

UN Global Compact Network: COE Report 2023



Statement of Support from the Chairperson of Global March Against Child Labour

I am pleased to confirm that Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) 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 of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles in 2023.

In pursuing our mission for a child-friendly world, especially zero tolerance for child labour, child slavery and child trafficking, Global March continues to see value in collaborating with the UN Global Compact.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy Ryan
Chairperson
Global March Against Child Labour

The 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact Network

Who We Are:

The Global March Against Child Labour (Global March) is a worldwide network of trade unions, teachers' associations, and civil society organisations that work together towards the shared development goals of eliminating and preventing all forms of child labour, slavery, and trafficking and ensuring access by all children to free meaningful and good quality public education. Our mission is to harness the collective strength of our network to tackle systemic inequalities, reduce socio-economic barriers and diminish vulnerabilities that create the ecosystem for child labour to thrive.

How We Work:

As a unique coalition of trade unions, teachers' unions and civil society organisations, we work to support the child labour elimination work by developing strong knowledge management, strategic alliances, actions of political impact, social mobilization and advocacy. Our collective mission focuses on eradicating child labour through diligent pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 8, specifically Target 8.7.

What We Do:

- Developing and collating knowledge-based evidence
- Building and strengthening a worldwide movement of stakeholders
- Spearheading and coordinating advocacy activities in partnerships on policies and programmes
- Fostering meaningful and positive social change through awareness-raising

UN Global Compact Network Principles:

We constantly strengthen our policies and procedures to uphold our values and promote the UN Global Compact principles in collaboration with our partners. This Communication on Engagement highlights the specific actions we have undertaken to uphold and advance the UN Global Compact principles. Leveraging our local and global networks, we actively promote the UN Global Compact and its Ten Principles across diverse regional, national, and cultural landscapes. Our efforts focus on fostering effective outreach, facilitating learning, engaging in policy dialogues, and catalysing collective actions and partnerships. Through our multifaceted approach, we contribute to the implementation of responsible business practices, steer sustainable initiatives rooted in community needs, and translate our sustainability commitments and values into tangible actions.

1. Human Rights: Principle 1 & 2

The Global March collaborates with some of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities across diverse landscapes. Our actions, decisions, and partnerships significantly impact these communities, particularly children who are often at risk of human rights abuses. Throughout 2023, all our activities implicitly align with the UN Global Compact Human Rights Principles. Furthermore, we actively engage with our partners to ensure the same and safeguard these principles in every facet of our work.

2. Labour: Principle 3, 4, 5 & 6

Our collective efforts are strategically aligned with SDG Goal 8, Target 8.7, which emphasizes the eradication of child labour. In adherence to Labor Principles 3, 4, 5, and 6, our work actively upholds the freedom of association, ensures the elimination of all forms of forced labour, facilitates the effective abolition of child labour, and promotes the elimination of discrimination in employment. By focusing on these principles, we contribute substantively to the global pursuit of sustainable and equitable labour rights, fostering an environment where the dignity and rights of all individuals, particularly children, are protected and upheld.

3. Environment: Principles 7, 8, 9

In both Bangladesh and Uganda, our work aligns with the UN Global Compact's environmental principles, emphasizing a proactive stance toward environmental challenges. Our supply chain interventions incorporate innovative solutions to support farmers' livelihoods in climate-vulnerable regions. In Bangladesh, our initiatives, such as saline farming, not only promote sustainable agriculture but also mitigate the risks of child labour in these communities.

Furthermore, our engagement in Uganda extends to fostering environmentally responsible practices. Here, our endeavour involves promoting child-friendly coffee plantations in a sustainable manner. This initiative not only encourages responsible environmental practices but also ensures the well-being of children in these areas. By actively participating in the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies, our work resonates with the principles of the UN Global Compact, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient future for both communities and the environment.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

1) Addressing child labour in the coconut oil supply chain in the Philippines



In 2021, Global March became one of the implementers of a project investigating the possible existence of child labour in the coconut oil supply chain. After playing the role of a technical expert on child labour in the first phase of the project, we are now leading the second phase which focuses on preventing and remediating child labour in the coconut supply chain. We are working closely with smallholder coconut farmers, farm workers, school authorities, and local government in setting up an effective multidimensional CLMS (Child Labour Monitoring System) that allows us to track whether children are attending a school or flag up when child labour occurs. Such a ground-up, community-led system enables us to identify the existence of child labour in an area and empower local authorities, relevant stakeholders, and duty-bearers to act.

The second phase of the project will focus on poverty alleviation and capacity building of smallholder coconut farmers to increase their income and strengthen their livelihoods. We envision working together with the communities of smallholder coconut farmers to enable a child-friendly environment in coconut farming in the Philippines. Our approach is built upon a rights-based, participatory method which will also strengthen the human rights due diligence process of the private sector. We believe systemic change can be achieved when the affected children, communities, and members become the change agents.

