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POLICY

MINIMUM STANDARDS

ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE **2020/2025**



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1. MOTIVATION AND CONTEXT

July 2019 has been the month with the hottest global average temperature, exceeding the record of July 2016 by 0.04°C, according to the Climate Change Service of the European agency, Copernicus. More than 800 million people in the world still suffer from hunger and over two billion are victims of malnutrition. At the same time, food systems contribute to up to 57% of GHG emissions (GRAIN 2011), when including all the steps from manufacturing the inputs and deforestation down to waste management through crop production, animal rearing, food processing, transportation and distribution.

Given the internationally recognized climate emergency situation, it is essential to develop our activities through a climate and environmental approach. This approach allows us to understand better and be responsible in facing the main environmental challenges. The second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) aims to eradicate hunger and put an end to all forms of malnutrition by 2030. In order to cope with climate change and vulnerable collective needs, regarding gender equity in particular, it is necessary to set up a sustainable agriculture which respects the environment, biodiversity and ultimately contributes to the fight against climate change. Among the state obligations of many countries regarding human rights and the environment, the right to a healthy environment is increasingly recognized. In more than 100 countries, it enjoys constitutional protection. They focus on the right to a clean, safe, favourable, healthy or ecologically balanced environment. Beyond the applicable legal frameworks in each country, the requirements of the donors and the pressure of society, the integration of environmental aspects is mainly a moral obligation. In our fight against hunger it is essential to assume our environmental responsibilities properly and on a sustainable way.

In Action Against Hunger, we recognize that the impact of climate change could be disastrous and undermine years of progress in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. We are thus committed to move forward in our approach to the climate crisis and to be at the forefront of the fight against hunger under a climate and environmental approach. Health security is also directly affected by climate change with the increase of waterborne and vector-borne diseases, such as malaria (Martens 1995), dengue (Patz 1998), diarrhoea (Kolstad 2011) and cholera (Pascual 2000); and has many other health implications (Patz 2005, McMichael 2006, Costello 2009). Also, extreme weather events damage infrastructure and can impede access to health and care facilities (Watson 2007), placing pregnant women and infants most at risk (Callaghan 2007).

This Policy lays down our commitments to embrace the environmental and climatic challenges, establishing core principles and a series of steps to guide our interventions under global and local perspectives, able to protect the local environment, identify environmental risks and mitigate them. Besides, a set of minimum standards and indicators has been established in order to allow a proper monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Policy. Our engagement will pass through a clear integration of the issues raised by climate crisis and environment in our strategic planning as well as in our management system in both Headquarters and field activities.

As a basic principle, there are no restrictions or limitations on the sectors in which the policy is implemented. Thus, the geographical scope of the policy is global. Obviously, the social, economic, political and environment of each intervention must be incorporated into operationalization measures in order to ensure coherence. The references used in this policy are: The Agreement of Paris¹, European Union, United Nations and in particular UNEP² (United Nations Environment Program) and UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU)³ specifically for emergency response.

1 <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

2 <https://www.unenvironment.org/>

3 <https://www.unocha.org/themes/environmental-dimensions-emergencies>



2. PRINCIPLES

ENGAGEMENT 1.

We are accountable of our environmental impact and outline our way of working in the face of climate change.

PRINCIPLE 1.1: We know our carbon footprint.

Climate change is the biggest threat to development in the coming years and it especially affects food and malnourished vulnerable groups. Climate change increases the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts, cyclones and floods, which will produce more humanitarian emergencies and displaced people.

Most of the human activities have a carbon footprint, and the only way to avoid the worst climate impacts is to be aware of our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to address their fast reduction.

PRINCIPLE 1.2: We assess the environmental impact of our projects.

Projects can affect the environment. Environmental risk assessment anticipates the worst situations and protect the resources. Simple tools are applied to make a first environmental and climatic diagnosis of all interventions and detect risks. High-risk interventions are analysed in detail with Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), if necessary. An environmental risk assessment allows focusing efforts on critical issues.

PRINCIPLE 1.3: We study the interlink between our core mandate and climate change and outline our way of working for a climate against hunger.

Climate change aggravates humanitarian crises, bridging the humanitarian development gap becomes increasingly important. It is necessary to have an accurate knowledge of the interactions of the environment and climate with vulnerable populations who depend on the natural environment and their environmental services, using the gender perspective. From this analysis on climate-related challenges on hunger, we will define our way of working both for dedicated interventions and mainstreamed approach able to improve our impact.

