

# 2021 COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS REPORT



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## OVERVIEW

### Statement of continued support

To our stakeholders:

MK-Africa has a strong commitment to responsible business practices. Our mission is to become a pan-African sustainability communications consultancy that supports companies with the relevant knowledge and expertise to communicate their responsible business strategy simply and effectively.

We reaffirm our continued support of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption and are committed to making the UNGC and its principles part of our daily operations by engaging in collaborative projects, which advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

MK-Africa offers consultancy services in sustainability training, strategy development and reporting to companies that are looking to create measurable social, economic, and environmental impact. We aim to simplify how sustainability is communicated for Africa and support businesses in creating African sustainability stories that future generations can integrate and leverage on. We also train, mentor, and support young people to innovate and set up social enterprises based on the SDGs and sustainable business practices through our #MyLittleBigThing Initiative.

As we continue to grow, we commit to transparency and sharing our Communication on Progress (COP) to our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication and through the UNGC website. This report covers the period between January to December 2021.



Yours Sincerely,

Muthoni Kanyana,

CEO, MK-Africa.

## OUR COMPANY

### Who we are

MK-Africa is a business consultancy that offers training, strategy development, and communication services for Sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to companies that are looking to create measurable economic, environmental, and/or social impact (ESG) impact. MK-Africa is a company registered in Kenya under the Companies Act and with the Kenya Revenue Authority.

MK-Africa is a Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Certified Training Partner that conducts sustainability webinars and courses as well as create and develop ESG reports using the GRI Reporting Standards. Our goal is to inspire, engage and equip today's business to prosper for the near and long-term by leading the way to a sustainably abundant future.

### What we offer

#### Reporting

At MK-Africa we help organizations assess, plan and deliver effective sustainability reports by developing ambition for reporting, evaluating past reports and identifying a pathway for the evolution of best approach. We partnered and work with The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); an international independent standards organization that helps businesses, governments and other organizations understand and communicate their impacts on issues such as climate change, human rights and corruption.

The Company provides simple, clear, expert advice to help develop an approach to reporting, putting the organization's activities in context through evaluation and benchmarking. Through this, we demystify critical aspects of reporting such as materiality identification (identifying and prioritizing significant environmental and social impacts), stakeholder issue mapping, performance disclosure and specifying third party assurance.

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The Company began the sustainability reporting process for TotalEnergies Marketing Kenya<sup>1</sup> and HFC<sup>2</sup>, which was completed in the first quarter of 2022.



On 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021, the Nairobi Securities Exchange PLC (NSE) in partnership with Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) invited MK-Africa to attend a high-level Launch of NSE's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Disclosures Guidance Manual at the Nairobi Serena Hotel.

The ESG Manual provides detailed guidance on the implementation of ESG metrics in organizational strategy, as well as

collection, analysis and reporting of ESG performance. It aims at enhancing consistency, comparability, and credibility of the ESG disclosures by listed companies. The ESG Manual will also raise the standards of reporting on ESG practices by companies listed on the NSE thereby enhancing the competitiveness of our capital markets.

## Training and Capacity Building

MK-Africa provides a range of training courses designed to provide the necessary skills, support, and advice one needs to maintain their focus and action on sustainability in their organization. The training products are tailored to one's needs, giving in-depth knowledge of the GRI Standards and reporting.

On 26 November 2021, we facilitated a discussion on ESG governance on boards in a Hybrid Corporate Secretarial Seminar held at Sarova Panafric Hotel, Nairobi. The event was organized by the Institute of Certified Secretaries.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bit.ly/3RE8qMy>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bit.ly/3PFBDfB>



## Sustainability Strategy

Many businesses make claims about their sustainability or CSR, but without a realistic and effective sustainable business strategy, they are unlikely to deliver the gains that more sustainable performance can bring. Sustainability is increasingly important to businesses and managing it effectively can be transformative.

Our innovative and practical approach helps organizations integrate sustainability with their everyday business priorities. MK-Africa specializes in working directly with people across/within the business, building their understanding and engaging them in creating real-world solutions that work for them. We work with organizations to develop a comprehensive and commercial sustainability strategy that focuses on addressing the key sustainability issues for the business to enhance business performance.

## Thought-leadership events

MK-Africa provides insights on the most important trends in sustainability and responses to environmental and social change. We offer sustainability related talks and provide input for discussion panels. We aspire to be our profession's preeminent impact partner and advisor on sustainability, climate, energy transition, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG)—from the board room to the engine room. We are working with clients to lead a wave of innovation and economic growth that safeguards our planet and advances sustainability.

