

28 February 2023

H.E. António Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
New York NY 10017

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

I am pleased to re-affirm the support of MSI Reproductive Choices (MSI) for the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption. With this commitment we express our intent to continue to support the Global Compact in advancing these principles and make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also pledge that MSI will continue to participate in and engage with the UN Global Compact in the following ways:

- Delivering sexual and reproductive healthcare services and removing the barriers to access around the world.
- Strengthening our global policies relating to human rights including; safeguarding, modern slavery, labour, and anti-fraud, corruption and bribery.
- Nurturing a culture and mindset of environmental sustainability including in the design and delivery of sexual and reproductive healthcare programmes that support climate adaptation and resilience.
- Collaborating with partners in multiple external working groups and initiatives at global, regional, national, and local level in support of access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, a fundamental aspect of human rights.

In this Communication on Engagement, we outline the actions that we have taken in support of the UN Global Compact's principles over the last couple of years. Our ongoing commitments to the Compact are also reflected in our 10-year strategy, which sets out our ambitious goals to transform access to reproductive choice and to ensure that the way MSI operates, contributes to a more equal, just, and sustainable world.



**Simon Cooke**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**1 March 2023**

## Communication on Engagement

### UN Global Compact

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#### MSI's Mission and Services

MSI supports the UN Global Compact's human rights principles through its mission to advance access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRH) and gender equality, by delivering sexual and reproductive healthcare services and advocating for change. Access to quality contraception and abortion services is fundamental to achieving gender equality, and MSI works to build sustainable access to these services around the world.

MSI has an extensive network of operations in 37 countries, comprising:

- Over 300 healthcare clinics worldwide.
- Outreach operations where we provide access to healthcare to remote communities.
- Partnerships with existing private health providers to support them in delivering services.
- Partnerships with public sector health providers to deliver high quality contraception and services at public facilities in rural and remote communities.
- Engagement of mobile midwives to provide access to sexual and reproductive healthcare to girls and women in specific communities where there is unmet need.
- Contact call centres which provide comprehensive information and support concerning our services and SRH products.
- Distribution and marketing of affordable and high-quality condoms, contraceptive pills and other contraceptive products to pharmacies, community-based distributors, and other private providers.

In 2022 MSI reached 21.1 million clients, across six continents, with high-quality sexual and reproductive health services. Every single day, we served people with the contraception, safe abortion, and post-abortion care services they needed, supporting them to build the lives they want.

The UN Global Compact's environmental principles asks organisations to take a precautionary approach to environmental challenges. MSI considers that a key component of addressing the climate crisis is an integrated approach between SRHR and climate adaptation and resilience. Currently, very few environmental programmes integrate reproductive health as part of their strategies. MSI is committed to developing partnerships and designing programmes that integrate reproductive healthcare with building resilience and supporting environmental and conservation protection.

#### MSI's Project Delivery

During the reporting period for this CoE, MSI has completed or commenced several projects which advance the UNGC's principles. Set out below are a few examples.

##### Labour and Supply Chains

In MSI's Vietnam and Bangladesh country programmes, MSI has worked with partners to provide access to high-quality, comprehensive, and affordable family planning and SRH information and services to factory workers. Many of these partnerships are with private

companies to provide services to their workers, which demonstrates MSI's work in engaging with private companies to advance the UN Global Compact's principles.

### *Vietnam*

In Vietnam, it is estimated that of 12 million factory workers, 80% are female. MSI's research within one of the largest factories in Vietnam found that among female factory workers, nearly one in five pregnancies were unintended. MSI's Vietnam Programme delivered a project that partnered directly with factories to deliver a range of SRH services and education to factory workers. Achievements in this project include providing 12,712 workers with SRHR and family planning counselling through informational events, reaching 126,400 workers through SRH communication campaigns and providing services to over 8,000 women.

In a separate project currently underway, MSI Vietnam is delivering a range of education and health services to factory workers in Northern Vietnam, with research showing that women in Northern Vietnam have some of the poorest SRHR outcomes. MSI is aiming to deliver services to 4,000 factory workers via mobile clinics set up in or near factories and training health ambassadors to provide counselling, education and awareness raising in factories.

### *Bangladesh*

In Bangladesh, MSI currently has a program underway to deliver family planning information and services to workers in 16 garment factories. The primary target group for this project are female factory workers, many of whom are young people between 18-24 years. High percentages of factory workers are young, unmarried, have low levels of education, are migrants and have limited access to SRHR information and services. MSI's programme in Bangladesh is delivering services to these workers via mobile clinics set up within the factories and delivering education to workers via health education sessions and video documentaries.

### Climate Change and Human Rights

In 2021-2022, MSI has worked further on the intersectionality between SRH services and resilience in climate change-affected settings. It has worked with partners to provide advice to SRHR advocates both within MSI and outside on the best ways to engage with the climate change agenda at national and global level. Outputs include the production of an advocacy guidance document '*Initial steps for engaging in climate change: A guide for SRHR advocates*'. This guidance has been launched through a series of global webinars.

