



**Communication  
on Engagement**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Contents</b> .....	1
1. Introduction .....	1
2. Internal Policy Development.....	3
3. Sustainable Procurement and Modern Slavery Risks. ....	4
4. Promoting the Sustainable Development Goals.....	5
4.1 Sustainability Initiatives in Organisational Programs .....	5
4.2 Regional SDG localisation initiatives. ....	5
4.3 International SDG Advocacy .....	7
5. Engagement with Global Compact .....	8

## Statement of Support by Group Managing Director

I am pleased to present this Communication on Engagement (CoE) following four years of membership of the UN Global Compact and the UN Global Compact Network Australia Global Compact Network.

Home in Place began its sustainability journey with the appointment of a Sustainability Officer in 2014 and have developed a portfolio of activities within our organisation and with external partners. We have embedded the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) into our operations. We engage in highly local activities, such as providing our community housing residents with gardening pods and education in water and energy efficiency practices.

In June 2022 Home in Place, submitted its first Modern Slavery Report.

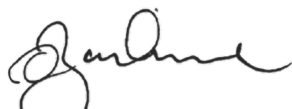
In the recent Pacific Urban Forum September 2023. The concept of civic space and shared space was repeatedly cited as a core tenet of democracy. Stressing the need for Governments to provide healthy civic spaces for online and offline dialogue and engagement. We are committed to engaging in collaborative projects that advance the broader development goals of the SDGs and we continue to communicate this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We are also engaged in Pacific regional and global networks working to deliver a highly sustainable and socially just housing system; that recognises the universal human right to adequate shelter and safe spaces.

We are aware of the local, national and international challenges. In this report, we provide a summary of the activities, projects and programs we have developed and that are evolving.

The UN Global Compact Principles and the resources available to us as a member have assisted us in this process, providing guidance and practical information.

I also take this opportunity to affirm current and future adherence to the 10 Principles and commit to future organisational actions, to further develop our support for the objectives of the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals.



Group Managing Director  
Home in Place

## 1. Introduction

Home in Place is one of the largest not-for-profit, Community Housing Providers (CHP) in Australia and operates in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Home in Place New Zealand manages properties in New Zealand. The Home in Place Mission statement is that:

***That all people have appropriate and affordable housing and are engaged in sustainable communities.***

This organisational commitment is embedded in a human rights perspective. Building on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Home in Place supports the UN Habitat 2015 definition<sup>1</sup> of adequate housing as including social, economic and cultural factors as well as the basic need for shelter. Adequate housing must satisfy the following criteria:

- Security of tenure:
- Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure
- Affordability
- Habitability
- Accessibility
- Location
- Cultural adequacy

Home in Place is also committed to its ethical **P<sup>5</sup>** framework which informs its policies and practice and shapes the conduct of its services to its clients, many of whom experience major vulnerabilities of disability, physical and mental health challenges and social isolation. The **P<sup>5</sup>** framework identifies the focus of Home in Place as People, Place, Planet, Partnership and Performance.

**People:** We will endeavour to support and develop all the people that our activities encounter  
**Place:** We will work to create places and communities that allow people to flourish  
**Planet:** We will support the protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations  
**Partnership:** We will forge and maintain effective and equal partnerships to support our activities  
**Performance:** Our achievement of these objectives is founded on a commitment to high standards of performance and a process of continuous improvement.

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<sup>1</sup>United Nations. *Habitat III Issues Papers; No 20- Housing*. United Nations, New York: United Nations, 2015

This is represented diagrammatically as:



The implementation of this framework is evident in Home in Place's delivery of its housing and resident services in Australia and New Zealand. Also, in our commitment to international expansion of operations and in support of the (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Home in Place sees our mission in international terms and has commenced international development activities in the Pacific region. The framework also provides us with a natural alignment with the 10 Principles of the United Nations Global Compact:

### **Human Rights**

- [Principle 1:](#) Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- [Principle 2:](#) make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

### **Labour**

- [Principle 3:](#) Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- [Principle 4:](#) the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- [Principle 5:](#) the effective abolition of child labour; and
- [Principle 6:](#) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

### **Environment**

- [Principle 7:](#) Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- [Principle 8:](#) undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- [Principle 9:](#) encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

## Anti-Corruption

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

We have built on existing organisational policies and developed additional policies that support these principles and further detail will be provided in the body of this report. Additionally, prior to joining the UN Global Compact and UN Global Compact Network Australia in October 2019 we were achieving similar principles through our 2014 commitment to be a sustainable organisation and from 2016, our support for the United Nations NUA and the aspirations of the 'City For All' and 'No-One Left Behind' agenda. To promote these activities, we organised the first Southern Hemisphere international conference, *Implementing the New Urban Agenda in Australia and the Pacific* in Melbourne in 2018.

Following our Global Compact membership, we have seen the Sustainable Development Goals as the most comprehensive set of internationally agreed objectives and our ten-year strategy to 2030 is now fully aligned with the SDGs. The following paragraphs outline the program we have followed in the last two years to meet our Global Compact commitments and to position us as a major advocate for the SDGs in the Australasia and Pacific region.

