

SAYARA
INTERNATIONAL

UN GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

UN Global Compact

Communication on Engagement

Sayara International

Section 1 – Statement of continued support by the chief executive

November 10, 2022

To our stakeholders:

We, Sayara International, are glad to confirm that we reaffirm our support to the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact as well as our strong admiration for and adherence to the values its ten principles represent and reflect.

The four areas that the principles cover (Human Rights, Labour, Environment, Anti-Corruption) align with the values and mission of Sayara as we aim to inform policy, engage communities, and effect change.

Therefore, we would like to share with you this Confirmation on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We reiterate and emphasize our strong believe in these principles and aspire to participate in the UN Global Compact by

- Attracting new participants to the UN Global Compact through our outreach efforts both locally and internationally.
- Including the UN Global Compact as an integral part of our future workshops, dialogue events and other community engagement activities.
- Supporting the UN Global Compact by lending our expertise and personnel to the Global Compact working groups.
- Putting the Global Compact-related issues as one of our key action points and engaging our members in collective action efforts to contribute to addressing those issues.

Attached to this, is a Communication on Engagement that describes our organization's actions that echo the principles and values that the Global Compact strongly stands for.

Yours Sincerely,

Saloni Gandhi

Director- Admin & Operations



Section 2 – Description of Actions

Background:

Sayara International is a social enterprise combining rigorous research and communication to create positive change in fragile and conflict-affected societies.

Sayara provides complex monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) and social and behavior change communication (SBCC) in the most challenging environments. We work on countering disinformation, measuring social cohesion, and assessing education, migration, inclusive governance, climate change, and health.

Diverse perspectives and an emphasis on equity bring strength to Sayara. Gender, inclusion, and intersectional identities are cross-cutting themes across all our internal practices and our programs for governments, civil society organizations, and international institutions.

Sayara has evolved across unstable contexts. Our decentralized structure – with a global leadership network and investment in local talent – enables agility and rapid start-up, while equipping us with unique values and competencies.

Founded in 2003, Sayara operates in 30 countries across Eastern Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Central Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Our teams of professionals are based in field offices in Khartoum, Kyiv (until recently), and Nairobi, with support from our offices in Dubai, London, Marseille, and Warsaw.

Find out more about Sayara International:

Website: <https://sayarainternational.com/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SayaraIntl>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sayarainternational>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/9407279/>

Our Activities and Services:

Those include:

1. Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MERL).

Sayara International believes that effective MERL helps humanitarian and development actors maintain credibility with donors and beneficiaries. We create solutions to help our partners maximize their field effect using local networks and modern technologies.

Sayara promotes CLA and MERL across program cycles. In a refugee camp, conflict zone, underserved rural community, or developing capital city, we build programming to reflect the complexity of the context.

Our MERL team develops systems, methodologies, and tools to fit our partners' frameworks (DFID, USAID, the EU, and UN agencies) and produce actionable evidence for decision-making.

Sayara has completed over 80 MERL projects in various industries during the previous decade. These projects have collected verification data with mobile technologies to measure humanitarian response in formal and informal settlements in Lebanon, built the architecture of an information management system to better respond to the migrant crisis in Eastern Africa, and evaluated various child protection, education, and public health programs in Afghanistan.

2. Social and Behavior Change Communications.

Sayara uses evidence-based social and behavioral change communications to improve community-government relations. Community participation and traditional and digital media help crisis-stricken communities modify their behavior on migration, public health, and elections.

We trust earned media. We can quickly and credibly respond to fast shifting news cycles by using local and national broadcasters and social media.

Sayara targets multi-level communications. Call-in radio, social media, TV dramas, face-to-face involvement, and mobile theater are among our primary influencers. We specialize in helping local government and civil society players understand and communicate with their audience across media.