The cooperation partners in this project are Cargill, Wilmar, Cordaid, The Integrated Rural Development Foundation, Verité, Global March, MVO, and Vernof. RVO supported this project via a subsidy from the Fund against Child Labour (FBK).

This collaboration aims to develop company action plans; implement supplier management programs (with a focus on child protection); and align internal systems with the roadmap to a sustainable child labour-free community, to address some of the key root causes of child labour in the Philippines coconut oil supply chain.

2) Addressing child labour in scrap metal recycling in India.

Global March conducted a local impact assessment research on child labour risk in the scrap metal supply chain of India, funded by the Fund Against Child Labor, RVO, the Netherlands. The research conducted over 8 months in 3 states of India - Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Punjab focused on assessing the risk of child labour in the Indian scrap metal recycling value chain for a Dutch company. Based on stakeholder consultations, field visits, and interactions with rights holders (workers in scrap yards, rag picking, local processing units, etc.) and value chain analysis, it is determined that hazardous child labour is prevalent in the domestic value chain in the focus areas of study mainly in - rag picking, local processing units, and scrap yards. Additionally, there are various concerns pertaining to the situation of labour rights in the industry such as no employment contracts for workers, poor health and safety procedures at work, extreme working conditions, and lack of protective gear.

Multidimensional poverty, migration, the informality of the sector, and lack of access to education policies and employment opportunities for migrants are key factors behind the issue of hazardous child labour and working conditions for adult workers. The lack of access to the Dutch company's Indian buyers and their value chain makes it impossible to confirm the existence of child labour in their supply chain. However, based on the on-ground research and stakeholders' consultation as well as workers' interviews and spontaneous visits to scrap yards and local processing units, evidence of hazardous child labour in scrap metal recycling is evident.

3) Raising economic and social security in agriculture for child labour eradication

From 2023-26, Global March will be implementing the RESOURCE* project in Bangladesh and Uganda, towards addressing child labour in the shrimp and coffee sector with the support of [Brot für die Welt](#). The project will use ABA* (Area-based Approach) by setting up a Child Labour Monitoring System addressing the project areas along with building the capacity of smallholder farmers and producers to address the economic root causes of child labour. Through ABA, we aim to address not only the social but also the economic root causes of child labour by integrating income-generating good practices such as [Saline farming](#) and boosting food production and agricultural income through the [Seeds for Education](#) initiative. Our Project partners are [Cordaid Uganda](#), [Cordaid Bangladesh](#), UDAYAN (Bangladesh), and [ANPPCAN Uganda](#).

**RESOURCE: Raising economic and social security in agriculture for child labour eradication*

**Area-based Approach (ABA): Area-based Approach (ABA), also known as Integrated Area Based Approach, introduced by the International Labour Organization (ILO), aims to eliminate child labour from the grassroots level by tailoring the interventions to specific geographical areas or communities where it is prevalent. It adopts a focused strategy by concentrating its efforts on a specific geographical area and combating all forms of child labour in the designated region. The ABA model to tackle child labour is a rights-based approach as it recognizes the inherent rights of the children and aims to create environments where these rights can be fully realised. It prioritises the protection and promotion of children's fundamental rights - where every risk, vulnerability, and threat of violation of child rights are considered on an equal level.*

Addressing child labour in the coffee supply chain in Uganda:

The coffee sector in Uganda is labour-intensive and informal which significantly contributes to the prevalence of child labour within the supply chain. To combat that, interventions are being carried out through our project at the community level/ district level to stimulate behavioural change, and mindset change among local stakeholders. To drive impactful change and address legal, policy, and implementation gaps at the national and regional levels, it is essential to actively engage Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), trade unions, NGOs, UN agencies, and businesses. Their involvement is crucial for effective advocacy and lobbying with governments and parliamentarians



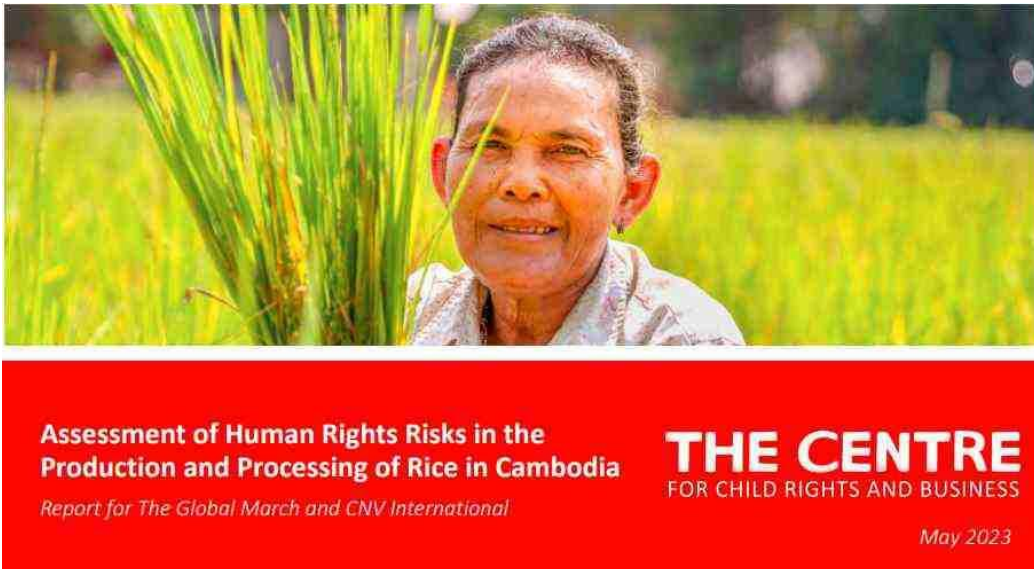
A highlight of the project in 2023 was the drafting of a roadmap for child-friendly coffee plantations in Mt. Elgon, Uganda. The roadmap was developed in consultation with the local coffee companies, cooperatives, along with other key stakeholders including CSOs, District Community Development Department, Uganda Coffee Development Authority and the media. The roadmap provides a 3-year (2023-26) strategy to address the various root causes of child labour in the coffee supply chain and the role of various stakeholders. [Read the full Report](#)

