

UN Global Compact

Communication on Engagement

November 2022



Statement of continued support

It is my pleasure to reiterate the continued commitment of Sightsavers to supporting and upholding the principles of the United Nations Global Compact.

We remain committed to embedding these throughout our organisation and the work we do. They are reflected in our culture and strategy, particularly those relating to human and labour rights, which forms the core of our advocacy work. We will continue to promote the principles through our actions and ensure that Sightsavers supports other organisations in their work to embody them, particularly for those who are not themselves signatories.

We will continue to do our part in living and strengthening these principles, and, as always, we will be actively thinking and re-thinking ways in which we can do more and better, for our community and our world.



Dr. Caroline Harper, CBE

Chief Executive Officer

Actions in support of the Global compact principles

Human Rights

Safeguarding our project participants and communities where we work is core to what we do at Sightsavers.

We employ a Global Safeguarding Team and have a network of designated leads based in all of country offices to ensure our practice fully aligns with our policy. During programme design, risk of harm, abuse and exploitation is identified, and appropriate mitigation strategies outlined; which are supported by the inclusion of safeguarding activities in the budgets for new projects. The UNCRC AND UNCRPWDs are both referenced in our Safeguarding Policy, and we work closely with partners and communities to ensure the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights, in line with Global Compact principles one and two.

We do this through safe recruitment, due diligence assessments, training, incident response and strengthening of feedback mechanisms. We continue to invest in our safeguarding approach and champion the rights of all people we work with, particularly children and adults with disabilities.

Please see below information regarding further work that Sightsavers is undertaking in support of the Sustainable Development Goals which relate directly to the Human Rights principles.

Labour

Sightsavers maintains its' zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery within our operations and strives to act ethically and with integrity to ensure modern slavery is not taking place in any part of our organisation or supply chain.

Sightsavers has in place a robust Global Anti-slavery policy, a copy of which can be viewed [here](#).

In compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (UK) we publish an annual statement which outlines the steps taken by Sightsavers to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking throughout its' business during each financial year.

In quarter 1 2022 new training was developed for all supply chain staff, to raise awareness of modern slavery and provide guidance on identifying non-compliance and how to report it. This training will be deployed to all employees by quarter 1 2023.

During 2022 Sightsavers developed an anti-human trafficking monitoring tool for partners working on a number of our projects.

Additional modern slavery monitoring and evaluation has been added to our partner due diligence process and this will be strengthened again in 2023, ensuring that we are consistently challenging those that we work with to demonstrate compliance with the law and expecting the highest standards of practice.

In September 2022 we developed Modern slavery KPI's for the coming year which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

In 2020 Sightsavers introduced a Racial Diversity Working Group with a purpose of ensuring that Sightsavers continues to focus on being an inclusive and racially diverse organisation.

The group also assesses Sightsavers' working environment to identify potential issues of racism. It monitors the mechanisms for preventing, investigating and addressing incidents of racism and supports internal and external communications on Sightsavers' values of equity and inclusion which counter racist behaviour.

The Racial Diversity Working Group is responsible for taking forward an agreed action plan which aims to foster and further improve racial diversity and inclusion across the global organisation.

A copy of our Global Equality and Diversity Policy can be found [here](#)

Founded in 2016, Sightsavers' Disability Inclusion Working Group draws its members from across the organisation to improve our diversity and accessibility.

The group's objectives are to:

- ❖ Promote staff commitment to inclusion
- ❖ Monitor inclusion efforts and identify gaps
- ❖ Enable Sightsavers to become an employer of choice for people with disabilities.

Our achievements:

- ❖ The group has created and launched a global disability training programme for staff and all new starters at the organisation.
- ❖ We have developed guidelines for print, digital and live event accessibility, and we help to test content to ensure it is accessible for people using screen readers.
- ❖ To ensure all internal and external written content is accessible, we have helped to produce document templates.
- ❖ We regularly bring in external trainers and organise speaker sessions for visiting inclusion champions.
- ❖ The group has helped Sightsavers achieve Disability Confident Leadership status, recognising the organisation's leadership as an inclusive employer.
- ❖ The group was nominated for a prestigious Bond Diversity award in 2020.

Environment

Sightsavers recognises the negative effects of climate change on the communities and systems that we work with, as well as the potential negative effects that our programmes may have on the environment. As a global development organisation, we have a responsibility to monitor and limit our environmental impact and support the communities and systems we work with to increase their resilience and adaptability to the negative effects of climate change.

Sightsavers has emphasised climate action as a priority for the organisation through:

1. Developing a Global Environmental Policy (April 2021) encompassing an Environmental Management System (EMS) into each country that we work.
2. Incorporating climate action as a cross cutting priority in each of the thematic strategies
3. Endorsing IAPB's 'Call to Action for environmentally sustainable practices in the eye health sector'

In our last report we advised that we had partnered with an environmental consultancy to embark on a project to understand our carbon footprint, implement a new environmental policy, environmental management system and strengthen our programme resilience to climate change. This project, which began in October 2020 has now progressed well beyond its initial scope.

