

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) POLICY - IMPACT CLUSTER

Kampala, February 22, 2021

Adventure Tourism Uganda is an impact cluster wherein a consortium of Dutch-Ugandan companies join hands to develop new products for the Ugandan adventure and cultural tourism sector. The impact cluster is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All partners declare to adhere to the following Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

The impact cluster partners commit to environmental conservation and animal welfare by;

- 1.1. Recognizing and respecting the boundaries of protected areas and not engaging in activities that are illegal in these areas.
- 1.2. Not engaging in any activities that contribute to the degradation of critical habitat. Degradation means the (1) elimination or severe diminution of the integrity of a habitat caused by a major, long-term change in land or water use; or (2) modification of a habitat that substantially reduces the habitat's ability to maintain viable population of its native species.
- 1.3. Taking the two paragraphs mentioned above into consideration when selecting partner organizations.
- 1.4. Promoting sustainable practices among clients (tourists), employees, and partner organizations.
- 1.5. Not engaging with companies that harvest, consume, display, sell, or trade wildlife species unless it is part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilisation is sustainable and in compliance with local, national, and international law.
- 1.6. Providing information for tourists on how to prevent harm to the natural environment.
- 1.7. Providing information for tourists on how to behave if an animal is encountered, and gaining public support by explaining the importance of those animals.
- 1.8. Providing periodic guidance, training and /or information to all staff members, about their roles and responsibilities with respect to good environmental practices.
- 1.9. Using as many natural products for cleaning as possible and limiting the use of insecticides.
- 1.10. Reducing packaging use and limiting the use of plastic bags.
- 1.11. Reducing the amount of (non-re-fillable) plastic bottles of drinking water for office use.
- 1.12. Separating all materials which can be recycled and organizing collection and proper disposal to an extent that is locally feasible.
- 1.13. Using sustainable water sources, which don't adversely affect environmental flows.
- 1.14. Complying with national legislation of wastewater treatment, which should be reused or released safely.
- 1.15. Minimizing and substituting the use of harmful substances and managing proper storage, handling and disposal of chemicals.
- 1.16. Maintaining and properly checking motorized company vehicles, to reduce emission and energy use and make sure they comply with the legal emission standards.
- 1.17. Promoting the use of sustainable modes of transport for both clients and staff, including bicycles and public transport when practically viable.

2. COMMUNITY IMPACT

The impact cluster partners commit to having a positive community impact by;

- 2.1. Being aware of the absorption capacity of tourism destinations and preventing the negative impacts associated with overtourism (too many tourists going to a specific place). In that light, the partners consider sustainability aspects in the selection process of new destinations and possibly offer alternative, non-mainstream destinations.
- 2.2. Avoiding overuse local resources (water, power, etc.), in order to safeguard existing access of the local population to these essential resources.
- 2.3. Avoiding contributing directly or indirectly to the forced relocation of indigenous peoples from traditional or customary lands, as this will contribute to their marginalization. The term “Indigenous Peoples” is used in a generic sense to refer to a distinct social and cultural group possessing the following characteristics in varying degrees: self-identification as members of a distinct indigenous cultural group and recognition of this identity by others; collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the project area and to the natural resources in these habitats and territories; customary cultural, economic, social, or political institutions that are separate from those of the dominant society or culture. In Uganda ethnic groups like the Batwa and various groups in Karamoja may be considered as marginalized indigenous peoples.
- 2.4. Promoting positive and meaningful contact and interaction with tourists, by including the local population in activities offered.
- 2.5. Advising clients before and during activities on behaviour standards related to respecting the local culture, nature, and environment. Specific attention should be paid to avoiding the practice of giving away money and/or free handouts as they will harm the local economy and contribute to the creation a culture of begging.
- 2.6. Avoiding offering any excursions that harm humans, animals, plants, natural resources such as water and energy, or which are socially and culturally unacceptable.
- 2.7. Utilizing skilled and/or certified guides to host guests in sensitive cultural sites, heritage sites, or ecologically sensitive destinations.
- 2.8. Promoting and advising guests on activities which directly involve and support local communities by purchasing services or goods, traditional crafts and local (food) production methods, or visiting social projects.
- 2.9. Motivating clients to use local restaurants and shops (where appropriate).
- 2.10. Empowering communities with the necessary skills and guidelines required to work or manage responsible tourism services and operations.
- 2.11. Up-skilling of community members to host tourists and helping them to find work in the tourism sector, where possible.

3. PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

The impact cluster partners commit to supporting local private sector development by;

- 3.1. Shaping their activities under the impact cluster in such a way that other businesses will also benefit from them, while carefully balancing them with their own commercial interests.
- 3.2. Actively communicating about the activities that (will) take place under the impact cluster as well their proposed methodology and impact.
- 3.3. Actively supporting local companies to also benefit from the project through skills training, access to expertise, providing them platforms to showcase their activities to potential clients and being open to explore business collaborations.
- 3.4. Helping small and micro business enterprises to develop in order to reduce the level of poverty in communities.
- 3.5. Allowing competition of other businesses in the area (as long as fair business standards can be assumed within these businesses).
- 3.6. Respecting intellectual property and preventing plagiarism.
- 3.7. Providing anyone access to public versions of the feasibility studies that will be conducted under this project.
- 3.8. Providing anyone access to public versions of the training curricula that will be developed under this project.

