# QIMA 2022 UN Global Compact CoP Report



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# ▲ FACTORY WORKERS OVERTIME > 20%

FACTORY CO2 EMISSIONS 103 MT/YEAR

WORK-RELATED ACCIDENTS 0.02%

> WASTE RECYCLING +23%



# Content

- Overview 3
- 3 Letter from our CEO
- 4 About QIMA

#### **Our solutions' impact** 6

- 7 Social responsibility and worker wellbeing
- 11 Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains
- 13 Sustainable food practice
- 17 Human rights & environmental due diligence and ESG
- 18 Technology driven and boots on the ground

### 19 Working with our ecosystem

- 20 Our COVID-19 response
- 22 Capacity building with training and information resources
- 24 Partnerships and associations

### **25 Our commitments**

- 26 Environmental initiativesGiving back to society
- 30 Cultivating a growth culture
- 31 Building a QIMA community
- 32 How we maintain integrity
- 34 Governance structure

### **35 United Nations Global Compact Index**

# About this report

In 2021, QIMA joined the United Nations Global Compact community, committing to internalize the Global Compact's principles and support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this report, we outline our journey so far with our clients and their supply chains our teams and our ecosystem partners.





# Letter from our CEO

International trade is an integral part of modern life as we know it. And now more than ever, global supply chains have a role to play in keeping the world connected, even as humanity is facing mounting challenges in the form of climate change, pandemics, and geopolitical turmoil. At QIMA, we take pride in doing our part to keep global trade running and consumers safe, but our mission does not stop there. We work tirelessly to make international procurement more responsible, ethical, and sustainable.

In 2021, we became a participant in the United Nations Global Compact initiative. This move reflects our commitment to responsible business practices and our deep-held belief that greater sustainability on a worldwide scale can only be achieved if all stakeholders join in a common effort.

Fostering cooperation and helping forge stronger partnerships between all links of the global supply chain has been a fundamental aspect of QIMA's business since day one. With more than 4,000 employees and operations in 95 countries, we are on the ground wherever our clients' products are made, and our digital solutions provide visibility and traceability to make products consumers can trust.

As expectations from regulators and consumers for more transparent and socially responsible supply chains will keep increasing, the QIMA team is ready to do our part supporting our customers. With our traceability solutions, as well as CSR audit and certification programs, we help businesses globally, from individual farmers to multi-national retailers, address every aspect of social and environmental compliance. Meanwhile, our quality control programs and state-of-the-art product safety testing capabilities help make sure that only safe, quality and durable products reach the consumer.

At QIMA, we are aware that in our line of work, trust is everything. In our role as independent experts, we are relied on by multiple stakeholders of the global supply chain for accurate information, impartiality, and discerning advice. To ensure that we always remain worthy of this trust, we have a strong set of eight core values in place, woven through our strategic decisions and day-to-day operations. One of the paramount QIMA values is integrity, which guides all of our external and internal interactions. And while we are passionate about helping our clients succeed, we remember that success starts with a trustworthy team: this is why our employee relations are built on a foundation of respect, accountability and growing together.

In this, our first report as a participant of the UN Global Compact, we share an update on our progress so far with our clients and their supply chains, our teams and our ecosystem partners. We are proud to join the thousands of other companies committed to creating a better future through responsible action, and look forward to sharing the evidence of our efforts in the years to come.

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Sebastien Breteau, QIMA Founder and CEO





# About QIMA

At QIMA, we make it our mission to offer smart and sustainable supply chain solutions that enable our clients to make products consumers can trust.

We combine on-the-ground expertise for quality control and assurance, product safety testing and certification, and human rights & environmental due diligence solutions with a digital platform that brings accuracy, visibility and intelligence for quality and compliance data.

We operate in 95 countries and help more than 17,000 global brands, retailers, manufacturers, and food growers achieve quality excellence and work towards safer and more transparent supply chains.

# The QIMA story

Founded in Hong Kong, QIMA now employs more than 4,000 employees in over 60 offices and labs in 95 countries, offering solutions to clients in the consumer goods, food and life sciences sectors.

Since day one, one of our key areas of focus was taking the Testing, Inspection and Certification (TIC) industry online. Today, with tech teams in Asia, Europe and the Americas, we offer our clients digital solutions that empower brands, retailers, and manufacturers with real-time collaboration and actionable data for quality and compliance management.

Over the years, we have expanded our services from product inspections and testing to comprehensive supply chain solutions that address every aspect of responsible procurement, including certification, ethical compliance, environmental impact, supply chain visibility, product traceability, and more.

Beyond developing our internal capabilities, we have also grown our network and service offerings through global acquisitions as a part of our expansion strategy. In the past five years, QIMA has welcomed great teams to the group, with the addition of entities in consumer goods testing (Hansecontrol, NYCE), inspections (SBE), Food and Agrifood (QIMA WQS, QIMA IBD, Quantilab) and Life Sciences (Synelvia, Newtone, Monasterium).

QIMA by the numbers







### Our presence

	North America Vancouver Buffalo Charlotte Miami Ensenada Guadalajara Guadalajara Monterrey Mexico city Mexico city Mexico city Santiago Rosario Asuncion Botucatu Petrolina	Europe Rotterdam Hamburg Budapest Budapest London Paris Lille Poitiers Poitiers Lyon Toulouse Geneva Madrid Lisbon Porto Porto	South Asia New Delhi Mumbai Kakinada Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Mumbai Kakinada Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Dhaka Shanghai Dongguan Hong Kong Dongguan Hong Kong Dongguan Hong Kong Dongguan Hong Kong Dongguan Hong Kong Shenzhen Tianjin Guilin Fuzhou Shenzhen Dongguan Hong Kong Dongguan Hong Kong Shenzhen Hong Kong
esh Animal Proces	sed Food	Cosmetics, Pharma & Biotech industries	R&D & Efficacy testing services

Food

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### **Life Sciences**



# Our solutions' impact

Supply chain sustainability is as complex as modern-day global supply chains themselves. It is a multi-faceted issue that involves collaboration between all stakeholders, including industry players, government organizations, participants of voluntary schemes and initiatives, and more. At QIMA, our supply chain sustainability solutions are focused on delivering impact through collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement.

### **IN THIS SECTION**

- Social responsibility and worker wellbeing
- 11 Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains
- 13 Sustainable food practice
- 17 Human rights & environmental due diligence and ESG



# Social responsibility and worker wellbeing

# Ethical audit programs

QIMA's ethical audit programs are designed to help consumer goods brands and retailers We understand that when it comes to ethical and sustainable procurement, there can integrate sustainability into their sourcing decisions and engage with ethical actors at be no one-size-fits all solution. This is why our ethical audit programs can be tailored to every step of their value chain. In an industry where factory audits are too often reduced support a client's existing CSR program, or conducted to QIMA's own Best-In-Class protocol, as well as a number of internationally recognized schemes for responsible sourcing. to a standardized, "box-checking" formality, we design programs that produce a realistic picture of the working conditions and human rights situation at the factory, put workers By offering our clients a selection of key international standards for ethical audits, first, and educate all stakeholders on the importance of building an ethical supply chain. we provide them with a clear framework for making their supply chain more ethical and

In our approach to ethical audits, we reject the "comply or die" mentality in favor of driving meaningful, lasting improvement and fostering long-term, productive cooperation between buyers and suppliers.

Our ethical audit protocols are tailored to the specifics of our client's and their supplier's business, but always cover all key domains of human rights and occupational safety, including labor practices, worker representation, discrimination, disciplinary practices, hygiene, health and safety, and waste management.

Ethical audits performed in 2021:

**+95%** vs. 2019 (pre-pandemic)

# Internationally recognized ethical audit schemes

sustainable. In addition, working to established auditing schemes helps reduce audit fatigue on suppliers by avoiding duplicate audits, and makes it easier for brands and retailers to share information about their supply networks, for greater transparency and cooperation.

