

## **UN GLOBAL COMPACT: COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)**



Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:  
From 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2022

## Part I: Statement of Continued Support by the Executive Director

17 January 2023

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh is a non-profit organization registered under the Ministry of Commerce & Industries [societies Act XXI of 1860 (S-12820)] committed to support the government in the areas of Environment, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Disaster Management, Energy and socio economy to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh provides expertise and advisory services to business, local authorities and communities, government bodies and public at large, to enable them to establish and consolidate their environmental action. We are taking a leading role in promoting education, awareness, training, dissemination of knowledge, advancing the scientific, technical and practical aspects of green banking, renewable energy, green technologies, environment protection and Climate Change effects to support SDGs.

I am pleased to confirm that GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh, reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents. In this Communication on Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organization like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Yours sincerely,



Lutfor Rahman  
CEO and Executive Director  
GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh

## Part II: Description of Actions

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GreenTech Foundation signed the UN Global Compact in 2009. As a member we have been actively promoting the ten principles of the UNGC. With this Communication on Engagement, we would like to highlight some of our key activities of the last two years.

### Human Rights (Principles 1-2)

GreenTech Foundation's **Code of Conduct** (COC) obliges all employees and partners to non-discrimination, equality, and inclusion. Further, GreenTech Foundation has a PSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment) policy that defines zero tolerance for any SEA incidents, as well as the reporting process in cases of such incidents. GreenTech Foundation is committed to always acting on cases of SEA and addressing the needs of victims/survivors. GreenTech Foundation sees PSEAH as a shared responsibility that is undertaken through strong leadership as well as by reducing gender inequalities and power gaps. This is how GreenTech Foundation ensures the application of its **PSEAH policy**:

- **Within the organisation:** GreenTech Foundation has an e-learning course on PSEAH, which is mandatory for all staff. In addition, compliance officers receive specific and more extensive training on the Code of Conduct and PSEAH than other staff.
- **With partners:** GreenTech Foundation supports its partners in the management of SEA cases whenever requested to do so. If there is reason to believe that a partner organisation has mishandled a complaint, that organisation risks having its funding withdrawn or the partnership terminated.
- **With beneficiaries:** GreenTech Foundation applies a systemic approach, working as a facilitator and not directly with beneficiaries. If it does so, it is always with the involvement of a partner organisation.

To ensure that our partners respect principles of equality and inclusion, GreenTech Foundation counts further with a Partner **Due Diligence** process as well as a specific Partnership Management Policy. In this process, particular importance is attached to project partners' perceptions of compliance with legislation and sustainability criteria such as "gender equality and social inclusion". In addition, a policy for cooperation with the private sector has been established, in which a due diligence has to be carried out for donors of the private sector. It includes the criterion of "gender equality and social inclusion" is an important evaluation topic.

At the workplace, as well as in our work with partners and beneficiaries, no sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment is tolerated. GreenTech Foundation counts with a clear **speak-up line** with PSEAH focal points (ombudspersons/compliance officers) in place, and that additionally provides the possibility to make complaints at an external provider (Safecall). GreenTech Foundation takes actions against perpetrator, but also against any staff whether they are the subject of a complaint or not, who carry out retaliatory action against complainants, victims or other witnesses. Staff who are found to do this are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## Labour (Principles 3-6)

The **Code of Conduct** of GreenTech Foundation obliges its employees and partners to fully comply with the International Labour Standards which includes the principles 3-6. In the selection process of our project partner, sub-contractors and local SMEs, we check their compliance with the Core Conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and do not cooperate with non-compliant companies and organisations.

In addition to this reference, a specific additional chapter address the elimination exploitation of youth and the effective abolition of child labour; GreenTech Foundation is keen to **prevent children / youth abuse and exploitation** while promoting youth participation in the different programs. This applies to all the programs' stakeholders, including GreenTech Foundation employees, partners and subcontractors. The organisation maintains a high level of protection of both children and youth from any form of abuse and exploitation by either employees or other parties working with GreenTech Foundation. As part of the CoC, GreenTech Foundation requires all employees to identify and address risk factors and prevent abuse, child labour and exploitation of children and youth as well as ensuring total compliance by all employees, partners and subcontractors. Such abuse, child labour and exploitation include physical, emotional and health deprivation that's effects their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to the physical and mental development.

Most prominent in our work is **the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation** (principle 6), equal rights and opportunities. This principle is therefore additionally differentiated and addressed in A) our Code of Conduct, B) our gender equality and social inclusion policy and C) illustrated by different project examples

### A) Code of Conduct

The principle of non-discrimination is clearly stated in our Code of Conduct with a specific paragraph: The Bangladesh Government's Constitution states: "No person may be discriminated against, in particular on grounds of origin, race, gender, age, language, social position, way of life, religious, ideological, or political convictions, or because of a physical, mental or psychological disability." 4 "Employees must not be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, whether directly or indirectly, including on the basis of their marital status, their family situation or, in the case of female employees, of pregnancy. This prohibition applies in particular to hiring, allocation of duties, setting of working conditions, pay, basic and advanced training, promotion and dismissal."