3. Migration, Displacement, countering people-smuggling and trafficking.

Sayara researches and implements projects to protect migrants and displaced and trafficking people. Our fieldwork investigates why and how people leave their communities. We interview refugees, asylum seekers, smugglers, law-enforcement officers, and civil society representatives; develop robust mixed-methods surveys to track migration flows at the local and regional level; and conduct longitudinal research to measure the impact of displacement and migration on host communities. Our gender-sensitive research considers the needs of children, disabled persons, marginalized minorities, and other vulnerable groups.

Sayara creates evidence-based social and behavioral change campaigns to strengthen protection systems and migrant socioeconomic involvement in host communities.

We recently developed and implemented services to refer trafficking persons, vulnerable migrants, and refugees in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somaliland, and Sudan. We conducted conflict-sensitive evaluations of refugee return and internally displaced person settlements in Afghanistan and educated potential migrants. We examined Colombian communities' response to Venezuelan migrants, argued for a stronger humanitarian response, and found ways to enhance refugee-host relations.

4. Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Disinformation.

Sayara's approach to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) and Disinformation is based on the belief that weak governance and societal cohesiveness lead to extremism, violence, civil unrest, and democratic institutions' disintegration.

Sayara prioritizes sub-national government responsiveness and societal cohesion over counter-narrative, mass media, and internet engagement activities. Our strategy includes real-time target audience analysis, rapid reaction communications, and civil society organization and key influencer support.

Sayara has completed 12 global P/CVE projects. These projects have supported sub-national governance communications, civil society capacity, mobile theaters, sports diplomacy, comic books, and radio and television drama series. Sayara's ethnographers, nationwide surveys, and social media analysts work with our P/CVE experts.

Sayara analyzes disinformation in five Eastern European and South Asian countries.

Foreign state actors use disinformation to divide societies and undermine democracy. Sayara uses narrative and sentiment analysis and monitoring to combat disinformation. An AI gateway tracks data live.

5. Stabilization and Sub-National Governance.

Sayara blames instability on inadequate administration, societal cohesion, and ideological extremism and violence. We avoid funding "disparate agendas," as the recent U.S. Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) puts it. We eliminate government power vacuums where ideological extremism, non-state armed groups, disinformation, and violence thrive using stabilization measures to improve societal cohesiveness and government responsiveness.

Minimalism works. Sayara's decade-long stabilization experience taught us that programs don't need to be complicated or overly planned. Multi-faceted stabilization programs that rely on significant financial streams and technocratic models often lose sight of their initial goals and confuse local recipients. Large-scale programming may undermine government legitimacy and increase corruption.

We collaborate directly with sub-national government actors to leverage real-time data to inform fast reaction stabilization actions and give government and civil society counterparts with the tools they need to improve service delivery and achieve sustainable change.

6. Youth and Education.

How do kids and teens learn in war, displacement, and instability? Our research connects kids, parents, teachers, governments, and the donor community to explore how informal schools and education systems help youth to continue their education when formal school systems become unavailable or stop functioning

. We advocate community support for education and identify barriers to school enrollment, retention, inclusivity, and learning.

How our services and activities contribute to the UN Global Compact Principles:

Sayara's Main Action Points -

- For the purpose of developing and putting into action interventions on behalf of international and host nation donors, our researchers, social and behavior change communicators, and governance specialists collaborate directly with local subject matter experts, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. Sayara, in contrast to more conventional development companies, keeps permanent offices in each of the nations in which it does business. This strategy exemplifies our dedication to the regional economies as well as the communities that we are privileged to serve. Additionally, it enables us to give prompt support within the country, shorten the amount of time needed for launch, and capitalize on the expertise of our local team.

- Sayara is dedicated to the advancement of ethical principles and activities that benefit humanity. The rights, the dignity, and the interests of the communities in which and for which we operate are given priority by our "do-no-harm" precept.