## 2. Internal Policy Development

A number of the Global Compact principles are inherently embedded in our operations given our compliance with regulatory and legal frameworks which condition our operations in Australia and New Zealand. Firstly, as a Tier 1 CHP we meet the registration conditions of the Australian National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) and the New Zealand Community Housing Regulatory Authority (CHRA). Both of these registration schemes require a high degree of financial accountability and transparency, registration of Board memberships and compliance with a range of operating conditions that define quality of service delivery and overall organisational performance.

Our fully compliant status with both registration schemes ensures we have the systems, policies and procedures to combat corruption, ensure legal compliance with all equal opportunities employment practices and provide high quality, inclusive services to a diverse range of clients.

In addition to these requirements our international development activities have led us to registration with the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and we are in the process of registration with the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as an international development agency. We are also an Associate member of the New Zealand Council for International Development (CID) In these contexts, we have developed and implemented a range of policies which align Home in Place clearly to the Global Compact principles.

Policies include:

- Child Safeguarding Policy
- International Gender Equality and Equity statement
- Environmental and Sustainability policy
- Partner Due Diligence Assessment
- Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

In addition to these policies, Home in Place complies with The Australian Modern Slavery legislation. Overall, this policy and procedure framework ensures that we adhere to the 10 Global Compact Principles.

### 3. Sustainable Procurement and Modern Slavery Risks.

Home in Place submitted its first Modern Slavery Report covering the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. In line with the commitment from the international community to end modern slavery by 2030. We are committed in our practice to sustainable procurement that delivers fair value for money but must also advance the Home in Place group strategic, social, and environmental objectives.

Goods and services must be procured from ethical organisations and individuals focused on ensuring sustainable practices throughout their supply chain. Our supply chain is made up of approximately 1,400 suppliers located in the jurisdictions in which we operate. Of these suppliers 1,300 are based within Australia. We acknowledge that our supply chain extends beyond these direct suppliers.

Freedom from slavery is a fundamental human right and under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, we have a responsibility to respect human rights in our operations and supply chains. Home in Place is opposed to any forms of modern slavery.

To identify any risks of modern slavery we have mapped our supply chain structure and the general sectors and industries in which they operate, the types of products and services they supply and their geographical locations. Our Group Procurement Policy outlines the principles regarding the acquisition of all goods and services to ensure procurement is undertaken in accordance with the objectives and principles outlined in the policy.

Our Code of Conduct includes (Safeguarding of Children) Commitments. These commitments incorporate the DFAT Child Protection – Professional Behaviours and are in compliance with Commitment 1.4.2 (Safeguarding of Children) in the ACFID Code of Conduct.

We have a Whistleblower Policy that allows officers and workers to raise concerns internally about suspicious activity, misconduct, or wrongdoing confidentially and without fear of recrimination, reprisal or disadvantage. This Policy also applies to contractors, suppliers and their employees, volunteers, Partners, and their staff. It is expected that Partners will have policies, procedures or similar in place

covering Whistleblowing wrongdoing. In the absence of such policies and procedures they will be expected to adopt Home in Place policies and procedures.

## 4. Promoting the Sustainable Development Goals

In addition to our policy and procedure platform we have undertaken a program of international activities which since 2016 has committed the organisation to the pursuit of social and climate justice.

This program also underpins our adherence to the 10 Global Compact principles. It has both a local and global perspective, drawn from the belief that aggregated actions at the local level can make a major contribution to achievement of the SDGs, but that support for supra-national organisations and agreements is also essential at a time when major disruption is occurring at a global level, due to climate change and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 4.1 Sustainability Initiatives in Organisational Programs

**Roadmap to Zero Carbon:** We have made a major commitment to environmental and social sustainability since 2014. This continues with our Roadmap to Zero Carbon with a target of 2030 for our operational activities. We are also investigating how we can reduce energy consumption by our 15,970 tenants. We have a program to map their energy use patterns to best inform how we can retrofit properties in a decarbonising social housing initiative.

**NSW Government Sustainability Advantage Program:** We have again been awarded Gold membership of the program following our submission in early 2023. This attests to our continuing leadership in sustainability and commitment to promoting the SDGs.

**Carbon Reduction:** Home in Place has measured its carbon footprint since 2015 and has introduced incremental measures to reduce it further. A sustainability target has been integrated into senior management KPIs. We are currently developing our Roadmap to Zero Carbon which will set our zero-carbon target date and identify the measures that will achieve it.

### 4.2 Regional SDG localisation initiatives.

Home in Place continues to actively support SDG Localisation in the Hunter Region of NSW. This has developed considerably since our last COE.

**The Hunter Regional SDG Taskforce.** <https://huntersdgtaskforce.org/>. We continue our support for the SDG Taskforce and have played a key role alongside the Department of the Environment of the NSW State Government. Activity in the past two years has focused on the development of an SDG Voluntary Local Review (VLR) for the region.