ENGAGEMENT 2.

We promote actions oriented to be at the forefront of the fight against hunger under a climate and environmental approach.

PRINCIPLE 2.1: We care for the natural resources.

We commit to incorporate the climatic and environmental dimension in the supply chain and to reduce waste production and the consumption of energy, materials and equipment.

We assume the principles of redesign the supply chain, Circular Economy, to keep products and materials in use; Zero Waste, to recycle, biodegrade or value waste, and avoid sent trash to landfills, incinerators, or the ocean; Life Cycle Assessment, to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and maintenance, and disposal or recycling; Energy Efficiency and use of Renewable Energy, and Acquisition in Local Markets, to minimize transport and logistics costs.

We are committed to reduce the use of materials, prioritizing those of more sustainable origin or with environmental labels (paper, ecological, electronic labels ...) and those that generate less waste or easier management (e.g. avoid plastics, hazardous waste). The use of materials and equipment is prolonged by choosing those that have a longer life and reusing, refurbishing, sharing, selling or donating equipment that is no longer used, etc. Waste is managed, prioritizing recycling, selective separation or alternative system, and hazardous waste treatment.

PRINCIPLE 2.2: We increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information in order to be able to anticipate and reshape our programming under a climate-sensitive approach.

Environmental disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity and it is important to promote surveillance mechanisms and early warning systems in area of high exposure to climate variability. We adopt the concept of 'Early Warning Early Action' for translating warnings into anticipatory actions to reduce the impact of specific disaster events.

PRINCIPLE 2.3: We define and develop adapted actions to overcome the consequences of climate change on hunger.

Climate change adaptation and Disaster risk reduction are cross-sectoral topics and it is fundamental that public policies related to agriculture, food security, nutrition, health, rural development, water and sanitation, economic development fully consider these topics and offer a coherent set of policies, allowing inclusive development and nutrition for all. Timely and well-designed adaptation actions have the possibility to mitigate the impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable through preparedness, risk reduction, both applied to the livelihoods and the organization of society. Principles must be developed to ensure adaptation-oriented finance reached those who need it the most and actually strengthen their livelihoods and build their capacity to face the adverse impacts of climate change. Action against hunger recalls the need for ambitious mitigation as food security and nutrition will be jeopardized in a warmer world. Nonetheless, mitigation actions should never be done in a way that threatens local communities' livelihoods and food security nor should countries avoid mitigation in agriculture under the pretext of safeguarding high GHG emissions food production systems.



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ENGAGEMENT 3.

We are transparent and exemplary in transforming our fight against hunger in the face of climate crisis.

PRINCIPLE 3.1: We are engaged to reduce our carbon footprint and environmental impact.

We support the objective of the Paris Agreement to maintain the global average temperature at 1.5°C above the pre-industrial temperature, the commitment of a carbon neutral society in 2050, and we compromise with ambitious targets for reducing GHG emissions in the medium term.

We consider necessary to set ambitious but realistic targets and to plan the main actions to reduce our emissions. We commit to opt for the use of renewable energy in our offices the midterm and progressively improve the efficiency of the vehicle fleet. In the long term, we plan to review our whole displacement strategy.

PRINCIPLE 3.2: We transform our relationship with our stakeholders.

The environmental challenges require the mobilization of all actors, and in some contexts, the environmental efforts of a single actor may be limited by those of others.

We invite all our stakeholders (Final Beneficiaries, Private & Public Donors, Employees & Collaborators, Humanitarian Community, Governments & Public Institutions, Partners, Media, Competitors, General Public and Suppliers) to align with our environmental policy, informing, supporting and setting an example of good environmental practices. We will reward the environmental performance of our stakeholders and seek for high environmental standards.

For our stakeholders without commercial relationship, we offer training and resources to facilitate compliance. We raise awareness and incidence measures when high-risk or impact issues are detected.

PRINCIPLE 3.3: We bet for more competences and systems, able to systematize our climate and environmental awareness and inform on our progress.

Our staff has basic knowledge to incorporate the Environmental dimension in their work, and there are specialists in the organization to support specific or more complex issues. The organization staff is familiar with the environmental policy and the main guides to put it into practice.