Addressing child labour in the shrimp supply chain in Bangladesh:

In Bangladesh, the project focuses on addressing child labour in Bangladesh's shrimp sector, a key player in the country's export industry. By targeting small-scale shrimp farmers and fry-collecting communities in the Southwest and Southeast regions of coastal Bangladesh, we aim to eliminate child labour, particularly in hazardous roles within the informal shrimp supply chain. The project also seeks to encourage the Bangladeshi government to commit to developing child-friendly upazilas and advocate for the introduction of a minimum age for employment in aquaculture, involving civil society in these efforts.

From 2021 to 2022, Global March and Cordaid worked on a pilot phase with a major focus on creating an impact through additional income from salt-tolerant farming to prevent child labour and enrol them into school. Cordaid introduced saline agricultural technologies at the household level by setting up homestead gardens to grow seasonal salt-tolerant crops. The communities, especially women were trained to convert their unused salt-affected land for growing salt-tolerant crops. This solution has proven to help vulnerable families to earn an extra income and improve food security, resulting in the withdrawal of children from child labour and enabling their transition to formal education. Instead of fighting the salt in the soil, the salt-affected soil is used for agriculture again, by introducing varieties of well-known crops such as snake gourd, bitter melon, and other green leafy vegetables that grow well on salt-affected land. This way, degraded soil becomes productive once again and that offers new opportunities for vulnerable households and their children. The Child Labor Monitoring System, led by target communities and stakeholders in Bangladesh and Uganda, will serve as the key link to monitor and ensure sustained efforts and outcomes till the end of the project period and beyond.

4) Assessment of Human Rights Risks in the Production and Processing of Rice in Cambodia



As part of the [Dutch IRBC Agreement](#) (International Responsible Business Conduct) for the Food Products Sector, Global March, together with [CNV International](#) hosted a webinar that delved deeper into the rice supply chain in Cambodia. Along with [The Centre for Child Rights and Business](#), the [Sustainable Rice Platform](#), and other partners, we had a conversation around the insights from the findings of the [Human Rights Assessment](#) on this supply chain and explored a collaborative pathway towards a more transparent and sustainable rice supply chain. Some conclusions of the webinar were to bring attention to the inter-related issues of health access, child rights, livelihood, and gender to understand the root causes of the risks better and therefore provide comprehensive solutions. This will help find greater collaboration among the stakeholders in the rice supply chain and address the human and labour rights that were identified. The IRBC agreement is intended to foster cooperation throughout

the entire chain to minimise the risks of negative impacts such as human rights violations and damage to the environment, thereby working towards increased sustainability in the production chain. We continue to engage with our stakeholders in a constructive dialogue towards joint actions in making the rice supply chain more transparent and sustainable.

5) Collaborative efforts to combat child labour

In April 2023, Global March had an experience-sharing opportunity with the representatives of Cargill, Vernof and MVO where we spoke about different forms of Child Labour Monitoring Systems (CLMS) to combat child labour. Each organization plays a crucial role in addressing this, contributing to its unique strengths and strategies.

Global March spoke about the implementation of a comprehensive child labour monitoring system to understand and monitor child labour on grassroots level. Furthermore, the benefits for a company to be involved in a CLMS to give access to remedy. Cargill's commitment to respecting human rights is rooted in the company's guiding principles and its responsible sourcing practices and traceability systems. They actively invest in community development programs for education and livelihood, enhancing transparency throughout their supply chain. Cargill also facilitates dialogue and cooperation, emphasizing collective action for effective policies against child labour and systemic change in business practices.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to strengthen collaboration and coordination among these organizations. The participants recognized the significance of sharing information, best practices, and resources to enhance the impact of their individual initiatives. The collective goal is to create a comprehensive child labour monitoring system that addresses the root causes and ensures a sustainable and ethical supply chain across various industries.