The Hunter region is not a formal administrative jurisdiction. However, a strong regional collaborative culture has enabled the Taskforce to initiate the development of a VLR which combines the 10 local authorities in the region, alongside the business and voluntary sectors. Developing the indicators to be employed in the VLR involved 12 workshops with over 100 participants. Three teams of undergraduate students at the University of Newcastle have contributed to the VLR, by developing case studies of organisations in the region. Members of the Taskforce also contributed over \$70,000 to fund an expert team at the University to collate the data for the VLR. A further volunteer team led by Newcastle City Council is entering the data into an online dashboard that will be available online to the public. The primary purpose of developing the VLR has been to raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and the role that a relatively small organisation can play in their achievement.

**The Newcastle City Mayor's High Level SDG Group:** Home in Place continues to support this initiative which provides a quarterly forum to share experience and good practice in working towards Agenda 2030. We have a long-standing partnership with the City Council and completed a 16 unit social and affordable housing development to a (7 Star) Sustainability rating. Winning the Housing Industry Association, Green Smart Multi-Dwelling Development Award 2023.



This is a component of our continuing partnership with the City Council to resolve housing challenges in the city and contribute to its commitment to the SDGs, particularly SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

**The High-Level Group Procurement for the SDG Sub-Group:** Established at the suggestion of the Home in Place Group Managing Director Greg Budworth, this group brings together key public sector, business and NGO partners to develop procurement procedures that will assist organisations meet the aspirations of the SDGs. The group is currently drafting procurement guidelines that will foster ethical and social procurement practices. Home in Place provides the secretariat services for this sub-group.

**Roadmap to Zero Carbon:** Compass and now as Home in Place has made a major commitment to environmental and social sustainability since 2014. This continues with our Roadmap to Zero Carbon with a target of 2030 for our operational activities. We are also investigating how we can reduce energy consumption of our 8,000 tenants and currently have a program to map their energy use patterns to best inform how we can retrofit properties in a decarbonising social housing initiative.

**NSW Government Sustainability Advantage Program:** We have again been awarded Gold membership of the program following our submission in early 2023. This attests to our continuing leadership in sustainability and commitment to promoting the SDGs.

**Consultancy Services:** Based on our leadership on sustainability in the community housing sector, we have provided consultancy in the last year to two major community housing providers to assist their development of an SDG strategy and ESG reporting framework. Professor David Adamson, our Manager Special Projects, also chairs the Australasian Housing Institute, Sustainability Community of Practice.

**Specialist Community Participation Unit:** Following an internal reorganisation, a Specialist Community Participation Unit has been established, led by an Executive Manager, Environmental and Social Sustainability. That role and team of 6 Community Participation Officers provide a range of activities to support our tenants and foster community cohesion. The Unit also manages our two Community Hubs where we provide a range of services including food and clothing distribution, energy grant applications, training and social events, contributing to our role in achieving SDG1: No Poverty and SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

## 4.3 International SDG Advocacy

We continue our active role in international organisations, including the World Urban Campaign (WUC), contributing to events and internal review roles. Mr Ben Wong, our International Stakeholders Manager participated in several WUC internal workgroups and was a member of its Civil Society partner group until his retirement in July 2023. Professor David Adamson is a designated WUC City Changer and has contributed to WUC events, the most recent as a panel member at the 2022 World Cities Day.

Home in Place has also been active in supporting the adoption and development of both the NUA and the SDGs in the Pacific region; in recognition of the very specific climate change vulnerabilities of our many island neighbours in the region. To this end we are Members of the Pacific Urban Partnership (PUP) working with organisations including UN Habitat, UN- Habitat Regional Office Asia Pacific (ROAP), UN ESCAP and Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) Pacific. Specific activities include:

**Pacific Urban Forum (PUF6):** Home in Place was a co-sponsor of PUF6 in Suva, Fiji in September 2023. We were represented on the Organising and Logistics committees and made several significant

contributions to conference proceedings, including facilitation of three sessions on the topics of First Nations Housing Solutions, with representation of indigenous housing organisations from Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Risk Informed Resilient Settlements in conjunction with The World Bank and the Government of Vanuatu. Examining the suitability of the Public- Private Partnership model in the Pacific with the International Finance Corporation IFC), Holden Law and ICA Partners.

**Pacific Partnership for the NUA (PP-NUA):** Home in Place is a member of the partnership Steering Committee and has recently contributed to the development of the Virtual Pacific Urban Forum (VPUF) to report on the progress implementing the New Urban Agenda in the Pacific region.

**Partnering with Governments in the Pacific.** We are engaged in peer-to-peer learning and skills training with Pacific Housing Government organisations to increase skills and capability in planning and managing new climate resilient affordable housing in response to recurrent climate threats and risks.

## 5. Engagement with Global Compact

Home in Place looks forward to future engagement with Global Compact and Global Compact Network Australia. Our primary interests to date have been in the Science Based Targets Initiative and the SDG Accelerator program but regrettably these have not been available to not-for-profit organisations. We look forward to participation in these programs when they become available.