The Environmental dimension is incorporated in the most important processes from the Environmental point of view, along the project cycle, purchasing, training, recruitment of staff, information system, accountability, studies, research and incidence, annual strategy development and Country strategy development.

Besides, we inform annually our environmental performance and progress on our fight against hunger in the face of climate crisis.



3. MINIMUM STANDARDS

ENGAGEMENT 1.

We are accountable of our environmental impact and outline our way of working in the face of climate change.

PRINCIPLE 1.1: We know our carbon footprint.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ The Carbon Footprint of our operations in the field is calculated using an international accepted methodology.
- ▶ The Carbon Footprint of our Headquarter and operations in Spain is calculated using an international accepted methodology and will consider a wide scope of elements: energy, transport, supplies, equipment, information and communication technologies.

PRINCIPLE 1.2: We assess the environmental impact of our projects.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We promote, protect, and respect environmental rights and ensure that specific environmental regulations, whether available, are applied in our interventions in countries with high environmental risks.
- ▶ Projects are subjected to environmental and climate screening to assess their risk, with a gender perspective, and have an environment marker.
- ▶ High environmental risk projects have an Environmental Impact Analysis.

PRINCIPLE 1.3: We study the interlink between our core mandate and climate change and outline our way of working for a climate against hunger.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We identify the challenges, our strengths in our contexts in the face of the adaptation and mitigation of climate change.
- ▶ We define our niche and our role with regard to the fight against hunger under a climate sensitive approach.

ENGAGEMENT 2.

We promote actions oriented to be at the forefront of the fight against hunger under a climate and environmental approach.

PRINCIPLE 2.1: We care for the natural resources.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We ensure that no project contaminates aquifers, water bodies, soil and air as well as no project depletes natural resources locally.
- ▶ A standard system to detect and manage hazardous waste exists and all hazardous waste is properly managed.
- ▶ Alignment with the EU's Green Public Procurement (GPP).

- ▶ Promotion of good practices for suppliers, good use of equipment and services, and good travel and mobility practices.

- ▶ The consumption of the main resources used such as energy, water, vehicles, computer equipment, telecommunications, and office supplies is monitored.

PRINCIPLE 2.2: We increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information in order to be able to anticipate and reshape our programming under a climate-sensitive approach.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We increase our predictive capacity on the basis of innovative solutions for surveillance and particularly in area of high exposure to climate change.
- ▶ We anticipate our actions in the face of disaster events and advocate for this window of opportunity amongst our stakeholders.

PRINCIPLE 2.3: We define and develop adapted actions to overcome the consequences of climate change on hunger.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We define our strategy to face and overcome the consequences of climate change on hunger at global level with regard to the most vulnerable groups and particularly undernourished children; women; elderly and disable people.
- ▶ We define a set of actions and adapted measures according to our expertise and able to build resilience, reducing needs and supporting sustainable livelihoods to adapt to future shocks.
- ▶ At all levels where our projects are developed, we involve all the actors towards on planning, budgeting and shaping policies for building resilience capacities.

ENGAGEMENT 3.

We are transparent and exemplary in transforming our fight against hunger in the face of climate crisis.

PRINCIPLE 3.1: We are engaged to reduce our carbon footprint and environmental impact.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ The “Carbon Neutral” principle is included in our strategic planning.
- ▶ We put in place a plan for GHG reduction targets and compensation with time schedule, measures and resources

PRINCIPLE 3.2: We transform our relationship with our stakeholders.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ In our relationship with stakeholders and all the related documents and templates, we inform about this Policy and ask for alignment and compliance.
- ▶ When high-risk or impact environmental issues are detected, stakeholders are informed.
- ▶ Environmental criteria will be incorporated in tenders and requests for equipment or services.
- ▶ In the evaluation procedure, the good environmental performance of the products and suppliers is positively valued.

PRINCIPLE 3.3: We bet for more competences and systems, able to systematize our climate and environmental awareness and inform on our progress.

MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- ▶ We provide continuous training to our staff and induce our new staff on how to mainstream environmental and climate aspects in our project and operations.
- ▶ We incorporate the environmental dimension in our procedures.
- ▶ We build an Action Plan to put in place this Policy, associated to our international strategy.
- ▶ We measure and make available our environmental impact and performance.
- ▶ We inform annually our progress on our fight against hunger in the face of climate crisis.





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