On Friday 12th November 2021, MK-Africa was part of a panelist at Strathmore Business School (SBS) during the Executive Leadership Programme, contributing to the discussion on Supply Chain Transformation and sharing our experiences with the participants. SBS has a tradition of collaborating with industry as part of its endeavor



to transform the Kenyan business community through targeted forums and its executive education programs.



## Partnerships and Collaborations

MK-Africa runs an initiative known as #MyLittleBigThing which is inspired by Nobel laureate, the late Wangari Maathai's 'Little Thing' of planting trees. This initiative trains, mentors and supports young people to innovate and set up social enterprises based on the SDGs and sustainable business practices. Our goal is to catalyze social entrepreneurship among young people through the development of ideas that will help find the best homegrown solutions to Africa's development challenges. Since 2017, we have worked with like-minded organizations like Safaricom, PKF East Africa, Cambridge University's Institute of Sustainability Leadership (CISL), Crew 2030, and South African Airways, to network close to 1000 youth innovators who have some of the best SDGs-inspired ideas.

To mark our 5<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, MK-Africa entered into partnership with Kenyatta University TV (KUTV) to televise the 2021 annual challenge as a 13-week reality TV series. On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021, MK-Africa signed a Memorandum of Understanding with KUTV to produce 5 series of 13 feature-length episodes focused on SDGs awareness and training based on the various stages of the #MyLittleBigThing SDGs Innovation Challenge 2021 from call of applications, the judges' selection (including the Design Thinking training and Community Immersion) through to the finals event.

The main objective of this partnership was to create, inform and increase public awareness of SDGs and related issues and stories that may have otherwise been unknown or not often thought about and to build and increase the capacity of young people to solve problems related to SDGs through the 2021 Innovation Challenge.

It aims at providing a learning space for young people and local people on development effectiveness at the local level. The initiative will also educate and inspire the audience to take Individual and broader social change. This is because, for the realization of the agenda 2030, youth must collaborate and work together with zeal and with sufficient SDGs knowledge.



## DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS

### Human Rights

MK-Africa is committed to an injury-free and illness-free workplace that is operated in an environmentally sound manner in compliance with all relevant laws and regulations. As our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we implemented a work from home policy which continues to be in effect. The policy has been designed in response to the current self-quarantine imposed by the Government of Kenya, that makes sure that working from home is beneficial to our employees and company.



We embrace diversity of people and ideas and take into consideration all our employees' opinions and ideas that could improve the company and protect them from workplace harassment, including physical, verbal, sexual or psychological harassment, abuse or threats.



*UNGC PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED:*



MK-Africa's greatest asset is our workforce. We recognize the importance of the safety and wellbeing of our employees as imperative to our operational success and take actions to uphold human rights and safeguard our employees. We updated our employee manual in 2021 which includes the following human rights initiatives:

- i. Implementing policies recognizing the health and safety of our employees as the first line of defense against environmental and safety hazards;
- ii. Providing a positive culture of safety in which employees feel free to speak up about non-conformances, undesirable or unsafe situations or any other Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)-related issue;
- iii. Maintaining a process to mitigate risk through the identification, classification, prioritization and control of hazards and risks;
- iv. Training employees on OHS requirements;
- v. Consulting and collaborating with employees, and other stakeholders on OHS matters;

In the coming year, we will be focusing on the following: -

- i. Issuing standards against physical, verbal, sexual or psychological harassment, abuse or threats and discrimination, including the MK-Africa Code of Conduct and zero-tolerance policies;
- ii. Implementing awareness and educational campaigns on human rights topics through trainings, posters, and targeted communications from management;
- iii. Maintaining robust ethics and compliance programs

## Labor

MK-Africa is a woman-owned small and medium-sized enterprise. Despite having 90% female staff and sub-contractors, the company is an equal employment opportunity employer. Employment opportunities are available regardless of gender, race, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other legally protected status. This principle applies to all aspects of the employment relationship, including recruiting, hiring, training, work assignment, promotion, transfer, termination, and wage and salary administration.



MK-Africa does not participate in any form of forced or bonded labor. We ensure employees sign their employment contracts and understand the policies and practices governing the conduct of the business. We comply with minimum wage standards by providing allowances to our interns and attachés to cater for their expenses.