MSI has also jointly led a side event at COP27 on *Removing Barriers to Family Planning in African Climate Policy Processes*, which focussed on African leadership and integrating reproductive health into climate adaptation and resilience building.

In 2021, MSI worked with partners to illustrate the relevance of girls' education and family planning to climate change adaptation and resilience, and to advocate for the integration of these issues in funding and programmatic responses.

### **MSI Policy Advocacy**

In order to secure universal access to contraception and safe abortion to enable every woman to have access to fundamental health services, MSI has increasingly focused on advocacy to

remove the unnecessary legal, clinical and policy restrictions which prevent or hinder women's access to SRHR services. MSI focuses on advocating on issues that affect service delivery so that advocacy directly translates into increased access to services on the ground. Between 2016-2020, MSI worked with partners to secure 53 policy, law, or regulation changes in 22 countries.

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## MSI's Policies

MSI implements internal policies and processes that support the UN Global Compact's principles with respect to human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption.

### Safeguarding

MSI has in place a comprehensive Global Safeguarding Programme to promote the safety and protection of our clients, team members, partners, and the communities in which we work. We recognise that abuse is more likely to occur where individuals are vulnerable and/or dependent on others who may seek to abuse their position of power. Acknowledging that our team members are likely to interact with children and vulnerable adults, our programmes have a responsibility to operate in accordance with the principle of 'do no harm' and take active measures to mitigate risks of them experiencing harm or abuse.

MSI's Safeguarding Programme aims to:

- Prevent incidents of abuse, exploitation and harassment occurring through:
  - Comprehensive policies and programmes to ensure compliance;
  - Safe recruitment practices;
  - Risk assessment and monitoring;
  - Regular behavioural-based training to ensure team members have a clear understanding of
    - the ethical standards of conduct expected of them;
    - the behaviours which constitute abuse or exploitation, and other forms of individual harm which violate MSI's Safeguarding Policies;
    - their duty to report all known, or suspected, safeguarding concerns;
    - how to sensitively respond to all safeguarding concerns and use MSI's Speak Up Channels to report issues.
- Training is expected to be supported through continuous messaging and discussion across all levels of the organisation to promote ethical ways of working and empower team members to speak up about concerns. These might include case studies and community of practice sessions designed to embed a safeguarding culture.
- Respond quickly and sensitively to any potential safeguarding incident that may occur through:
  - Speak Up channels which encourage the reporting of all known or suspected concerns, including through SafeCall, an anonymous external reporting hotline
  - A robust survivor-focused incident management process
  - Supporting survivors with referrals to organisations that can provide specialist support where required

- Transparent processes for reporting up to MSI's donors and the Charity Commission whilst maintaining survivor anonymity.

## **Anti-Fraud and Bribery**

MSI has a comprehensive global Anti-Fraud and Bribery Programme ("AFB Programme"), which aims to reduce the risk and incidence of fraud and bribery, and to foster a zero-tolerance culture at MSI. The AFB Programme comprises four key policies: Anti-Fraud and Bribery, Speaking Up, Conflicts of Interest and Gifts and Entertainment. It is the responsibility of each Country Director to ensure that the AFB Programme is embedded in their country programme; that fraud risks are regularly assessed, fraud allegations are responded to in line with global procedures, and staff as well as third parties adhere to our policies and are clear on the consequences of committing fraud.

A key component of the AFB Programme is to continually promote and reinforce MSI's zero tolerance to fraud and bribery across MSI's global offices. MSI organises quarterly Communities of Practice where Country Programmes share best practice on how to prevent, manage and investigate fraud. Staff receive a newsletter on a regular basis where reminders, learnings and best practice about the AFB Programme are shared. Fraud allegations are entered into the Global Fraud Register, ensuring that allegations are immediately received by the relevant MSI individuals and managed efficiently in line with policy. All staff receive training on fraud and bribery, gifts and entertainment, conflicts of interest and speaking up. The training is mandatory and refresher training is completed at least every two years.

## **Modern Slavery and Due Diligence**

MSI has an Anti-Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy that is disseminated to staff, and all team members sign a Code of Conduct, which includes a commitment to anti-modern slavery principles. The Anti-Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy is implemented via training and due diligence processes. All Global Support Office staff, and Country Programme leadership, human resource and procurement teams are required to complete a mandatory e-module on preventing, identifying, and responding to concerns of modern slavery and human trafficking within MSI's operations and supply chains. All staff also complete safeguarding training, which raises awareness about the various types of exploitation and abuse that children and vulnerable adults may experience, outlining team member responsibilities to help MSI prevent such incidents from occurring across our operations, and to speak up about any known or suspected incidents of abuse.

MSI commits to ethical principles in its employment practices. MSI has processes in place to ensure it does not use forced, bonded or child labour. MSI does not demand fees from anybody who wishes to be employed by MSI or retain any original actual or potential employees' identity or travel documents. MSI ensures that its employees' salaries and working hours comply with national laws, and that our employees have a safe and hygienic working environment, and full access to grievance procedures.