Here are the globally recognized ethical audit schemes which QIMA supports in the capacity of member and/or accredited auditing partner.













# Worker voice solutions

The wellbeing of workers is one of the key aspects of the QIMA audit philosophy, which is why we use a variety of tools and methods to make worker voice heard in the course of our audits.

Despite the growing awareness of the importance of responsible business conduct, some factory managers still view audits as a formality, more interested in getting a passing grade than making real change. An audit is only a brief window into what happens at the factory day to day, and it is not uncommon for business actors to distort the real picture in the hope of impressing the auditor. Factory workers, however, know the real story, and a key aspect of our work is to make sure they can tell it – crucially, without facing retaliation.

Our worker hotline, worker voice surveys and proactive callback service provide safe and confidential channels for factory workers to report any coercion or retaliation that may occur as a result of their involvement in the audit, or complaints that they may not have been comfortable sharing with the auditor on-site.



### Worker Hotline

Worker interviews are a key part of any ethical audit conducted by QIMA, but in some situations, workers may feel uncomfortable reporting problems to the auditors in the factory: for example, if they have reason to believe that the factory management may penalize them.

Our worker hotline is a safe and confidential channel allowing workers to share additional information even after the audit has been completed, serving as a link between factory workers and the buyers of the products they make. It also fulfills the role of a grievance mechanism required of businesses under applicable human rights due diligence legislation (such as the upcoming EU Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence Directive) and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

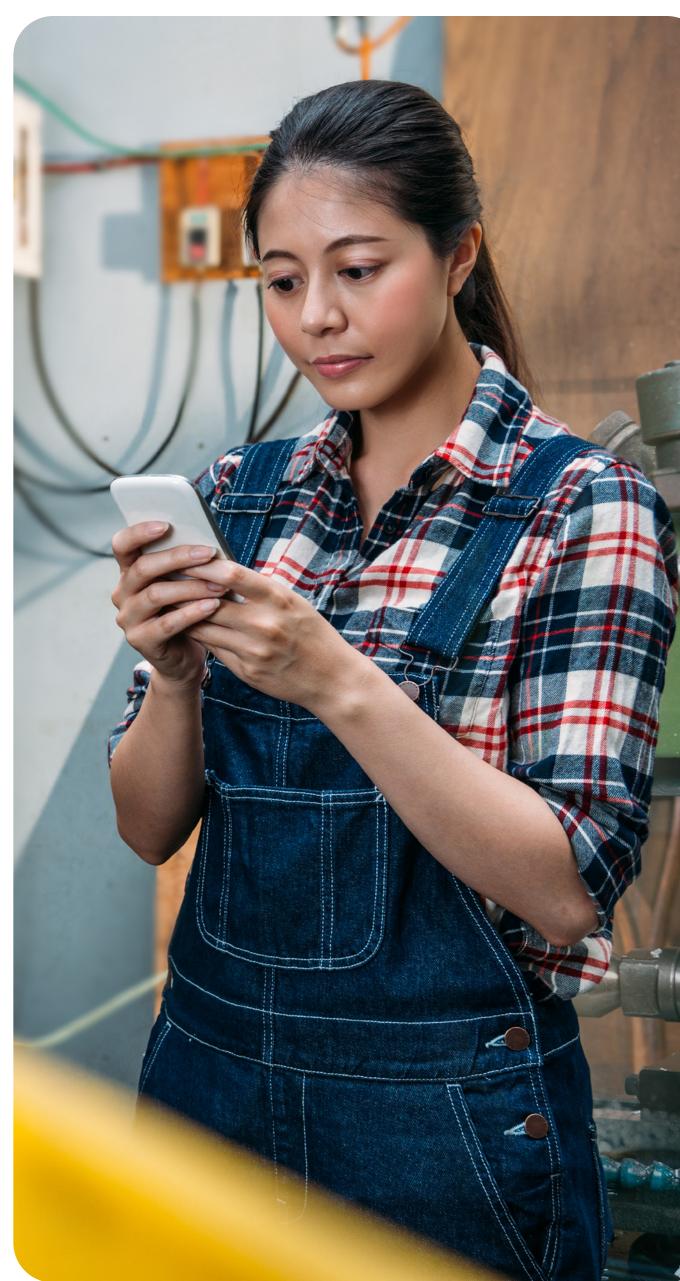
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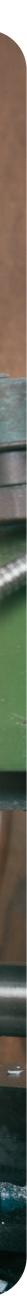


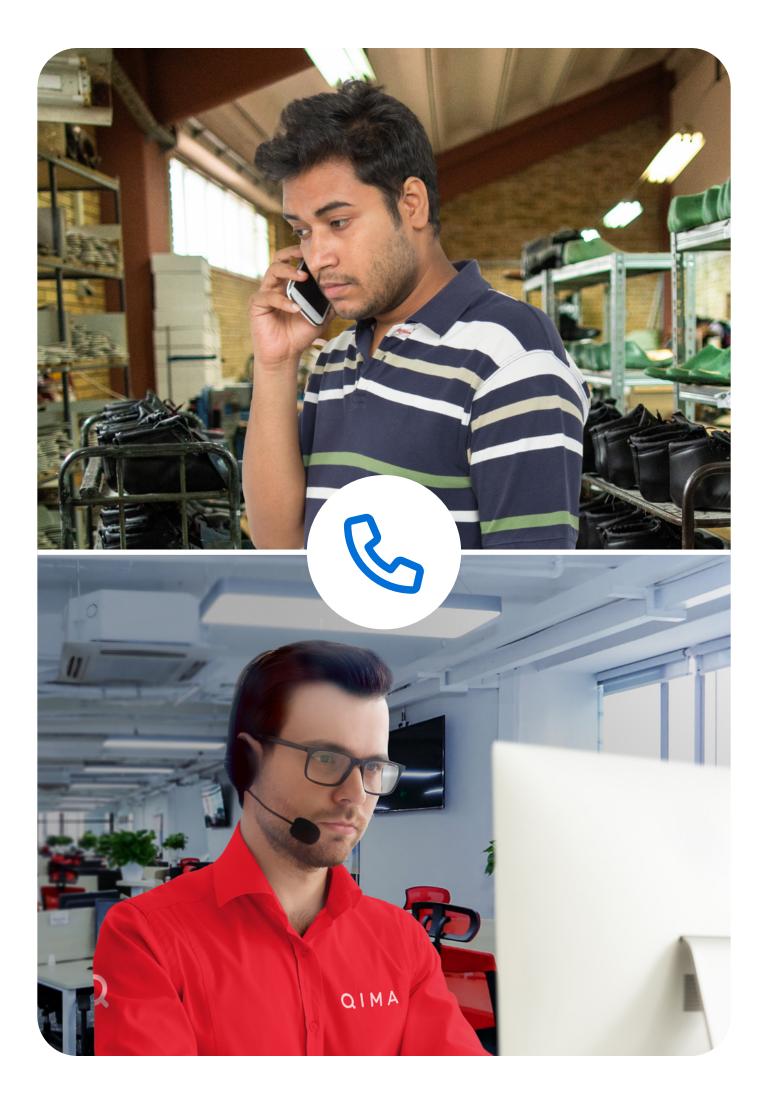


# **Our worker voice solutions**

- **14** countries
- **8** languages







### Worker voice surveys

To make worker voice heard across global supply chains, we have integrated easily accessible tech solutions into QIMA factory audits, providing workers with a safe and effective mechanism to report any relevant information about their workplace, both reactively and proactively.

An example of a reactive report would be an account of abuse and threat in the workplace, or a violation of human rights, such as restriction of freedom or withholding of passports. QIMA works with a third-party worker's voice survey solutions company to allow workers to report such violations safely and anonymously, without exposing themselves to risk of retaliation by the factory management.

By contrast, when acting proactively, a worker could report a perceived structural risk so it can be addressed before it is exacerbated. Being well-positioned to identify risks before they happen, workers can prevent them from escalating by raising concerns early and in a secure way.

