



# Responsible employer and business ethics statement

This Statement expresses our intent to be more responsible and has been written for two reasons. Firstly, to help us guide our culture so that all of our employees think carefully about the decisions we take, how we can hold ourselves to account and how we can change our behavior. Secondly, to help our donors and our clients understand our commitments to business ethics and that our values are aligned to theirs.

There are many factors that influence and drive our decisions, and these can often be economic or compliance, such as keeping costs at a low level or meeting relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and we have identified that there is more we could do. It is therefore our ambition to ensure that we go over and above those fiscal and compliance areas and challenge our thinking and the decisions that we make, by tipping the balance in favour of social, cultural and environmental factors and bringing those to the forefront.

We are known, and wish to continue to be known, for our commitment to being an ethical and responsible organisation: from the way we operate and treat our employees and partners, to how we work in and support communities, to our impact on the environment both physically and socially, to our fiscal performance, and for our innovative, high-quality products and services.

We have a range of policies and procedures (presented in Appendix A) that support our culture of trust, transparency and openness, and we continually review these practices to ensure that they remain in line with our ethical standards and business integrity. We aim to be an employer of choice and aspire to recruit talented people who share our vision and values.

Our values remain at the forefront of our thinking – they shape not only the type of organisation we are, but also how we behave towards one another, our partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. We acknowledge what matters to our funders and listen to and involve our employees in the implementation and measurement of our Responsible Employer goals for greater commitment and for financial and sustainable performance.

We will review this Statement and any related activities annually. This Statement was approved by the board in October 2019.

## Social and cultural goals

### Ethical business practices

- Adhere to the Ethical Trading Initiative's Base Code of labour standards (although not a corporate member) and will expect upstream and downstream partners to demonstrate the same commitment
- Continue to be a Living Wage Foundation accredited employer in the UK and share these practices across our global areas
- Ensure interns are paid a minimum of the living wage (or equivalent in the country they are based)
- Monitor and reduce our gender pay gap and strive for equal pay
- Commit to building and valuing diversity and inclusion within our workplace
- Commit to preventing the existence or prospect of modern slavery within our organisation or within our supply chains and not knowingly enter into contract or partnership with suppliers that undermine these principles
- Safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of all children, adults in situations of vulnerability, and any person whom we employ or work alongside
- Remain committed to ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. We will strive to go beyond legal compliance to achieve best practice for all parties
- Ensure that we hold the maximum 5-star rating from Transparify (who provide a global rating of financial transparency)

### Health, safety and wellbeing

- Uphold our duty of care and provide our employees with a comfortable, healthy and safe working environment
- Strive to increase our efforts as a Disability Confident employer
- Offer mental health awareness training in our drive to tackle stigma and discrimination, and strive to ensure Mental Health First Aid is available
- Provide access to health packages, such as health insurance, health cash plans or Employee Assistance Programmes (which also offer free counselling)
- Provide all employees with an opportunity to work flexibly, helping them to balance their work and personal life
- Provide access to cycle to work schemes to improve the general fitness and morale of our employees while also reducing parking and congestion problems

### Equal opportunity and diversity

- Celebrate diversity in all its forms and ensure we remain committed to equal opportunity for all without regard to race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability
- Maintain our Disability Confident Employer status and commit to increasing the number of disabled people through our Guaranteed Interview Scheme, and making reasonable adjustments

in recruitment, retention and promotion procedures to ensure no-one is disadvantaged because of their disability

## Community

- Continue to offer paid internships that offer an insight into the professional side of the development sector, helping create opportunities for young people at the start of their careers to strengthen their skills base, and benefit the sector
- Provide paid days off for staff to volunteer with charities, local community projects and working with disadvantaged groups, delivering positive change in our communities

## Environmental goals

### Energy and recycling

- Reduce the amount of energy used with lights and other electrical equipment being switched off when not in use and heating being adjusted with energy consumption in mind
- Consider the energy consumption and efficiency of new products when purchasing
- Continue to shift a significant proportion of paper materials from virgin pulp to recycled sources by actively promoting recycling and continuing to reduce and minimise the use of paper in the office and for our publications
- Reuse and recycle everything we are able

### Purchases and waste management

- Consider a supplier's ethical and environmental stance as a deciding factor once minimum standards on quality and value for money are met, and potentially seek alternative suppliers (consideration will be given to: fraud, arms manufacture, fossil fuel use, tobacco production, pesticide use, gambling, negative nutrition)
- Promote fairness and act objectively in procurement activities and provide guidance to staff who make purchasing decisions to develop an ethical trade approach to our business practices
- Evaluate if renting/sharing is an option before purchasing equipment
- Favour more environmentally friendly and efficient products and materials wherever possible
- Use only licensed and appropriate organisations/facilities to dispose of waste
- Minimise waste by evaluating operations and ensuring they are as efficient as possible

### Transportation

- Reduce the need to travel long distances by restricting to necessary trips only, or using local staff, and promote the use of travel alternatives such as telephone, e-mail or audio-visual conferencing
- Outsource work to 'local' consultants and organisations when this is seen to be beneficial not only in terms of skills and qualities, but also to ensure 'carbon footprint' is reduced
- Make additional efforts to accommodate the needs of those using public transport or bicycles
- Encourage and support homeworking by employees to allow for the reduction of carbon emissions from transport

- Encourage employees to car share, use public transport or cycle to work
- Ensure that carbon offsetting becomes standard practice; we will offset carbon emissions by contributing to local projects or initiatives *or* by adding-on 'offsetting' when purchasing travel

## Economic goals

Social responsibility exerts positive impact on fiscal performance because the benefits of meeting our social and environment goals have economic value in terms of increased commitment, respect and trust from our funders and clients, improved productivity and loyalty from our staff, and ensures that we are able to deliver on and enhance our mission.

- Reach decisions on income using criteria set out in our 'Income Acceptance Policy'
- Provide transparency on our finances – internally and externally
- Report our activities to the IATI Standard
- Monitor and review the providers of our financial services (e.g. banking, insurance and pensions) to ensure that they have a positive impact on society, the local community and/or the environment
- Strive to be well-known and established globally and regionally and through ethical promotion of our work
- Encourage our board to challenge our social, cultural, environment and economic decisions
- Maintain our robust approach to the management of risk and create an environmental/responsible risk register
- Consider a consulting offering or partnerships with the private sector regarding societal impact

## Annex A

- Health and Welfare Manual
  - Statement of General Policy
  - Organisation Responsibilities
  - Arrangements
  - Company Structure
  - Health and Safety Roles and Responsibilities
  - Index of Health and Safety policies/procedures
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement
- Partner Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Travel and lone worker policy
- Fair Treatment (HR Handbook)
  - Equality and Diversity
  - Equal Opportunities Statement
  - Discrimination
  - Recruitment and Selection
  - Disabilities
  - Part-time and fixed-term work
  - Breaches of this statement
- Wellbeing and Personal Safety (HR Handbook)
  - Drugs and/or alcohol problems
  - Stress management
  - Appropriate Equipment
  - Equal Opportunities
  - Work-life Balance
  - Cycle to work
  - Travel and Lone Workers
- General Business Practices (HR Handbook)
  - Finance
  - Community and environment
  - Society
  - Environment
  - Dress code