MSI is committed to working with partners and suppliers that value their people and the quality of their product. We also recognise risks of forced labour associated with the production of manufactured goods, particularly condoms, rubber gloves and surgical equipment. We require

our external partners that co-implement donor funded projects, and MSI's suppliers, have the same approach to modern slavery as MSI. All suppliers with whom MSI has an annual projected spend above £1000 are required to sign MSI's Business Partner Code of Conduct which includes anti-modern slavery and human trafficking obligations. All suppliers with whom MSI has an annual projected spend above £5000 also undergo vetting against a global database of sanctions and other published lists of serious crime and misconduct. When entering a new contract with an external implementing partner or material supplier, MSI includes anti-modern slavery clauses in the contracts.

MSI ensures that the approach taken by external partners with whom it works to deliver donor funded projects, in relation to implementing anti-modern slavery and human trafficking processes, is considered when deciding whether to contract with such partner. All external partners are also vetted against the global database of sanctions. MSI also conducts a risk assessment on global suppliers with a minimum spend of £10,000.00 which identifies key modern slavery factors by supplier location and industry. Identified risks are monitored through visits to supplier premises where necessary.

## **Environment**

During this CoE reporting period, MSI has taken action to strengthen its commitment to the environmental principles of the UN Global Compact.

In 2020 MSI launched its 10-year strategy called *MSI 2030 Your Body Your Choice Your Future*. It includes a commitment to nurture a culture and mindset of environmental sustainability and design and deliver programs that support climate adaptation and resilience.

In 2021-2022, MSI has begun delivery on its strategic commitment to 'leave no footprint'. Tools for remote working (including the use of Microsoft Teams and remote clinical quality assurance assessments) were adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic and have been retained to reduce unnecessary travel. These have contributed to significant carbon savings: Carbon emissions for the UK part of the group (for energy consumption and business travel) have reduced from 581 tCO<sub>2</sub> in 2020 to 505 tCO<sub>2</sub> in 2021.

In 2020 MSI developed and launched its Environmental Principles which outlines MSI's approach to delivering its services in a sustainable way. The principles cover travel, service delivery, recycling, energy, culture and measuring impact. During 2021-2022, these principles have formed the basis of actions and policies to protect the environment across the MSI group. Representatives from different country programmes have met in regional groupings to share ideas and best practice. The MSI Asia region decided to launch an Environmental Community of Practice in 2022.

Inspired by the environmental principles, MSI programmes are responding in new and creative ways, including litter picking, declaring offices to be "plastic free zones" and using MSI's behaviour change framework to drive pro-environmental behaviour change. In 2022, Population Services Zimbabwe helped to organize a three-day health expo to mark Menstrual Health Day with activities including a workshop on how to make washable menstrual pads and cloth nappies. Over 1,000 women received reusable menstrual hygiene products such as menstrual cups and washable pads.



## **Speaking Up and Reporting**

MSI has a Speaking Up Policy for staff, clients and third parties to report concerns in relation to wrongdoing or malpractice (e.g., in respect of fraud and bribery, safeguarding, bullying, harassment, modern slavery). The Policy outlines MSI's process on how to report a concern and how the concern will be handled once reported; that all credible concerns will be investigated, a support person will be appointed to the reporter to provide feedback and updates and protection will be afforded to those who speak up. The Policy stipulates three main reporting channels; line manager, country director or Safecall, which is MSI's independent and confidential speaking up service. Safecall is available 24/7 and contactable via webform, e-mail or telephone. Individuals may write or speak in almost any language as a translation service is used.

MSI maintains awareness and promotes the Speaking Up Policy through staff training and speaking up posters which must be displayed in every MSI office or clinic.

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## **MSI's Partnerships and Engagement**

### **Support of special initiatives and work streams**

#### Working Group Memberships

MSI participates in multiple external working groups and initiatives and works in collaboration with partners at global, regional national and local level in support of SRHR. For example we are a Board member of FP2030, we are on the Steering Committee of the International Conference of Family Planning, our CEO is a 'Champion' of the SheDecides Movement, and we are a member of the FIGO family planning and abortion technical working groups. MSI uses these opportunities to participate in global and national-level conversations around SRHR, and to share lessons learned from programming about best practice in removing barriers to these rights, especially for marginalised groups such as adolescents, people living with disabilities, people living in poverty, and those living in conflict-affected communities. MSI also supports improved commodity security as a crucial element of supporting countries and organisations to provide choice for women and girls seeking SRH services, through our work on the UNFPA Supplies Steering Committee and the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition Advocacy and Accountability Working Group.

MSI supports efforts to expand the provision of rights-based SRH services in conflict-affected settings through our work as associate members of the IAWG on RH in Crises and as members of the NGO Working Group of the Call to Action for Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict partnership. In addition, MSI supports broader gender equality and development sector initiatives through support to initiatives such as AWID, the Gender Equality Forum, Women Deliver, and through our engagement with ECOSOC mechanisms, and by supporting efforts to incorporate SRHR and other women's rights issues into climate and conservation programming, through our membership of the SRHR and Climate Justice Coalition and engagement at COP meetings (UNFCCC).