### **Callback Service**

Fear of retaliation is perhaps the biggest factor that can prevent factory workers from giving honest responses in an auditor interview, or even from reaching out anonymously after the audit, despite the channels being provided. Furthermore, failing to protect a worker from reprisals can drastically reduce the likelihood of other factory employees coming forward with grievances.

To build trust between our teams and the workforce of the factories we audit, we have designed our callback service to ensure worker safety, uncover the complete picture of the working environment, and make it clear to the factory management that both QIMA and their buyers have zero tolerance for retaliation against workers in connection with the audit. This service also allows us to reach certain vulnerable groups of workers that may lack an opportunity to speak during an audit: such as migrant workers and homeworkers.

# Structural, fire and electric safety

### Structural and fire safety audits

QIMA's structural audit teams of licensed civil engineers work on the ground to identify, prevent and mitigate risks to life and health in the workplace. In the course of a structural audit, we conduct a comprehensive check of buildings and premises that includes evaluation of the building's structural system, plan and alignment, fire and electric safety checks, and more.

Critically, we carry out follow-up work with the factory to assist in the implementation of the corrective action plan, ensuring that the audit intervention does not stop at the fact-finding stage, but results in tangible improvement.



### Life and Building Safety initiative

Ever since the deadly Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh in 2013, which took the lives of over a thousand people, the state of factory safety in the developing world has been thrust into the spotlight. Almost a decade later, collaboration of private and public organizations has made progress towards ensuring safe working conditions worldwide, but the pace of improvement varies from country to country. Tragically, industrial fires and collapses still destroy lives and livelihoods every year, with South and Southeast Asia being among the most vulnerable regions. QIMA is one of the founding members of Life and Building Safety (LABS), an industry-driven initiative where private sector players are proactively addressing building safety activities in their supply chain and operations. The proactive approach to building safety is crucial, as given the pre-existing poor state of buildings in many supplier countries, basic measures like annual checks for compliance with local codes are often insufficient to prevent accidents, injury, or death.

Focused on the apparel, footwear and accessories industry, LABS aims to improve worker safety by effectively identifying and remediating the most pressing risks related to fire, electrical, and structural building safety and evacuation. This is achieved through developing a single country-based, coherent, and consistent life-safety program to assess factories and provide a framework for monitoring as well as ensuring mitigation and remediation.

Under the LABS Initiative, in addition to applicable country laws, factories commit to adhering to a harmonized, country level standard around fire, electrical, and building safety. In Vietnam and India, LABS also operates a helpline enabling workers to directly report issues related to fire, electrical, and structural safety issues in their workplace. Regular updates on the state of factory remediation are posted on the LABS website, along with detailed status reports and corrective action plans on each factory surveyed.



# Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains

Reducing the burden of global supply chains on the planet by managing their environmental impact is high on the agenda of businesses and governments alike. At QIMA, we center our solutions around safeguarding communities and the environment: including quality control services, environmental audits and chemical management.

### Quality control and quality assurance

Every day, quality and safety issues cause products to be returned or discarded by the consumers, or even pulled from the market by the authorities, leading to waste and unnecessary costs. The lion's share of quality issues stems from defects that occur during manufacturing and can be prevented with the right quality control and assurance interventions. QIMA's QC and QA programs help brands, retailers and manufacturers catch defects at various stages of a product's life cycle, from design to final production. Safer and durable products translate into reduced waste and lesser risk to consumers and the environment, improving supply chain resilience and sustainability in the long term.

### Raw materials solutions

Awareness and concern for the quality, authenticity, and ethical provenance of raw materials are on the rise globally. Our solutions help our clients ensure raw material traceability, verify the working conditions from the mill, farm or component factory to the final production site, and assess the environmental impact of their production at the raw material stage. QIMA's range of solutions for raw materials include inspections for fabrics, yarns and leather; performance testing; environmental analysis and toxicology; color and shade consistency checks; and fabric mill technical audits that cover, among other issues such as raw material management and manufacturing processes.



# Environmental solutions and chemical management

### **Environmental audits**

With a comprehensive range of environmental audit programs, we help brands, retailers and importers monitor and improve the environmental impact of their supply chain. Our environmental audits are aligned with the ISO 14001 standard. QIMA is also an approved verifying body for Higg FEM (Higg Facility Environmental Module) under the Higg Index, a standardized supply chain measurement tool for environmental, social and labor impacts. Besides ISO14001 and Higg FEM, we can also provide audits which cover environmental management, such as ICS and SMETA. We understand that when it comes to environmentally sound and sustainable procurement, there can be no one-size-fits all solution. This is why our environmental audit programs can be tailored to support a client's existing CSR program, or conducted to QIMA's own best-in-class protocol, as well as a number of internationally recognized schemes for responsible sourcing.

### Waste water testing

Combining lab testing services for waste water testing with an onsite environmental audit can help achieve more visibility into suppliers' environmental performance, identify whether harmful substances are being improperly disposed of in the water supply, and address the pollution risks appropriately.

### **Chemical management and certification**

Poor chemical management at factories, mills or farms can expose people and planet alike to toxic substances, resulting in immediate and long-term damage and hazards. Nowadays, proper chemical management is compulsory for any manufacturer, especially as the regulatory requirements on the use of chemicals in consumer products are becoming stricter to protect human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals.

QIMA's chemical management services help brands and manufacturers identify toxic substances and chemical hazards involved in the making of their products, as well as assess, manage and minimize the associated risks.

To help brands and manufacturers provide consumers with the assurance that their products are safe and free from hazardous chemicals, our lab testing team offers specialized tests to detect a wide range of substances, including APEO, PFAS, RSL, phthalates, heavy metals, and more.

In addition to testing, we also offer certification under our Safe/Safe+ program for textile, glove and footwear suppliers and retailers. Workshops and supplier training sessions carried out through our testing and certification subsidiary Hansecontrol help businesses gain the knowledge and skills they need to improve chemical management in their production.

#### **Chemical control audits**

Chemical control audits help businesses manage their chemical compliance, ensure safe handling and proper disposal of chemicals, and promotebest practices at every stage of their supply chain.

QIMA's chemical control audit programs use protocols based on the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) principles or custom compliance requirements. Our lab testing teams can provide chemical control audits at different production stages.







# Sustainable food practice

Reaching all around the world and employing over two billion people, global food supply chains have a vast impact on the planet and all the people on it. The scale and complexity of the global food system make transparency an ever-greater challenge: at the same time as the demand for accurate information about the food industry's practices is at an all-time high among consumers, governments, and food businesses themselves.

At QIMA, we help meet this need and make the global food supply chains safer and more sustainable through our services for the food and agriculture industry, which include audits of farms and food processing facilities, as well as certifications under a number of internationally recognized organic, sustainability and animal welfare schemes. We also provide training on best practices and certification schemes for food inspectors and auditors, and other members of the food industry.



Better for the people QIMA offers members of the food industry a number of internationally-recognized certification programs that assess the safety of food products and processes for everyone involved in their production and consumption, from workers to the end –consumer, as well as programs that address more specific consumer concerns, such as gluten content, vegan certification and animal welfare.

### GHP and GMP Supplier Audits (Primus) for the Food Industry

The Global Markets Programme is a stepwise pathway towards GFSI-recognised certification for companies that lack or wish to improve their food safety systems. Companies that leverage this program develop effective food safety management systems through a systematic continuous improvement process.

### Safe for the workers

All participants of the food industry are increasingly attentive to issues of worker welfare, especially in the area of farm labor. QIMA's ethical audits in the food industry aim to increase transparency, and shed light on any issues related to human rights and worker safety, and provide food manufacturers and buyers the tools to make the food supply chain more ethical and responsible.

Our ethical audits for the food industry follow the SMETA social audit methodology developed by the Sedex auditor group, of which QIMA is a member.