Our Global Environmental policy is now embedded throughout the organisation, and we have established an in-house team to undertake carbon footprint calculation and plan strategy, globally.

We have progressed our organisational carbon accounting activities. We have clearly defined our organisational and operational boundaries for our carbon footprint in line with The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, a well-recognised international standard. We have worked with environmental representatives in our office locations to collect data for our global activities using an operational control approach.

Our annual carbon footprint has been calculated for 2021, and we have identified “hotspot” areas to focus on to reduce our overall emissions. We will monitor how we are doing in our efforts to reduce emissions through an annual carbon footprint exercise, and work on improving carbon literacy across the organisation.

In 2022, we released our carbon reduction plan (period 2020) for our head office in the UK, which outlines our commitment to achieving net zero by 2050. A copy of the plan can be found [here](#). An updated plan for 2021 will be available by the end of quarter 4 2022.

We have set up an environmental steering group, which consists of members from the senior management team who review the organisation's environmental management plans to ensure continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

During 2023, Sightsavers has plans in place for our in the UK to become certified in the international standard Environmental Management System ISO14001. Work towards this has been ongoing throughout 2022, which has included training for staff responsible for implementation.

During 2022, our climate action strategy team (CAST) was founded. Given the strategic and programmatic focus of our climate action work, CAST is responsible for leading the organisation's programmatic climate action work. It will be a place to share relevant activities that are being undertaken by contributing teams and incorporate learnings/policies into programmatic activities. These will be considered in line with national plans and relevant legislation.

The CAST will bring together the various teams focusing on climate change within their respective areas of expertise, including Global Technical Leads, Policy & Global Advocacy,

Campaigns & Communications, fundraising, Monitoring Evaluation & Learning, Research, Regional offices, and representatives from Country offices.

We have started work on a project for a Green Vision Centre in Sierra Leone, which will enable us to test different approaches for use in other projects. We are also working with organisations of people with disabilities to enable them to engage with climate initiatives in the countries where they are based.

Anti-corruption

Sightsavers has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud, bribery, corruption and the support of terrorism.

We have robust policies addressing these areas which are regularly reviewed and updated, most recently our Conflict of Interest, Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Counter Terrorism Financing Policies were updated September 2022.

We have appropriate processes to monitor and investigate fraud within our organisations and in our work with others. In 2021 we put in place a global reporting mechanism - 'Speak Up' whereby any Sightsavers beneficiary, employee, volunteer, partner, vendor, programme participant or other outside party can use the Speak Up service to report any inappropriate conduct. You can access the platform [here](#).

One of the categories highlighted in the reporting section are concerns relating to fraud, bribery and corruption and our video promoting the platform outlines an example of possible internal fraud, further promoting understanding and imbedding our zero-tolerance approach into organisation culture.

Our staff receive training on the signs of fraud, reporting channels and Sightsavers' policy.

Sightsavers also has processes in place to ensure that we do not employ or work with anyone who is the subject of a range of international and government sanctions, which undergo regular reviews.

Further work in support of the Sustainable Development Goals

For your reference, please find a link to the Sustainable Development Goals [here](#)

In **Cameroon**, we worked with our partners to empower local actors in the production and use of disaggregated data (including disability) to strengthen local governance and transparent decision-making. As part of this, we conducted a local council pilot and supported a voluntary local review (VLR) in Maroua. Through this VLR we identified gaps in local level inclusive data and produced key recommendations to advocate regional and national level decision-makers to act. As a result of this work, we are now partnering with Cameroon's national statistics office to address the data gaps and explore opportunities to scale up the pilot's learnings across other local councils in order to make their data collection tools more inclusive.

In **Nigeria** we have put a particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and Disability Data disaggregation collaborating with the Office of the Senior Special Adviser to the President on SDG to prioritise disability data on the SDG data indicator developed by

the National Bureau of Statistics. This led to realigned data indicators and the signing up to the Inclusive data charter by Nigerian authorities, Nigeria is now an Inclusive Data Charter champion.

In **Zimbabwe**, Sightsavers promoted SDGs localisation and amplification of local issues of sustainable development. In June 2022 we supported the SDGs reference Group convened by Poverty Reduction Forum to conduct Voluntary Local Reviews. An example is in Bulawayo where we brought together Civil Society Organisations to assess the progress on the implementation of the SDGs. While Bulawayo City Council has done significantly well in putting in place the policy and legal framework for most goals and aligning them to national development framework and Agenda 2030.