GreenTech Foundation also considers the following behaviours as discriminating:

- putting certain groups (e.g. persons of certain origins, working mothers) at a disadvantage with respect to promotion, training, or bonuses.
- ignoring an individual belonging to a certain group (e.g. cleaning staff)
- xenophobic or racist jokes, statements, and comments
- homosexual or "gay" jokes, statements and comments
- offensive imitation of language or posture

## **B) Gender equality and social inclusion**

Particularly when discriminating against whole groups, offenders usually feel they can hide behind common prejudices, moods, and opinions. We do not want and must not support this. GreenTech Foundation does not tolerate any discrimination neither against groups nor against individuals.

Against this background, GreenTech Foundation promotes **gender equality and the social inclusion** of all people. As an employer, we place particular emphasis on balanced leadership structures with family-friendly work conditions. We include the gender perspective in all our project activities. Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Social inclusion is defined as a process which leads individuals and groups to taking part in society by benefiting from its opportunities and developing their abilities.

GreenTech Foundation approaches gender equality and social inclusion by focusing on:

- Equal access to resources (economic, social, cultural), assets (skills), economic opportunities, and political/public representation.
- Equal agency regarding decision-making power over income, time, workload, and leadership.
- Equal rights to ownership, mobility, income, and political participation.
- Positive impact on gender norms, roles, institutions, social recognition, reduction of violence and well-being.

In addition, gender equality and social inclusion are a means to create employability, income and jobs, to reduce the risk for violence and increase decision-making power and well-being.

GreenTech Foundation **projects** have since many years considered gender and social inclusion issues to various degrees. The Thematic Leadership Gender/GESI is working on capitalising on project experiences, promoting exchange of best practices and on elaborating institutional resources that serve as a basis for GreenTech Foundation staff. The following **Policies and Guidelines** have been elaborated between 2020 and 2022:

- GreenTech Foundation's Policy on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)
- GreenTech Foundation's Gender Guideline for Projects
- GreenTech Foundation's Roadmap Towards Gender Equality at Institutional Level
- GreenTech Foundation's approach and guides to Conflict Sensitivity
- GreenTech Foundation's approach to Social Inclusion
- E-Learning on gender sensitization

## **C) Project Examples**

An example is the "Green Inclusive Business Incubation" project in Gaibandha, Bangladesh. Its objective is to improve the productivity and increase incomes of vulnerable population groups, which include young men and women working in the tourism, cashew nut, fruits, and dairy sectors. Based on an in-depth analysis, the project team developed a strategy to overcome gender-specific discrepancies.

It was determined that women are underrepresented in leadership positions of cooperatives, even though their participation as members is essential for successful cooperation. Therefore, these organisations were given close guidance to foster women's participation. This has resulted in women now heading committees at cashew nut processing facilities and dairy processors. Additionally, sensitisation campaigns were launched on social media to raise awareness of the different workloads faced by women and



men. The introduction of time-saving technologies (such as weeding machines and wheelbarrows) has had a sustainable effect on women's workloads, and they are now more able to participate in decision-making processes.

In 2020, professional profiles and curricula were drafted, and equipment was procured for various professional areas. COVID-19 safety guidelines were also drafted. On the whole, the project promotes economic resilience and independence for people with disabilities, thereby facilitating their inclusion in society and their ability to provide a stable living for themselves.

### Environment (Principles 7-9)

GreenTech Foundation has a 3-level approach to environmental responsibility (Source: GreenTech Foundation Policy on Environmental Responsibility):



**Promotion of green sectors:** GreenTech Foundation fosters competencies and skills for environmental protection, actively seeking solutions for the sustainable use of resources. In various projects "green sectors" such as recycling and sustainable transportation are supported with the corresponding know-how, while environmentally friendly businesses are strengthened. These materials include tyres, lead batteries, and scrap metal. This lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and fewer pollutants contaminate the environment. At the same time, new jobs are created, and businesses grow. Working together with local actors, the project team is implementing various initiatives: for example, laws are drafted that obligate manufacturers to use resources conservatively and implement recycling; various webinars, events, and sensitisation campaigns on the topics of waste management and circular economy are held. In addition, an app has been developed that brings together waste producers, green businesses, and waste collectors, in order to facilitate the recycling of materials.

GreenTech Foundation Bangladesh in collaboration with Sustainable Finance Division, Bangladesh Bank has organized a unique green and sustainable startup business idea based competition called “Green Inclusive Business Champions”.

The Green IB Champions 2021 has selected the best 10 sustainable, innovative and inclusive business ideas & startups who are contributing to the environment, transition to a modern, resource-efficient & inclusiveness, fair and competitive economy for the Award.