MK-Africa recognizes that a satisfied workforce contributes to better business performance. For that reason, MK-Africa prioritizes the individual and collective needs of our employees and other stakeholders through comprehensive labor and hiring practices. Our diversity across the organization is a source of pride, which we strive to maintain through inclusive and objective employment processes. Our proactive labor and hiring efforts include:

1. Committing to compliance with labor and employment laws.
2. Promoting a work environment that is positive, diverse, open, and inclusive, where employees and other stakeholders can ask questions, express work-related concerns about ethics issues, make inquiries and report violations without fear of retaliation.
3. Ensuring that our employment-related decisions are based on relevant and objective criteria. This approach is defined in MK-Africa's recruiting, hiring, performance management, disciplinary action, non-discrimination, and equal employment opportunity policies.

## Environment

By protecting our environment, we contribute to ensuring a brighter future for not only our employees and their communities, but the world. MK-Africa implements sustainable practices into its operations and through participation in environmental stewardship programs, the company is reducing its environmental impacts by:

1. Participating in initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint
2. Regularly training employees on proper disposal methods for hazardous waste.
3. Choosing to work with suppliers and partners who adhere to applicable regulatory standards that promote environmental sustainability, including the use of environmentally preferable products and services.

**#MyLittleBigThing** by MK-Africa continues to be a catalyst for environmental and social by providing a platform for undergraduate university students from all over Africa to broaden their knowledge on the SDGs.

In 2021, we celebrated five years of harnessing the potential of youth to drive forward Africa's transformative agenda. The #MyLittleBigThing SDGs Challenge

covered the **"Green Agenda"** or SDGs 12 to 15, that focus on life on land, and life underwater, catalyze climate action, and encourage responsible consumption and production.

The competition was open to African Undergraduate and technical college students aged 18-25. MK-Africa conducted SDGs leadership series workshop on the 4 SDGs. The training was completed online through weekly webinars introducing key concepts with additional material delivered weekly through online self-paced studying on the [learning.mylittlebigthing.com](https://learning.mylittlebigthing.com).

Participants went through a 13-week program that started on Thursday 19th August until April 2022, Participants were then taken through a design

thinking workshop to define and refine their ideas. The workshop is human-centered



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that uses techniques, which communicate, interact, empathize and stimulate the people involved, obtaining an understanding of their needs, desires, and experiences. It is a unique approach to problem-solving; one that starts with the people you are designing for and ends with new solutions that are tailor-made to suit their needs. The human-centered design consists of three steps (or phases): inspiration, ideation, and implementation.

The finalists attended the second Design Thinking Workshop held on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, which began with immersion whereby participants were fully immersed in the problem/ scenario to understand the context, and factors affecting the problem, identify stakeholders and draw insights.

Empathize followed and this involved developing empathy for end users and learning to see the problem from their point of view and articulate the problem statement. Next was ideation and this involved developing new, fresh, and out-of-the-box ideas for the problem at hand. The prototype followed and this involved creating a visualization of their ideas. Participants were validated by learning to evaluate their own ideas and those of others objectively.



The workshop validated their assumptions and explored the opportunities that motivate the search for solutions for 4 SDGs in the region. Participants then went through community immersion where they were able to test their ideas with their target audience. This was a very practical program, whereby participants prototyped their solutions to the Design Challenge and build on the ideas as they progressed through this program.



The course followed the “Watch – Think – Do – Explore – Collaborate” pedagogy in a highly experiential learning format. Throughout the 13 weeks of the program, the participants discussed their own experiences and had an opportunity to deepen their knowledge in key areas where further sustainability practice and development was needed. Winners of the challenge won up to Kshs 100,000 alongside other exciting prizes.

## Overall Winner



**Name:** Olivia Jolie

**University:** Africa Nazarene University

**Course:** International Business Management

**Project:** Pine Kazi project

- An eco-friendly Kenyan fashion company established in 2019.
- Aim of making the fashion industry greener.
- Recycles pineapple post-harvest waste into a sustainable pineapple textile
- Used to craft a range of eco-friendly fashion products like shoes and bags.
- Aim to become the most sustainable fashion brand in Africa and across the world.
- **Update:** Setting up a work center which will be the main center for operation and conducting training activities.





## First runners up



**Name:** Nicholas Ndekei

**University:** USIU Africa

**Course:** Finance graduate

**Project:** Mass producing insects, fertilizer and bio fuels by using bio waste

- Zihanga LTD is a youth-led company that focusses on the mass production of insect protein in Lower Kabete Kiambu region.
- Zihanga derived its name from the United Nation sustainable development goal Zero hunger.
- Work with women and youth groups in trying to establish an insect collection farm where they farm in one land with the aim to make profit and to reduce risk premiums.

