



COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement: January 2021-December 2022

I. STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT

April 6, 2023,

To our stakeholders,

I am pleased to present Population Media Center's Communication on Engagement with the United Nations (UN) Global Compact. By way of this letter, Population Media Center (PMC) also reaffirms its support of the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe the actions that our organization has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its principles. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Best wishes,

William N. Ryerson
President

II. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS

Population Media Center (PMC) is a U.S. 501(c)(3) organization with 25 years of field experience in social and behavior change communication (SBCC). We use entertainment-education, especially mass media dramas, to promote social and cultural change by addressing the interconnected issues of the full rights of women and girls, population, and the environment. We aim to empower people to live healthier and more prosperous lives and to stabilize the global population at a level at which people can live sustainably with the world's renewable resources.

From January 2019-December 2020, our organization has delivered on multiple UN Global Compact Principles, including:

Principle One: Human Rights

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

All PMC SBCC interventions, in addition to our ongoing business operations, are designed to support and respect the protection of **human rights**. Critical to our SBCC approach, which successfully motivates individuals to take actions to improve their lives and achieve their goals, every PMC program supports the **right to self-determination**.

In line with PMC's mission, **every PMC program addresses the right to health** (specifically reproductive health and family planning) and **equal rights of women and girls**. In the past two years, PMC implemented programs addressing such rights in the following countries:

- ◇ **Burkina Faso:** PMC completed a rebroadcast of *Yam Yankré* in October 2021. Over a ten-month period, the 156-episode drama was broadcast over 15 radio stations and made available on social media networks nationwide. Listener contests, episode summaries of *Yam Yankré* in Dioula (for those who do not speak Mooré), training of partner radio station personnel, epilogues providing information about available services, and monitoring and evaluation accompanied the drama. This Mooré-language drama addresses issues including female genital mutilation (FGM), reproductive health, substance abuse, education, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, family planning, and hygiene and sanitation. As such, it also supports the **right to life, right to education, and rights of protection for the child**.
- ◇ **Burundi:** Our drama *Agashi 4* began airing nationally in January 2022, building on the impacts and successful activities of *Agashi 1, 2, and 3*. Targeting adolescents/teens, and their parents, the show addressed the topics of family planning and SGBV, the sex lives of adolescents and young people, ASRHR as relates to parental responsibility, and responsible sexuality and sexual rights of adolescents and young people, all of which relate to a **right to life**.

- ◇ **Ethiopia:** The **rights to liberty and security of person**, **rights of protection of the family** and the **right to marry** were addressed through a multi-faceted sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) project that concluded in August 2022. This project includes a radio talk show *Yalaleke Guzo*, broadcast in the SNNP region and addressing female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. It included a radio drama, *Nekakat* - broadcast over FANA and the EBC in Oromia, SNNP, Tigray, Amhara, and Addis Ababa administrative regions - that addressed the issues of SGBV, child marriage, FGM, and family planning. Additionally, from 2021-2022, a WASH and Nutrition media and grassroots campaign supported the **rights of protection of the family** through promoting WASH care practices and good nutrition for children. Finally, three separate projects, each covering different regions of the country and supported by different partners, PMC implemented radio talk shows in multiple local languages, all focused on propelling dialogue on and abolition of FGM and child marriage.
- ◇ **Kenya:** In 2021-2022, with support from the UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme on the Elimination of FGM, PMC Kenya produced two radio serial dramas, in Swahili and Somali languages: *Maisha Pakacha* and *Isbaldalka Maalmaha*, airing in two different sets of counties in Kenya. In addition to addressing reproductive health, the drama supported the **right to life** and **rights to liberty and security of the person** through storylines addressing the GBV topics of child marriage and FGM.
- ◇ **Liberia:** With support from Sweden, PMC partnered with local NGO Talking Drum Studio to launch in July 2022 a multi-component project designed to promote sexual reproductive health and rights, GBV especially FGM, social cohesion and conflict resolution, and gender equity, thereby supporting the **right to life** and **rights to liberty and security of the person**.
- ◇ **Nepal:** In 2019-2020, PMC partnered with UNICEF and Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN), to develop a radio serial drama, *Rope Guna Fal*, addressing child marriage, parenting education, and adolescent pregnancy. The drama aired nationally on Radio Nepal. Together, these partnerships have supported the **rights of protection of the family and right to marry**, **right to life** and the **right to education**.
- ◇ **Nigeria:** In 2022, PMC partnered with the OASIS Initiative to repurpose a storyline from one of our previous dramas into a life skills group curriculum, in Northeastern Nigeria. The story was featured within a radio-based 'safe spaces' show, which aired both locally on radio and was featured within the curriculum and meetings of OASIS' established life skills sessions groups for married adolescents. As such, the project supports the **rights to liberty and security of person** and the **right to education**.
- ◇ **Rwanda:** In 2020-2021, PMC aired a national radio drama in Rwanda, *Umurage 3*, addressing issues including family planning, adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRF), GBV and COVID-19. In addressing issues like GBV, access to health services, and HIV/AIDS, this project supported the **right to life** and **rights of protection of the family**.