### SMETA ethical audits for the food industry

**41%** growth in 2021

# BRGS



Featured Standards







### Safe for the consumers

It is estimated that 600 million people – almost 1 in 10 – fall ill every year due to contaminated food. To help make safe and nutritious food more easily accessible for people worldwide, QIMA offers members of the food industry a path to certification under a number of internationally recognized schemes that cover food safety, organic food production, as well non-GMO, gluten-free and plant-based certification.

### Internationally recognized food certification schemes

### **GFSI Recognized Certifications**

Created in 2000 and consisting of 42 of the world's largest food manufacturers and retailers, the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) is not itself a certification program, but recognizes and lends its authority to legitimate certification schemes, acting as a "food safety passport" in the global marketplace.

The array of GFSI-recognized certifications allows producers to approach food safety in a holistic way, addressing the impacts on people and the planet. Producers can select certifications focused on consumer health, worker safety, environmental sustainability, animal welfare, and fair trade, for a variety of products and regions.

Through our subsidiaries QIMA IBD and QIMA WQS, we can provide businesses with organic food certification and GFSI food safety schemes covering BRC Global Standards, GLOBALG.A.P., SQF, IFS (food), PrimusGFS and more.

#### **Gluten-Free Certification**

Endorsed by the National Celiac Association, the Gluten Free Food Program has earned the trust of customers suffering from celiac disease and gluten sensitivity by ensuring that participating companies adhere to strict gluten-free production processes, while also helping food companies reduce expenses and increase efficiency in their gluten-free food production operations.

#### **Plant-based and vegan certification**

As increasing numbers of people worldwide are changing their diets for environmental and ethical reasons, the demand for vegan and plantbased products keeps growing. By enabling food manufacturers to obtain certification under plantbased and vegan certification programs, QIMA makes it easier for the consumers to choose plant-based foods with certainty.

Through QIMA/WQS we offer the BRCGS Plant-Based **Global Certification**, a global standard that requires strict auditing and assurance processes to prove an organization's commitment to plant-based production and sourcing. As an approved provider by BRCGS, the QIMA/WQS team is qualified to certify food manufacturing businesses, helping them safeguard brand reputation, mitigate risk, and showcase plantbased products.



#### **Non-GMO Certification**

With many different opinions and debates around GMO, consumers are looking for more transparency on whether the food product they buy contain any genetically modified organisms. The IBD Non-GMO Certification Program was created to help manufacturers provide consumers with assurance that their products are free from GMO or only contain pre-approved GMO materials. Through this program we also support industry players in the food sector by providing guidelines on food labeling standards for specific segments and legislations.

### **Organic Food Certification**

Consumers choose organic products for health and environmental reasons and want confirmation that any product marketed as organic was produced without artificial pesticides, genetic modifications, or petroleum-based fertilizers, as well as not crosscontaminated with non-organic inputs during production.

We can offer a wide range of organic certification inspection services through our subsidiary QIMA IBD, which is accredited across the Americas and European regions with internationally recognized schemes including USDA Organic Certification, The Organic Brazil Certification, EU Organic, Canada Organic, IFOMA and Regenerative Organic



# Better for the planet

In recent years, global consumers have become more aware of the impact of their purchases on the environment and society. Our QIMA WQS and QIMA IBD teams offer a wide range of food sustainability certifications to support food industry players across the value chain. Through these certifications, organizations can reduce environmental and social impacts, optimize their sustainability performance, and demonstrate their commitment to sustainable food production.

### Sustainability certifications

QIMA IBD offers certifications under a number of sustainability programs that promote conservation, biodiversity, environmental recovery and inclusive agricultural practices. These include internally developed certification programs, such as IBD Fair Trade, as well as internationally recognized initiatives, including the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), the Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT), International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC), and Farm Sustainability Assessment under SAI (Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform).



Through QIMA WQS, we also support the coffee trade industry with certification under schemes designed to improve sustainability and worker welfare in the coffee industry, such as the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, 4C, and C.A.F.E. Practices.



### Animal welfare certification

With increasing public and market attention on the inner workings of the food industry, producers are required to comply with increasingly stricter animal welfare standards if they want to enjoy profitable partnerships with major buyers and avoid consumer backlash.

Our QIMA/WQS teams can help food producers and organizations demonstrate compliance through audits and by achieving certification against animal welfare international requirements.







# Human rights & environmental due diligence and ESG

The past few years have seen a substantial push in legislative and other expectations for companies to exercise due diligence and handle Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues, aimed at building a level playing field for greater responsible business conduct.

In the due diligence space, many countries have issued new legislation, or are preparing to do so. The requirements reach well beyond a company's own operations, often deep into the supply chain and can cover specific topics or commodities.

QIMA is developing comprehensive human rights and environmental due diligence solutions, to support companies of all sizes, ensuring risk is adequately identified across business partners and effective remediation is provided where needed.

For ESG, there are not only ESG risks to be managed, but also opportunities to be captured, focused on impact and contributing to the sustainable development agenda.

## **During 2021-2022, we have** specifically created solutions for:

- **ESG and Due Diligence Risk Assessment:**
- > Sustainable and circular materials: post-production waste

> Supply Chain Mapping: helping companies to identify and connect with suppliers in any tier of the supply chain, in order to include them in their risk assessment and management programs

> **Traceability:** a toolset created to trace products along the supply chain, establish an electronic trail of documents and perform desktop or onsite verification where needed

to complement traditional means of risk management, such as audits, CAPs, training and hotlines, we are building tools which allow companies to access comprehensive, real-time and pre-sourcing risk insights

supporting products for a circular economy through testing and building a traced loop of





# Technology driven and boots on the ground

QIMA's expertise in quality control and compliance is tightly intertwined with our passion for leveraging digital technologies towards more resilient and sustainable supply chains. Through our digital platform, our clients can easily access not only all of our services, but all of their quality and compliance data. We provide accurate real-time reporting and insights, and have recently developed an ESG country risk dashboard that displays key indicators related to ESG gathered from trusted public sources. Users can easily check and compare countries on ESG risks and gain actionable insights for their risk-based due diligence programs.

In 2020 we introduced QIMAone: a fully configurable software platform that makes it easier for our clients to take control of product quality and supplier compliance. With QIMAone, we put our years of inspection and auditor expertise into a smart and collaborative solution that empowers brands, retailers, and manufacturers with real-time collaboration and actionable data. Being a suite of tools that creates synergy between software and human intelligence, QIMAone is our clients' mission control for quality and compliance. It breaks down best quality control and quality assurance practices into modular checklists and flows, allows clients to create product specifications from scratch or choose from thousands of off-theshelf options, and manage their inspection and audit protocols with ease.

With high-level and granular real-time data available from an endlessly customizable dashboard, training content aligned with the latest industry standards and multiple options for seamless collaboration across their sourcing network, QIMAone offers our clients the best of both worlds for managing quality and compliance in their supply chain. 1 943 1 085

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# Working with our ecosystem

For several years now, the global procurement landscape has been facing an unprecedented degree of disruption, with trade wars, armed conflict and a global pandemic creating a new reality of constant uncertainty in global trade. At QIMA, we do our part to help global supply chains navigate the ongoing storm, by designing solutions to address specific crises, as well as providing valuable insights to help businesses future proof their sourcing.

### **IN THIS SECTION**

- 20 Our COVID-19 response
- 22 Capacity building with training and information resources
- 24 Partnerships and associations



# Our COVID-19 response

# Supporting supply chains and workers during the global pandemic

COVID-19 has disrupted global supply chains in every way possible. From workers being forced into unsafe working and living conditions, to the increased human rights violations and losing employment due to the sudden changes in upended supply chains, factory workers across all supply markets, including Asia, the Middle East and South America, have felt the brunt of the pandemic, and are still suffering from its fallout.

Thanks to our presence on the ground in the sourcing regions, QIMA was able to observe the effects of the pandemic early and first-hand, and move quickly to help buyers and factories mitigate the disruptions while ensuring safe working conditions.