In **India**, Sightsavers is engaged in on-going efforts with UN Resident Coordinator's office (UNRCO) on two initiatives: the identification of indicators where disability inclusion is extremely important and getting those indicators included in India's National Indicators Framework for monitoring the implementation of SDG's. Development of a comprehensive report with 10-point advocacy charter after nationwide consultation at regional level with disability community based on VNR follow-up and build back better in the post-pandemic world. In the first initiative, an initial consultation with experts was held to identify disability specific indicators in India's National SDG Indicators Framework for monitoring implementation of SDGs.

At the state level in **India**, Sightsavers has led or supported in several initiatives that contribute directly towards SDGs' implementation in seven different states. An example is the call for localisation of SDGs and working towards LNOB principles where Sightsavers India partnered with "SAMARTH", an Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPD) in the Gajapati district of Odisha, to support their institutions building measures and provide them local strategies to strengthen leadership for persons with disabilities.

In **Pakistan**, we worked with the SDG unit of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives to strengthen disability disaggregated data in the SDG monitoring systems and collaborated with community based inclusive development network, which includes people with disabilities and their representative organisations. Following the success of a pilot to strengthen disability data for SDG 4: quality education, the ministry is now replicating this approach for monitoring the other SDGs at both national and provincial levels, in collaboration with Sightsavers and other organisations. By strengthening Pakistan's SDG monitoring frameworks to include disability disaggregated data, key decision-makers can improve planning and budgeting to deliver more equitable outcomes for people with disabilities.

The Government of **Bangladesh**, Sightsavers, Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh, UNDP and Australian Aid jointly organised a mapping exercise workshop to review the disability components in the social protection programmes in Bangladesh with the OPDs in December 2021 in Dhaka. 12 OPDs explored the gaps that exist in Bangladesh's social protection programmes following the outbreak of COVID-19 and the way forward.

In **Sierra Leone**, we supported the national SDG4 campaign conducted by the ministry of education as well as the roll out of the new radical inclusion policy. We are now part of the steering committee in charge of the education policies implementation and monitoring: Radical Inclusion Strategy and Inclusive Education Strategy.

In **Senegal**, we worked with the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Cooperation and CONGAD forum to build the capacity of civil society organisations and mobilised citizens, including young people, women, people with disabilities and farmers, to equip them with the knowledge and tools to encourage the government to take urgent and ambitious action on inclusive data. This advocacy enabled us to facilitate direct conversations between non-state actors and the government and resulted in an inclusive, participatory process to develop Senegal's Inclusive Data Charter action plan. This also enabled us to push for comprehensive, disaggregated national level statistics and localisation. In their 2022 voluntary national review submission, the government of Senegal has acknowledged the importance of championing inclusive data to ensure that no one is left behind.

As part of the 2nd edition of the Voluntary National Review of **Mali**, Sightsavers supported the National Platform for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. The phases of pre-survey, organisation of data collection, centralisation and the pre-survey, data collection, centralisation and processing phases included an overview of the distribution of the 1,014 participants in the civil society-initiated assessment between the regions and the district of Bamako, gender, type of disability, category of organisation, level of education and age groups of participants. This helped in identifying the priority SDGs for Mali from the perspective of civil society before formulating recommendations for the Voluntary National Review.

In **Ghana** Sightsavers continues to serve as the co-chair of the CSO platform for SDG 10. In that capacity we participated in the planning and strategic meetings leading up to Ghana's VNR reporting this year and lobbied together with other stakeholders to ensure that the government organise consultations for the disability community for their voices and issues to be factored into the government's VNR report. Sightsavers provided technical support to the CSO platform to prepare a shadow report to the government's report.

In **Zambia** we built OPD capacity to advocate for themselves following the previous VNR presented in 2020. Working with ZAFOD we built capacity of local OPDs to engage with stakeholders and government on inclusive development particularly inclusive education. ZAFOD engaged Minister of local government to include PWDs in the Area Development Committees (ADC) to ensure issues affecting PWDs are tabled. This resulted in a directive from the Minister to ADCs to ensure that there is inclusion of PWDs in the committees.

In **Tanzania**, Sightsavers contributed to SDG 4 by launching the model for pre-primary and primary inclusive education. We also led and supported the development of the National Strategy of Inclusive Education 2021-2026. We also supported the domestication of the Marrakesh Treaty on accessible literature in Tanzania in February 2022, this will promote inclusion for people with visual impairment increasing their access to reading materials.

In **Kenya**, we aligned our actions to fully support the SDG Forum work in delivering the 2030 agenda more broadly. This strategic working relationship, especially around SDG's 3, 4, 8, and 17, allowed us to join the subcommittee for SDG 3 on health. On SDG 4 we are working with the Elimu Yetu coalition, which has a wider membership. On SDG 8 we have been active and participated in the COSP side event during 2022, where we shared on progress towards economic empowerment specific to persons with disability as a subset of SDG 8 and aligned to the principle of leaving no one behind.