Human Rights -

- Our research, Monitoring and evaluation and other activities within the field of development help to critically assess the aid being delivered to vulnerable populations and allows Sayara to positively contribute to the insurance of furthering the reach of those development efforts to the communities that need them the most. This in turn, increases the accountability of aid providers and allows for continuous advancements in development aid and ensures the fulfilment of the internationally declared and protected human rights.
- An important action that was taken by Sayara was carrying out a self-funded study on the humanitarian crisis in Tigray, Ethiopia and Eastern-Sudan to help guide the humanitarian efforts to limit the impact of the conflict on the people most affected by it.
- That, paired with our focus and emphasis on human rights-related projects allows us to purposefully impact the outcome of all the projects targeting the vulnerable communities and allows for better outcomes that reserve and protect the rights of those communities.
- Furthermore, our strict policies regarding human rights, safeguarding, and child protection helps guide all our activities and allows our members and target communities to report any abuses to the relevant authorities as well as allowing the vulnerable communities to take power and control over their situation.

Labour -

- Sayara's employees around the globe are entitled to their freedom of choice, in all aspects including the right to form and join unions and workers' associations. This is in addition to a supportive work environment that strongly prohibits violence and abuse, both physical and psychological. As a consulting agency to multiple local, national and international partners Sayara also advises and upholds these partners to the same principles, through our disinformation and capacity building activities.
- Within established rules, employees – both long and short-term - are protected against compulsory labor, this also –by extension- falls under employees' rights to the freedom of choice. Sayara imposes laws that prohibits all forms of coercion whether it is pushed by ideological or political purposes. To put this into action, Sayara develops and communicates clear policies that prevents using, being a part of, or benefiting from forced labor, this comes in many forms starting from Sayara's employees' contracts which can be described as clear, fair and direct. Sayara charges no fees during recruitment.
- Sayara is strongly against all forms of slavery, especially child labor. Sayara usually follows both international labor laws and takes into account national labor laws as a reference to its work laws and contracts for both long term and short-term employees, including rules for the minimum age of employment. Sayara only works with partners who mirror this mission and employs strict guidelines for safeguarding, and reporting of any violations to it during the implementation of its various projects around the globe.
- Sayara International is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, colour,

sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, status as a protected veteran, political views or activity, or other applicable characteristics. This also applies to all employment practices within our organization.

Environment -

- Following the impact of Covid-19 lockdown on the environment, Sayara moved towards more non-office-based business model whereby we are able to reduce our carbon footprint, by reducing the need for travel to work and thus cutting a portion of the CO2 emissions associated with that.
- In addition to that, Sayara's shift towards an Online-Based structure allowed the firm to reduce its dependence on paper and other elements obtained from the environment, thus taking action to reduce the impact on the world's endangered and vital forestland.
- This ideology extends beyond the limits of our workspaces into the field work that Sayara does by shifting towards the use of technological alternatives to traditional data collection methods, thus reinforcing the importance of protecting the environment to the local communities and local staff.

Anti-corruption

- Sayara implements strict internal policies to effectively counter corruption. This is reflected in our strict and well-structured recruitment policies, our transparent and strict financial framework as well as our tight adherence to and compliance with the rules of each region within which we operate.
- In addition to that, within the scope of our services, Sayara has conducted several projects directed at countering corruption by building the capacity of several ministries in Sudan, to allow for better communication with an emphasis on the importance of that on reducing corruption while increasing accountability.

Section 3 – Measurement of Outcomes

The mission of Sayara International is to ensure that accountability and sustainability are properly and fully integrated into the development and humanitarian sector. To achieve that Sayara creates knowledge, tools, initiatives as well as impact measuring activities to allow us to effectively inform policies, engage communities, and affect change. This, however, by default, makes measuring the impact and the value created by our services and activities challenging. To date, our main method of assessing and measuring impact is the growth of a network of partners from the local communities, National and state-level partners, and our international clients.

This effectively reflects our growing relevance in the sector of development and the growing importance of our services to the stakeholders and communities we serve alike.

Another important factor is the positive impact our services has had in informing policies within the sensitive contexts within which our clients operate.