With our digital tools, we were able to offer buyers ways to continue their partnerships with suppliers despite restrictions on physical access to sites, and maintain open channels of communication to discuss any necessary changes to orders and shipping schedules. Meanwhile, as and when local regulations allowed auditor access to production facilities, we launched onsite sanitation audit programs with an intense focus on hygiene and sanitation at factories.

# Keeping sourcing partnerships alive with remote QC inspections

Quality control is crucial to consumer brands, so suddenly being unable to carry out QC measures can spell the end of a business relationship. Due to travel restrictions and lockdowns, many buyers and suppliers were unable to perform on-site product inspections that modern-day QC programs heavily rely on during the COVID-19 pandemic.

QIMA's digital tools, such as remote inspections, proved instrumental to keeping valuable sourcing partnerships alive.

Our remote product inspections are carried out via livestreaming technology, with a specialist QC supervisor guiding the factory staff through the same product inspection steps that would be performed by an onsite inspection team, to collect key evidence about the product's quality. Much like a standard product inspection, a remote inspection can be conducted at different stages of the manufacturing process. The inspection report, complete with digital images of the product captured by a QIMA supervisor, is delivered to the buyer to help them make an informed decision about their shipment even when the factory cannot be physically accessed.



# Keeping workers safe with factory sanitation audits

Working conditions in supplier factories around the world were a hot-button issue even before the COVID-19 pandemic, with millions of workers in many countries facing risk to life and health at work every day due to poor sanitation measures, improper management of hazardous chemicals, and other health and safety failings. The pandemic took these problems to a whole new level, with the often over-crowded factory floors becoming a fertile ground for virus outbreaks.

While hygiene, health and safety have always been an integral part of QIMA's ethical audit protocol, we have designed a dedicated Factory Sanitation Audit program in response to the heightened focus and acute need for disease containment and prevention.



Our Factory Sanitation Audits, which we have been offering from the moment that production facilities in supplier region begun opening for business, is focused on hygiene and sanitation, covering such aspects as:

- > Overall factory cleanliness and hygiene
- > Epidemic prevention control measures
- > Hygiene procedures for staff
- > Safety in working areas and communal spaces
- > Emergency procedures

Just like wider-profile ethical audits conducted by QIMA, our factory sanitation audits include a strong worker voice component. Using a specific health and safety oriented worker survey framework, we remotely gather feedback directly from workers on how hygiene, health and safety measures have been implemented at the production site. Worker confidentiality and anonymity is guaranteed, to ensure that workers feel safe to report actual facts about their workplace without fear of retaliation.



# Capacity building with training and information resources

**Factory improvement programs** With QIMA being a thought leader in the field of sustainable procurement, quality control and product safety, we make it one of our missions to provide training, education and information resources to all players involved in global trade. In addition to our customizable e-learning improvement programs are designed to bring the CAP to life and implement durable programs and supplier training for internal and external clients, we maintain an ever-growing and sustainable improvement. To that effect, we work with buyers and suppliers to library of on-demand resources, which includes webinars, white papers, analytical reports, support the remediation process, and provide training on quality, sustainability and quarterly industry overviews, and more – all freely accessible through our website. safety issues for factory staff on every level, from senior manager to floor staff.

While specialized content on sustainability, quality and product safety issues is often locked behind paid membership options, we choose to proactively provide this valuable information to all industry players in a free and accessible way. In this way, QIMA is helping countless businesses, including SMEs, make safer products and build ethical, lasting sourcing partnerships.

# Training and education

### **QIMA Academy**

The QIMA Academy is an e-learning platform that offers extensive training for inspectors, auditors and suppliers. It features over 500 courses that range from general quality training to product-specific and client-specific practices. Accessible online at all times, the training material are prepared by our dedicated team to meet international standards, industry best practices and, as required, client-specific requirements.

In addition to inspector and auditor training, the QIMA Academy can be used to educate and empower suppliers with information they need to improve their production and quality management processes. Online courses can be seamlessly combined with live video trainings and in-person workshops held by QIMA experts.



## **On-demand resources**

### **Webinars**

We host dozens of free webinars every year, in which QIMA experts and guest professionals offer valuable insights to help businesses build ethical supply chains, provide safe products, and comply with consumer protection and human rights regulations. At the end of each session, attendees have an opportunity to address their questions directly to the presenter, to be answered in real-time or in a detailed follow-up email. After the live session, recorded webinars and slide decks remain available from QIMA's website on-demand.

### **QIMA** insights

QIMA's frequently updated library of supply chain insights features a large collection of white papers and quick guides written by our subject matter experts. We cover a broad selection of issues related to sustainable and ethical procurement, as well as product safety and quality control.

Our white papers offer deep dives into major issues facing the global consumer goods industry, such as modern slavery, unauthorized subcontracting, consumer attitudes to CSR, and more. Meanwhile, our quick guides provide concise overviews and practical guidance on specific compliance and safety matters: for example, what steps a business can take to prepare for the upcoming human rights due diligence legislation.

# Keeping the industry up to date

### **QIMA** barometer

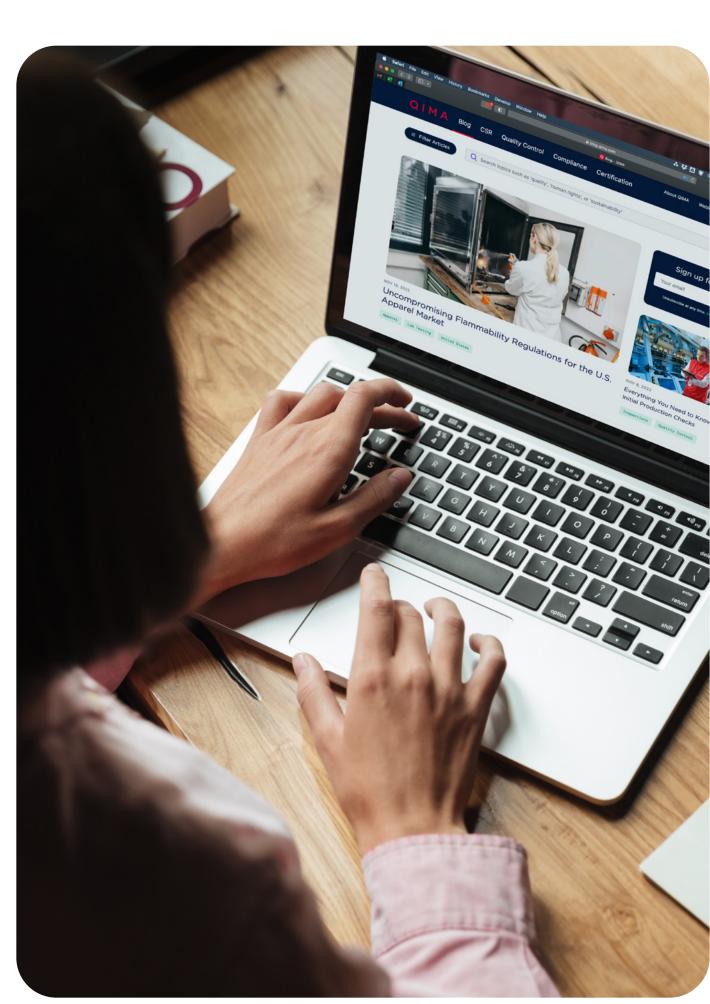
The QIMA barometer is a quarterly synopsis of the latest trends in global procurement, informed by internal QIMA data, insights of our industry experts, and regular polls of businesses with international supply chains. The barometer analyzes the state of sourcing in key supplier regions, including Asia, South America and the Mediterranean, as well as the performance of global supply chains on ethics and sustainability. Frequently referenced by acclaimed publications that include The New York Times, The Washington Post and Forbes, the QIMA barometer has been a trusted source of information for the procurement sphere since 2015.

### **QIMA** blog

The QIMA blog offers our readers information on a wide variety of topics related to sustainability, quality and product safety, presented in an easy-to-digest article format. In many ways a "Procurement 101" type of guidance, most of our posts are designed to provide straightforward answers to questions that SMEs and newer industry players will invariably find themselves asking: from the difference between quality control and quality assurance, to countryspecific requirements and certification schemes for various consumer goods.