- ◇ **Uganda:** PMC completed broadcast of two dramas – *Akakunizo*, in Luganda-language, and *Sotakai*, in English-language – in May 2022 as part of the RISE consortium, led by Marie Stopes International. Both dramas broadcast in numerous Ugandan districts, ranging from Northeastern to Central-Western. Both dramas addressed issues like family planning, GBV, maternal and child health, and nutrition. As such, these dramas supported the ***rights to liberty and security of person*** and ***rights of protection of the family***.
- ◇ **Zambia:** After completing the broadcast of two new dramas on community radio stations in July 2021, PMC received a costed extension from our partner USAID/Zambia to produce and disseminate a second season for each show: *Siñalamba*, in Lozi-language (broadcast in the Western Province), and *Kwishilya*, in Bemba-language (broadcast in the Muchinga, Luapoula, and Central provinces). The second season project concluded in August 2022. Both dramas addressed issues including family planning, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, GBV, education (particularly for girls), malaria, civic engagement, gender equality, and maternal health. As such, these programs supported the ***right to life, rights to liberty and security of person***, and finally ***rights of protection of the family and right to marry***. Additionally, PMC concluded in 2021 our implementation of an SBCC campaign that aimed to both raise civic awareness of voter and electoral rights and to support voter registration efforts. As such, this program supported the ***right to participate in public life***.

Principle Two: Human Rights

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

As outlined in our Employee Handbook and our Handbook for Field Offices, PMC has a policy of zero tolerance towards human rights abuses. All PMC staff and contractors are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct at all times. Furthermore, all PMC staff and contractors are expected to provide humanitarian assistance and services in a manner that respects and fosters the rights of beneficiaries and other vulnerable members of the local communities. In support of this goal, PMC implemented a new prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) Policy that sets out PMC's approach to prevent and respond to SEA. The policy applies to all employees and related personnel, both on-and off-duty. Under this policy, all PMC employees are required to complete the UNICEF Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) training course.

Principle Six: Labour

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

Since 2019, PMC has maintained committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The high-level committee goals seek: (1) to create a culture and environment of inclusion at PMC, where all staff and stakeholders feel that their voices are valued and that they are empowered to bring 100% of their authentic selves into their work; (2) to connect DEI activities to a broader

business-driven, results-oriented strategy; and, (3) to encourage open, trusting communication between persons of differing backgrounds and cultures at all levels of the organization.

Principle Nine: Environment

Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

PMC has taken active steps to encourage and promote the use of more environmentally friendly technologies. We have, for example, encouraged and offered our supporters to opt out of snail mail communications and receive digital-only correspondence. For those who require print communications, PMC has been working with a vendor certified by the Forrest Stewardship Council, that uses ink free of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and 100% recycled paper. Additionally, our business development and program management efforts have shifted to Zoom and related technologies, which we remain dedicated to using in the future in order to reduce our collective carbon footprint.

Actions Delivering on Multiple Principles

PMC's Employee Handbook includes a detailed Conduct & Behavior policy to protect and uphold the **rights of employees** and highlight **environmental safeguarding policies**. The handbook outlines a firm stance against, and a formal complaint and investigation procedure for, all forms of harassment, bullying, exploitation, child abuse, or any other unethical behavior. Additionally, this handbook upholds other rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining. Finally, it also highlights **environmental safeguarding policies**. We also include similar policies in our Handbook for Field Offices. Both the PMC Employee Handbook and the Handbook for Field Offices meet responsibilities in the area of Human Rights (Principles 1 & 2); Labour (Principles 3, 4, 5, and 6); the Environment (Principle 8) and Anti-Corruption (Principle 10).

III. MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES

PMC programs and our principle-based approach to doing business have supported worldwide, positive shifts in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of audiences around the world. Following are select indicators that illustrate how PMC activities produce measurable outcomes that support the UN Global Compact principles.

Globally:

- ◇ All of the PMC country teams and all but six of the headquarter employees worldwide have completed the UNICEF Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) training.
- ◇ PMC continues to foster collaborative partnerships among private, civil sector, and public organizations in our active country offices and through exploration of new countries for possible program implementation.

In Burundi: Listeners to *Agashi 3* were 3.3 times more likely than non-listeners to know that it is important for a woman to give birth in a healthcare setting to avoid complications relating to childbirth. Listeners were also 2.2 times more likely than non-listeners to know that poor hygiene can cause diarrhea in children.

In Burkina Faso: Listeners to Yam Yankré's rebroadcast in Burkina Faso were 2.3 times more likely than non-listeners to think there is no advantage for a girl to be cut.

In Nepal: Listeners to *Ropa Guna Fal*, in Nepal, were 5.5 times more likely than non-listeners to state that they intend to stop child marriage in their family and community. Listeners were also 3 times more likely to believe that adolescents in their community talk about STIs, such as HIV.

In Zambia: Listeners to *Sinalamba* in Zambia were 8.5 times more likely than non-listeners to know at least one of the benefits of exclusively feeding breastmilk to infants younger than 6 months. Listeners were also 2.6 times more likely than non-listeners to believe that their community strongly disapproves of the practice of child marriage.