4. LAND USE AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

The impact cluster partners will respect land use and property rights by;

- 4.1. Always including local stakeholder assessment and a review of land ownership when using other people's lands.
- 4.2. Recognising and respecting the various forms of land rights.
- 4.3. Recognising role of local communities in community-based land and natural resource management.
- 4.4. Engaging the full range of stakeholder groups, particularly those highly dependent on land and natural resources, when using other people's lands.
- 4.5. Preventing significant alteration, damage, or removal of any critical cultural heritage.

5. DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER

The impact cluster partners will actively prevent discrimination and address gender issues by;

- 5.1. Prohibiting discrimination when it comes to recruitment, conditions of employment, access to training and senior positions, or promotion in terms of gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion/beliefs or sexual orientation.
- 5.2. Ensuring that all employees have an equal chance and access to resources and opportunities for personal development through regular training and education.
- 5.3. Encouraging equality of opportunity and treatment, removing wage and salary gaps between men and women for jobs of equal value.
- 5.4. Increasing women's participation in decision making for higher female representation in managerial positions.
- 5.5. Establishing an internal system of go-to persons/trust persons.
- 5.6. Enabling women to earn money outside of their families, increasing their financial power compared to men and contributing to their economic independence.

- 5.7. Preventing stereotyping of gender roles, by creating possibilities for non-typical gender roles, such as - for instance - female drivers and tour guides or male cleaning staff/housekeepers.
- 5.8. Promoting social inclusion by facilitating interaction and creating networks with local communities.
- 5.9. Encouraging the creation of employment opportunities for marginalized groups (persons with special needs, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ) and providing them with a safe working environment.
- 5.10. Preventing sexual harassment to take place on the work floor, in contact with clients (tourists) and partner organizations, as well as during trainings.
- 5.11. Expressing zero tolerance towards the sexual exploitation of children anywhere within the value chain.

6. CORRUPTION

All the partners in the impact cluster agree to prevent corruption by;

- 6.1. Not engaging in, or accepting any form of petty bribery, in Uganda referred to as “kito kidogo”.
- 6.2. Avoiding payment or acceptance of any form of bribes, for example regarding the access to job positions, business permits and access to tourist attractions.
- 6.3. Taking corrective measures when wrong-doings have occurred.
- 6.4. Strengthening the feedback and complaint mechanisms related to corruption through installation of trust persons and the protection of whistle-blowers.
- 6.5. Providing timely feedback on progress of reported cases.

7. LABOR CONDITIONS

All the partners commit to creating decent labour conditions by;

- 7.1. Enhancing good pay and working conditions which are free from exploitation.
- 7.2. Creating jobs that are stable and provide fair salaries and benefits.
- 7.3. Prohibiting forced and child labour.
- 7.4. Obeying to the national minimum age for the admission to employment and having a zero tolerance policy towards third parties that do not obey this.
- 7.5. Granting employees the freedom of employment and contract termination with advance notice (ideally minimum one month) and without penalty.
- 7.6. Including labour conditions according to national labour law and a job description in the employment contract.
- 7.7. Mentioning the wage rate in the contract which is equal to or above the national legal wage and are compliant to RVO's living wage framework¹.
- 7.8. Timely payment of remuneration to the employees.
- 7.9. Determining and compensating of overtime working hours based on mutual agreement.
- 7.10. Granting fulltime employees a fixed (paid) annual leave and sick leave.
- 7.11. Drafting and implementing health and safety policies for employees which comply to national legal standards.

¹ https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2016/08/PSI_Paying%20a%20living%20wage.pdf

- 7.12. Providing all employees the possibility to freely express any complaints or suggest any comments.
- 7.13. Drafting and implementing a clear disciplinary procedure that is effectively communicated to employees.
- 7.14. Creating and implementing a system to measure employee satisfaction on a regular basis.
- 7.15. Creating opportunities for students to participate in traineeship/internship/apprenticeship.
- 7.16. Allowing trade union membership, collective labour negotiations and representation of members by trade unions.
- 7.17. Working with local tour leaders, representatives, tour guides, porters, drivers, cooks, and other staff in case of equal ability.

8. SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION

- 8.1. All the partners in the impact cluster agree to acquire certification by an internationally recognized sustainable travel certification provider by the end of 2022.

Cases of breach or non-compliance with this policy by any of the impact cluster partners, will be resolved through mutual consultation and/or mediation. Nevertheless, serious offenses or failure to comply with the aspects of the policy repeatedly or intentionally can also lead to legal action.

For questions regarding the CSR policy, feel free to get in touch via contact@adventuretourismug.com.