### **Regulatory updates**

Published every month, our regulatory updates provide an overview of the latest changes in product safety standards and regulations in key markets, helping brands, manufacturers and retailers keep on top of product compliance.



# Partnerships and associations

At QIMA, we believe in collaborating to make a difference. Working towards more sustainable, safe and transparent supply chains takes continuous effort and can only be achieved when we work together with trusted expert partners. These range from providers of specialized software systems, freight and shipping services, trade financing solutions, and third-party worker's voice solutions to voluntary initiatives in the sphere of sustainable trade, which bring businesses together under standardized frameworks.

As a participant of the United Nations Global Compact, the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world, we are committed to align our business practices, as well as our solutions and services with the UNGC's ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption.

# Accreditations & Memberships



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Partners







# Our commitments

At QIMA, we are committed in growing together, and growth means many things to us: from supporting environmental initiatives and our local communities, to developing our knowledge and skills, to setting and maintaining high standards on integrity. As our people are our most valuable asset, we encourage all members of the QIMA family to be advocates and ambassadors for the causes they are passionate about and the communities they are supporting.

### **IN THIS SECTION**

- 26 Environmental initiatives
- 28 Giving back to society
- 30 Cultivating a growth culture
- 31 Building a QIMA community
- 32 How we maintain integrity
- 34 Governance structure



# Environmental initiatives

# Corporate carbon footprint

In addition to helping our clients with sustainability solutions for their global supply chains, we are committed to conducting our business in a responsible and sustainable manner.

It is our ambition to contribute to the world's fight against climate change. In 2021, we have taken a major step on this journey by partnering with Sweep to measure our corporate carbon footprint.

The operational boundary for the first year (2021) includes QIMA Consumer Goods in Asia, Europe and North America. The emissions boundary includes scope 1, scope 2 and scope 3 (purchased goods and services, waste, business travel and upstream leased assets). Business travel includes all global travel by our inspectors and auditors.

Our partnership with Sweep is just the first step in measuring and disclosing our emissions. We plan to expand the operational boundary in 2022 and 2023, and address any gaps or process improvements we have identified when collecting the 2021 data. In addition, we will start a project to set reduction targets and report on our progress in future disclosures.

In the meantime, we continue raising employee awareness on energy efficiency and waste reduction through training and office campaigns.





## Annual world cleanup day

Being a global company with teams in many parts of the world, we encourage our employees to participate in different programs and initiatives that work for their own market and location. In addition to that, on the annual World Cleanup Day, all our offices and labs come together to tackle the global waste problem by creating public awareness and engaging with the local community.

We have been advocates of World Cleanup Day for three consecutive years now, and our participation rate continues to increase every year. In addition to our own employees, our colleagues also involve their friends, families, and community beyond our workplace. As a part of raising awareness and communication, we have created internal campaigns to increase employee engagement and communicate our efforts with our other office counterparts.



### Disaster response program

We enable our employees to help others in times of crisis. Giving support and serving our community has formed a strong foundation of love and care in our company culture. Our disaster response program is run by our global HR team and includes internal fundraising campaigns and direct funding from the company. Earlier this year, our global teams and management helped raise over US\$25,000 for our Cebu team in the aftermath of the devastating super Typhoon Rai. The funds were directed to bring support and relief to local residents in need.

### Pesticide analysis

Our laboratory team in Mauritius provides free pesticide analysis to Island Bio, a social and nonprofit organic farm that grows fruit, vegetables, and medicinal herbs. The community provides employment to those in need, including former drug addicts, exconvicts and single mothers.

Mauritius is considered one of the biggest users of pesticides in the world. In addition to directly harming human health, pesticides are toxic to other organisms, such as birds, fish, and insects, and can also contaminate soil, water, turf, and vegetation. By supporting Island bio with free pesticide analysis, we help to ensure the safety of the community by controlling the maximum pesticide residue limits on their produce.







# Giving back to society

### Food drives

Every year, our team in Mauritius donates ice packs and polystyrene boxes to Food Wise, an enterprise that fights against food waste and food insecurity in Mauritius. These packaging materials are used to keep food and meals fresh and safe throughout the transportation from food donors to those in need.

Our QIMA Produce team in Brazil supports the local community at Botocatu through food donations. In 2021, we supplied more than 230 bags of dry and canned goods, such as rice, noodles, flour, milk powder, cooking oil, sugar, and canned tomato sauce. Together, we raised over US\$3000 worth of supplies to low-income families.

## Blood donation

In partnership with Hospital das Clinicas – UNESP, a local hospital in Botucatu, Brazil, our team participated in a blood donation event and donated over 7 liters of blood. In addition to donating blood, we also raised money for the hospital to purchase tablets which were used to help educate the community on COVID-19 safety tips and protocols.



# Clothing donation

Elderly communities are often overlooked when it comes to charities and fundraising. As part of ensuring that we give back to the senior members of society, our QIMA/WQS team came together to donate clothing to a local elderly home. Through this initiative, we were able to give old clothing a second life, helping others and contributing to reducing waste and improving sustainability.



# No food delivery Friday

Since COVID-19, the take-out and delivery culture has continued to rise. Although eateries pivoting to delivery and takeaway options have helped to support the F&B industry, this trend has also increased the number of single-use utensils and containers. In our global offices and labs, we have made Fridays "No food delivery day", on which, in addition to reducing unnecessary waste, the team is encouraged to bring lunchboxes from home or enjoy lunches together outside the office.

### Contributing to a plastic free future

Our QIMA corporate team believes in educating our future generations with the right mindset towards sustainability and protecting our environment. As one of the key sponsors for Deplastify the Planet program, a partnership program run by UC Berkely and Schoolab SF, QIMA has also participated in the project by sharing industry views and thought leadership on sustainability challenges that supply chains are facing.

## Raising awareness for disabled youth

Spreading disability awareness is crucial in helping people understand how disability affects people's lives, and how they can help those with disabilities. Our QIMA team in Brazil volunteered at a disabilities and special needs event for the youth community that aims to support those in need and share knowledge about different disabilities and their impact on people's quality of life.





# Cultivating a growth culture

# QIMA hosted CSR conferences

In addition to participating and speaking at global industry events hosted by organizations such as AAFA, ICPHSO, Sedex, etc., QIMA also annually hosts a sustainability event in Hong Kong. The QIMA Sustainability Conference includes senior supply chain executives and leading compliance experts in a number of presentations, discussion panels and Q&A sessions.

Past QIMA Sustainability Conferences have centered around major themes such as: critical human rights issues in global supply chains, environmental compliance and chemical management in China, international trade wars, emerging sourcing geographies, traceability and sustainability, and innovations in technology in social compliance. Attendance is free for QIMA clients.



# Hackathon

Cybersecurity and cyberattacks are global and everevolving problems. At QIMA, protecting our clients' and employees' personal information is a top priority, and our IT teams are constantly staying on top of the latest solutions to ensure safe and secure processes for our booking platform, website, external systems and more. As part of keeping our team ahead of the curve, our IT department hosted the QIMA 2021 Hackathon for our coders, product managers and QA testers. The hackathon featured a series of challenging tasks which required quick and innovative thinking, and turned out to be a rewarding learning experience for everyone.

## Lightbulb moments

Given the complexity of the supply chain industry, keeping up with every solution our company provides is no easy task. As part of our knowledge sharing ethos, we hold Lightbulb Moments: 30-minute webinars in which QIMA experts share their experience around their role and area of expertise. Each time, a different expert will host the webinar, and participants are encouraged to ask questions, get to know their colleagues in different business units, and learn from one another.

### QIMA excellence awards ceremony

The QIMA excellence awards ceremony is our way of acknowledging and recognizing our inspectors for their commitment, integrity, and mentorship—but it is also so much more than that. This event communicates and reinforces the QIMA values that we try to embody every day. Hosted annually by our operations department, inspectors are nominated based on their work performance, with categories including integrity, best mentorship, and best team player.

