 7: BUSINESSES SHOULD SUPPORT A PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES;

IMPLEMENTATION

- NSCE follows the implementation of Energy efficient and environmentally green solutions regarding any equipment and material usage.
 - Power Saving machines (Computers, Servers, Printers, Photocopy Machines)
 - Reuse of and recycling printing papers.
- A procedures manual regarding environmental challenges and having clear instructions to employees in progress of preparation.

PRINCIPLE 8: UNDERTAKE INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE GREATER ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY;

IMPLEMENTATION

- NSCE is in constant search on opportunities to promote environmental responsibility, we have embarked on several projects that discuss this matter. Internally we have our teams in technical unit implementing measure.
- NSCE is now implementing the following projects:
 1. **“Green Value Chain Project”** a project developed by EBRD, supported by the green climate fund and European Union, the project is jointly implemented by Stantec and NSCE starting on February 2020. EBRD is launching, through the Green Value Chain project, a loan facility to eligible SMEs. Through the facility, SMEs eligible for loans agreements will be supported in innovation processes and production as well as their abilities to become more resource and energy efficient, which would allow them to contribute to advanced local and export markets and the overall improvement of value chains in Egypt.
 2. **“Green National Bank of Egypt (NBE) Loan Project”** a project developed by EBRD, supported by the green climate fund and European Union, the project is jointly implemented by Stantec and NSCE starting on July 2020. The facility aims to support SME borrowers to make energy and resource efficiency investments that would allow them to become more sustainable as well as increase their competitiveness.

PRINCIPLE 9: ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIFFUSION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGIES;

IMPLEMENTATION

- NSCE is now implementing ER2FOOD project, that aims to provide strategic support and expert consultancy services to facilitate the adoption of Energy and Resources efficiency solutions as drivers for the technical and business development of Egyptian MSMEs and start-ups in the food across the Bakery value chain. In a context of rising energy and wheat prices, ER2FOOD raises awareness about energy and resource efficiency, and provides technical and financial support to Egyptian bakeries to accelerate their green transition. It also supports startups to develop or adapt innovative solutions to reduce energy and resource consumption across the value chain.
- On July 1st, 2022, the European project TRUSTyFOOD (funded by the European Union) started. For 36 months, 13 participants representing the industry, academia and food associations from 7 countries and 1 third country (Egypt, represented by NSCE) will join forces for supporting the Strategic Research Agenda of the future joint research program on the subject of BCT by shedding light on the current partial and fragmented picture of the BCT applications in the agri-food domain and by clarifying the benefits and opportunities which BCT can concretely bring to stakeholders throughout the food chain offer. TRUSTyFOOD – Stakeholder-driven pathways for blockchain implementation in the agri-food sector. The project intends to prepare the way for R&I activities for the decade to come, basing its assumptions on systematic monitoring and reviews of national, European and international R&I pilots/use cases, experiences and best practices and on consolidated and balanced stakeholder views. The active involvement of users is required from the very beginning for the identification of needs and use cases, which will be subsequently translated into operational requirements for services. The goal of the project is to understand why communities, i.e. users, accept / reject blockchain-based projects, the mistakes done by others for not repeating them, the best and innovative practices in blockchain development in the agri-food sector (considering its complexity), to forecast and shape different possible futures for BCT application. The project will investigate and discuss both technical aspects as well as non-technical barriers to BCTs deployment, but also other issues fostering BCT deployment, such as interoperability, innovative business models, standardization and regulatory issues and will serve as a basis for White Papers addressed to the European Commission. At the same time, the project intends to provide users with a framework of services (and guidelines) for empowering them in future BCT implementation.

CSR CONTRIBUTION

Egypt Craft Center (ECC/FTA) has been registered as an organization operating under the company law, to provide professional marketing services to Egyptian craft producers. ECC/FTA is operating as a non-profit organization and has been registered with IFAT, the International Fair-Trade Association. To support FCTE 2007, with other prominent personalities, NSCE registered a foundation to provide complementary services to producers and promote fair trade practices in Egypt. This foundation is named Fair Trade Egypt Foundation. Over the last 25 years NSCE had been a significant support to the program from its own resources and from its own active and successful fund-raising.



The “Empowerment of Girls through Sport” as part of NSCE’s Corporate Social Responsibility. The project is implemented in 18 governorates across the whole country and two hundred girls participated in tailored adapted sports activities with trained coaches. Several girls competed in international competitions.





Anti-Corruption Principles

PRINCIPLE 10: BUSINESSES SHOULD WORK AGAINST CORRUPTION IN ALL ITS FORMS, INCLUDING EXTORTION AND BRIBERY;

IMPLEMENTATION

NSCE do have compliance procedures to prevent corruption in all its forms.

The use of strict procedures and monitoring through legal auditing specialized partners is helping in this regard to prevent corruption in all forms.

NSCE has all its financial documents disclosed under a shared file with all the employees, as an internal transparency procedure.

Accepting gifts from clients or partners are forbidden. Briberies for the benefit of any external or internal party are prohibited.

The NSCE Business Code of Conduct strictly forbids any form of bribery and corruption (irrespective of whether the recipient is a public official or an employee of a private customer).

NSCE Management System follows the below points:

1. Prohibition of Bribery

Charitable Contributions

The enterprise ensure that charitable contributions and sponsorships are not used as a subterfuge for bribery, and all charitable contributions and sponsorships should be transparent and made in accordance with applicable domestic law.

Gifts, Hospitality and Expenses

The enterprise prohibits the offer or receipt of gifts, hospitality, or expenses whenever such arrangements would be in violation of applicable domestic law.

Facilitation Payments Recognizing

That facilitation payments are prohibited under the anti-bribery laws of most countries; enterprises should eliminate them.

Facilitation payments, also called 'facilitating', 'speed' or 'grease' payments are small payments made to secure or expedite the performance of a routine action to which the enterprise is entitled.

Political Contributions

The enterprise, its employees, or intermediaries, should not make direct or indirect contributions to political parties, party officials, candidates, organizations or individuals engaged in politics, as a subterfuge for bribery.

All political contributions should be transparent and made only in accordance with applicable law. The Program should include controls