The Green Inclusive Business Champions 2021 also identified and recognized the pioneers of Green Development in Bangladesh, who showed environmental leadership and dedication for the first time in their Sector as Green Business Leader of Bangladesh in deferent categories.

In the category of Government Institution for Green Development Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance received the Award. In the category of Green Energy Development, SREDA, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources has received the Award. In the category of Green Banking Sustainable Finance Department, Bangladesh Bank; in the category of Green Research Institute, Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM); In the category Green Trade Organization BGMEA; In the category of first Green Industry development, Vintage Denim Studio Limited; In the category of Green Energy Production (Mega Project), Energon Renewable (BD) Limited; In the category of Green High-Tech Industry; Walton High-Tech Industry Limited; In the category of First Green Construction (Commercial), Cityscape International Limited; In the category of Green Youth Organization, Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative (BYEI); In the category of Green Personality, Professor Dr. Saleemul Huq has received the Award from the Chief Guest.

The award to show respect for the work done, which is why we are presenting it here as an inspiration and role model for the future generation and upcoming business leaders. Initiatives have been taken to invest for the development and dissemination of eco-friendly green technologies, conducting research, and eco-friendly business in Bangladesh. In order to encourage industry, a special fund has been set up by the Department of Environment through which entrepreneurs will be encouraged to set up eco-friendly factories and businesses.

Bangladesh has no choice but to enter the "green economy" to avoid the growing risk of environmental pollution. In line with the socio-economic context of Bangladesh, the government has adopted a number of specific policies to protect the environment and control pollution in order to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In the Green IB Champions 2021 the following top 10 Entrepreneurs and Startups were awarded along with 1 additional honorary award to a youngster: The projects were

**1. Bright Areca Ltd.** Eco-friendly products such as one-time plates, Bowl, Spoon, dining table food decorations item, one-time sandal etc. from fallen leaf.

**2. Farmzila** - Natural food products to sustain the nutritive value of the food with an aim to ensure better life while getting on the path to better health.

**3. Carbo Purification Technology** Building a zigzag Brick Field with this "Carbo Purification Technology", the black carbon dioxide emission from the coal, hot burned duct, hot coal gas and other impurities do not exhaust from the facility.

**4. Green Grain Cashew Processing Industry** - First-ever integrated and export-oriented cashew processing industry of Bangladesh. We are focused on high nutrient & protein snacks. With the by-product, we are producing alternative energy & other eco-friendly allied products.

**5. Filter** - is a technology-based waste management company. We aim to reduce waste production by aptly segregating the inorganic waste materials from root level and recycle or convert them into reusable products and energy.

**6. Sky Flora Ltd.-** SkyFlora strives to be the leading urban gardening management company in our country with quality service, passion and diversity.

**7. Borac Energia** - Borac Energia, is a Lithium-ion Battery manufacturer. They make lithium batteries that have double the lifespan of a Lead-acid battery and half the price of any other Li-ion Battery in the marketplace. They recycle old laptop batteries and repurpose them and make our batteries.

**8. Shuchita** – Sanitary pad distribution and reproductive health education on reproductive health knowledge and attitudes of Adolescent girls of Halftacks of Bangladesh.

**9. Greening from Eco-Toilet** - Eco-Toilet is an environment-friendly, high-tech, modern public toilet. This toilet has a rainwater harvesting plan, solar panel, automatic payment system, and own waste management plant.

**10. BUD Bio-Flock Farming** - BUDs Bio-flock Fish Farming is an organic fish culture system to produce higher productivity with zero environmental impact.



### Anti-Corruption (Principle 10)

Whistleblowing is the most effective way to detect fraud and corruption. Therefore, GreenTech Foundation has established a whistleblowing policy and implemented an additional reporting line for internal and external whistleblowers such as employees, subcontractors, suppliers and beneficiaries. They can report anonymous or namely by phone or by form on an internet platform which is hosted by a professional provider (Safecall). Details and links are on GreenTech Foundation's website available.



### **Part III: Measurement of Outcomes**

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On organisation level:

- In 2021 Environment and Climate was systematically mainstreamed into our PCM (Inclusive Systems Development Approach)
- In 2021 environment checkpoints were integrated in our project acquisition process
- In 2022 environmental aspects were integrated into guiding / strategic documents of all working areas
- In 2022 an internal strategic climate change working group was launched
- In 2022 an internal working group on CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction of the organisation was launched
- In 2020 the Environmental Policy was updated for example with an overview of environmental responsibility at different levels within the company

Through our projects:

- CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction of 681 tons (several projects closed)
- CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction of 902 tons in 2020
- 117 tons of waste reduced / recycled in 2021
- 105 tons of waste reduced / recycled in 2020
- 890 people have completed training programmes in skills development, entrepreneurship, and labour market insertion (49.8% women) in 2021
- 950 people have completed training programmes in skills development, entrepreneurship, and labour market insertion (35.3% women) in 2020