### QIMApeople

Our HR internal platform – QIMApeople, is more than a library of resources for our employees. QIMApeople consolidates everything from requesting annual leave, our latest global initiatives and campaigns, and our e-learning program QIMA Academy, to important documents such as our company handbook, policies, and branded templates. We are continuing to develop this platform to be more than an internal tool, but an interactive platform integrated with other functionalities such as recruitment, annual performance reviews, and more.

# Building a QIMA community

With our teams all around the globe, maintaining close relationships with all members of the QIMA family can be a challenge. COVID-19 travel restrictions have made this even more difficult, prompting us to come up with creative ways to stay in touch.

# Friendly office initiative

Staying connected with our office and lab counterparts in a meaningful way can help reinforce a stronger bond beyond virtual meetings. These challenges have led us to launch our first ever QIMA Friendly Office initiative, where each office or lab teams up with their counterpart to exchange a short video, in which they introduce their team and workspace, and share kind words and messages with each other.

### Spreading thanks with kudos

In kicking off 2021 strong, our global teams came together to show gratitude to our teammates through our QIMA kudos relay campaign. Participants were invited to share a 30 second video clip giving praise/kudos to any team member or department of their choice, while also relating their praise to one or more of the QIMA values.

### Postcards drift bottles

For some of us, the global pandemic has meant being away from departments and teams that we would visit frequently pre-COVID. In bringing back the holiday tradition, our global teams joined in on a Postcard Drift Bottle activity, where everyone shared snapshots of their handwritten holiday greetings to our teammates across the globe to celebrate the holiday season and ring in the new year. More than 370 wishes were exchanged!











# How we maintain integrity

When it comes to staying committed to our duties and the services we provide, setting and maintaining high integrity standards within our organization is fundamental. Through setting goals for good auditing practices, investing in the development of our employees, and implementing tools and protocols to prevent bribery and corruption, we are cultivating a positive mindset towards building responsible and transparent relationships.

### Our commitment to good auditing practices

We believe that ethical audits are an important tool in driving positive change in the lives of workers worldwide. Conducted properly, ethical audits provide valuable insights into the real state of human rights, ethics, and environmental compliance in supply chains. However, each audit's effectiveness directly depends on the competence of the auditors who are carrying it out, including their deep understanding of the social and human rights issues they are investigating.

Reflecting our awareness of the importance of each individual auditor's role in creating positive change, QIMA is a long-time member of the Association of Professional Social Compliance Auditors (APSCA), a practitioner-led initiative created to promote the use of independent social compliance audits to improve working conditions worldwide.

As a member of the APSCA, we have the following commitments:

- Framework.

Furthermore, in alignment with the APSCA expectations of its members, we ensure that our auditors have the working conditions, support and development they need to maintain the high quality standard of their work.

> To ensure that all our social auditors are individual members of the APSCA, abiding to the APSCA Code and Standard of Professional Conduct

> By Q2 2023, have 100% of our ethical audits be performed by Certified Social Compliance Auditors (CSCA), who have demonstrated that they meet the requirements of the APSCA Competency

## Fostering growth with employees

Making learning easy, fun and accessible is a part of QIMA's culture. All new employees must complete a series of mandatory courses on QIMA Academy, our e-learning platform to understand the fundamentals of the supply chain industry, the services we provide, and what sustainability can mean: both individually and what it means for us as a company, including the most pressing issues, the challenges we face, and the impact we can make.

We encourage all our employees to dedicate time to deepening their understanding and knowledge in their area of expertise, as well as to stay up to date with trends and happenings in the supply chain industry.

### In 2021 on our e-Learning platform...



70,000 courses

were completed



## Preventing and reducing bribery and corruption

Our compliance program is fully aligned with the TIC Compliance Code, Compliance Principles and Requirements for Implementation and the Compliance Program Guideline.

At QIMA, our goal is to help our clients, partners, and stakeholders to build and maintain ethical supply chains. As a third-party service provider in such an important field, we are relied on to be trustworthy and dependable, without compromise. As a result, we believe it is paramount to act with integrity in everything we do.

To achieve this goal across our organization, we have established responsible business conduct policies and zero tolerance integrity policies rules for both frontend and backend employees. To start with, our hiring and training processes are centered around integrity. Applicants must pass smart background checks and integrity tests before they are considered fit for the role. In fact, 24% of applicants are screened out simply because they don't meet our integrity standards, regardless of their other qualifications. After staff are hired, any breach of our anti-bribery and anti-corruption policies will also lead to suspension or even incrimination.

To maintain the highest level of integrity within our teams, we provide training programs that include weekly workshops, webinars and case studies. In addition to training, we also conduct surprise integrity audits during inspections, in which our own integrity auditors arrive unannounced to monitor inspectors' ethical behavior and inspection results.

In incorporating factories and suppliers into our integrity and anti-corruption strategy, we aim for an approach that is collaborative, yet pragmatic. We employ methods such as calling back factories so they can rate our integrity level, hosting supplier workshops and using our compliance hotline to collect claims or reports from factories and suppliers.

All integrity allegations reported by clients or QIMA employees are fully investigatedTo make reporting accessible, simple and secure, our QIMA hotline can be accessed without difficulty. We have various means of communication, including QR codes enabling quick access to a dedicated email inbox for reporting any allegations.

We also aim to recognize the reward conduct of good integrity within our teams. For example, whenever bribery attempts are reported, staff are rewarded with leadership programs, as well as growth and development opportunities.

## Using technology to enhance our integrity measures

- Using our QIMA proprietary inspector app, we can remotely monitor the activities of our inspectors and auditors in real time while they are on-site. This helps to actively avoid cutting any corners throughout the entire process.
- In ensuring that our processes are impartial, our inspectors and auditors are automatically allocated by our system from within client dedicated inspector pool. By cutting out the human element out of the process, we minimize the risk of inspector bias due to any possible vested interest.
- We target follow-up calls with our IT system, which tracks factory and inspector/ auditor KPIs, such as average AQL (acceptable quality limit), defect classifications and non-compliances. Outlier data points are flagged for targeted follow-up calls and shadow inspections and audits.