**Update:** Purchasing an electric drier which will be used to add value to the insects and their shelf life making sales easier.



## Second runners up



**Name:** Rachel Kaburu

**University:** Mount Kenya University

**Course:** Medicine

**Project:** M-Chota Solar Powered Irrigation System

- A solar-powered drip irrigation system, designed to benefit those who live in arid and semi-arid areas.
- The Kit comes with a cost-effective solar pumping technology with a high efficiency drip irrigation system which makes it cheaper and easier for farmers to grow fresh vegetables and other food crops.
- It leverages an inclusive financing model that makes it affordable for farmers to purchase and maintain the irrigation system.
- Integrate the MChota solar pumps with Pay As You Go software that enables farmers to make flexible payments till the completion of the purchase amount.

**Update:** Recently worked on fulfilling the first order in the market





## Tree planting activities

#MyLittleBigThing went into a partnership with Safaricom, Kenya Forest Service, KEPSA, Forest Management, and Kieni Community members in planting 3000 trees on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021 in Kieni Forest, with the chief guest being Principal Secretary for environment and forestry. The site is an example of the many sites that Kenya Forest Service has partnered with the private sector for rehabilitation and restoration. This was in recognition that collaboration between the private sector and government is key to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



## 12-hour challenge



The 12-hour challenge aims to rally more Kenyans to plant trees in line with the annual focus SDGs. Participants in the #MyLittleBigThing initiative are encouraged to partner with relevant clubs that share the same objectives and values for this noble course. It normally starts 12 days before the month ends and then clubs rally their members to plant trees building up to the final day challenge. This activity involves planting a single tree on the first day as the numbers build up as the days go by. Seedlings are sourced from Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and planted near campuses or in KFS zones.

In 2021, we planted more than 450 trees with PKF Kenya, the #mylittlebigthing finalists, and the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officers at Mount Kenya, Sirimone Gate to restore the ecosystem and give back to nature as Patrick Kuria hiked the mountain in 12 hours.

## **Anti-Corruption**

MK-Africa is committed to conducting its business ethically and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act and similar laws that prohibit improper payments to obtain a business advantage. We strictly prohibit bribery or other improper payments in any of its business operations. This prohibition applies to all business activities whether involving government officials or other commercial enterprises. A bribe or other improper payment to secure a business advantage is never acceptable and can expose individuals and MK-Africa to possible criminal prosecution, reputational harm, or other serious consequences.

The Company has both an Anti-Corruption policy and a Code of Business Ethics which all staff members are required to read and sign on it upon joining the organization. Each officer and employee of MK-Africa has a personal responsibility and obligation to conduct MK-Africa's business activities ethically and in compliance with all applicable laws. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. MK-Africa has developed a comprehensive program for implementing these policies through appropriate guidance, training, investigation, and oversight. During the reporting period, we inducted 2 new staff members who read and confirmed their understanding of both policies. There were no reported cases of violation of the policies in this period.

MK-Africa's commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct applies to all our employees. Our workforce is strictly required to comply with applicable anti-corruption laws that govern our operations. These requirements are detailed in our policies, procedures, and codes of conduct. We also recognize the critical role our partners and suppliers play in maintaining the company's reputation and ability to do business. We fight corruption through:

1. Diligent instruction and regular reinforcement of policies and procedures to prepare employees for corruption they might confront,
2. Policies on gifts, gratuities, and business courtesies and internal procedures that support MK-Africa's anti-corruption commitment.

Procedures include requiring pre-approvals from MK-Africa's CEO prior to extending certain business courtesies,

3. Regular audits and periodic monitoring are also implemented on various programs,
4. The MK-Africa Third Party Code of Conduct applies to any outside party conducting business with our company. This document covers our partners, suppliers, subcontractors, consultants and joint ventures on topics such as anti-bribery and anti-discrimination,
5. Seeking partners and suppliers who maintain the same high ethical standards by conducting a risk assessment and due diligence screening on potential third-party associations by our Board, and
6. Conducting ongoing audits and risk assessments on suppliers and partners on an as-needed basis.


## MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

MK-Africa will evaluate its effectiveness in meeting goals of the U.N. Global Compact through measurable data in the upcoming reporting period.

# Thank You

## Get in touch with us

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