QIMA code of ethics 🕁 QIMA Anti-Bribery & Corruption policy 🕁





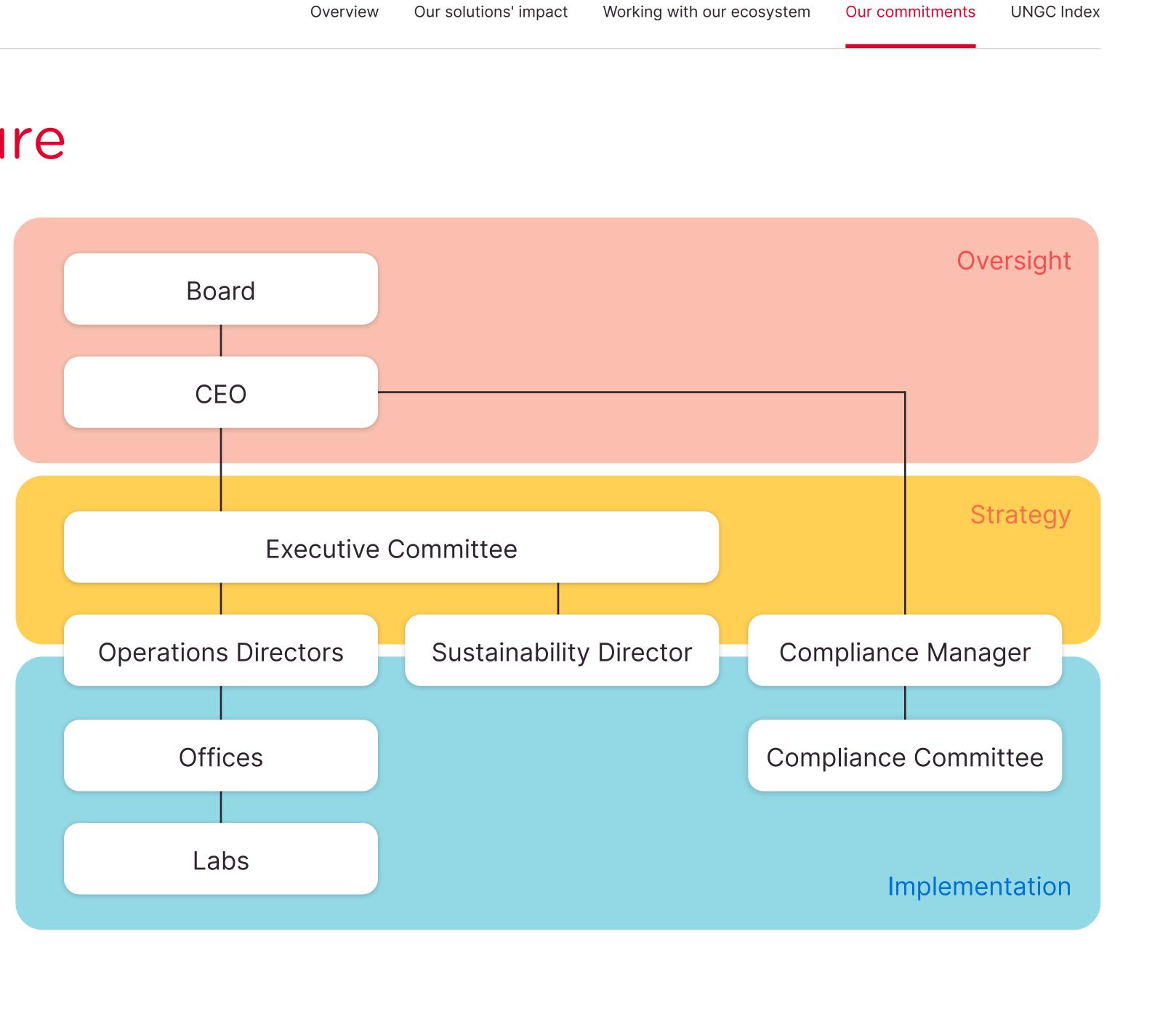


# Governance structure

QIMA's CSR Program is managed by the Executive Committee and its Operational and Sustainability Directors, with oversight by the CEO and Board of Directors.

Relevant staff in QIMA offices and labs are responsible for, or involved in, the day-to-day implementation of QIMA's sustainability internal programs.

All QIMA employees have access to sustainability e-learning on the QIMA Academy and are involved in general sustainability related activities in our offices, labs as well as the communities close to our operations.



# United Nations Global Compact Index





**UNGC** Principle

Report Reference

# Human Rights

### **Principle 1**

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

#### **Our commitments**

- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁 Fair Labor Policy Health & Safety Policy 🕁 Compliance Policy

### **Our commitments**

- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁 Fair Labor Policy **Compliance Policy**
- > Preventing bribery and corruption

### **Principle 2**

Business should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

> All QIMA employees have access to a grievance mechanism through compliance@qima.com.

> QIMA employees are required to complete and pass a Compliance Course on the QIMA Academy.

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**Our solutions and impact** 

- > Ethical audit programs
- > Worker voice solutions
- > Structural, fire and electric safety
- > Human Rights & environmental due diligence and ESG
- > Sustainable food practice | Better for the people
- > QIMA Policies: Impartiality Policy 🕁

> All QIMA employees have access to a grievance mechanism through compliance@qima.com.

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# Labor

### **Principle 3**

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

### **Principle 4**

Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor

#### **Our commitments**

- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁

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- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁 Fair Labor Policy **Compliance Policy**

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- > Ethical audit programs
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### **Principle 5**

Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labor

### **Principle 6**

Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

#### **Our commitments**

- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁 Fair Labor Policy **Compliance Policy**

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- > Worker voice solutions
- > Human Rights & environmental due diligence and ESG
- > QIMA Policies: Impartiality Policy 🕁



# Senvironment

### **Principle 7**

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenge

#### **Our commitments**

- > Environmental Init
- > QIMA Policies: QIMA Code of Ethics 🕁

### **Principle 8**

Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

### **Principle 9**

Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

iatives
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#### **Our solutions and impact**

- > Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains
- > Sustainable food practice | Better for the planet

#### **Our solutions and impact**

- > Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains
- > Quality control and quality assurance
- > Raw materials solutions
- > Environmental audits
- > Chemical management and certification
- > Sustainable food practice | Better for the planet

#### **Our solutions and impact**

- > Reducing environmental impact in global supply chains
- > Quality control and quality assurance
- > Raw materials solutions
- > Environmental audits
- > Chemical management and certification
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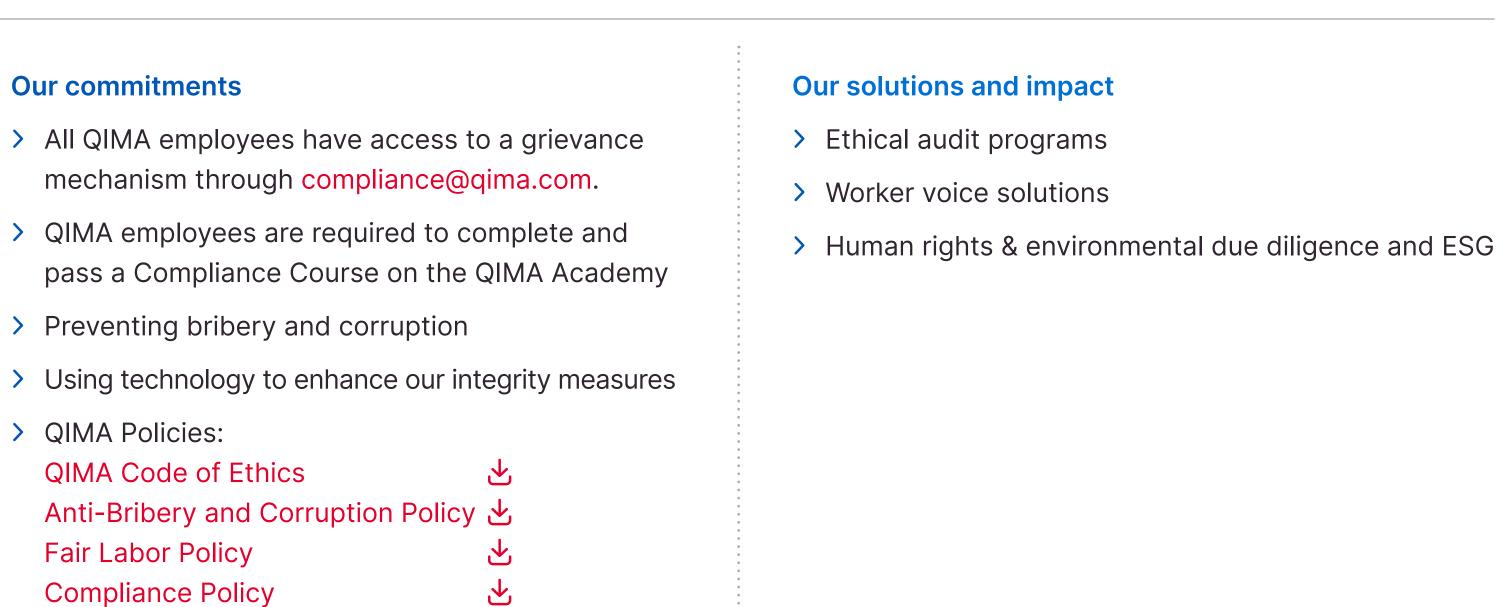


#### Principle 10

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

#### **Our commitments**

- > Preventing bribery and corruption
- > QIMA Policies: **QIMA** Code of Ethics Fair Labor Policy Compliance Policy







info@qima.com