



COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS (CoP) REPORT 2018-2019

United Nations Global Compact



November 2019



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Statement of the Deputy CEO



Dear stakeholders,

AFEA is committed to sustainability and corporate social responsibility and this is something that can be reflected also in this second Communication on Progress report that we issued.

During the last years our team made substantial progress towards incorporating sustainability and CSR principles in our daily operations, by developing and implementing relevant strategies and policies.

During 2018 and 2019, AFEA continued supporting and upholding the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). With this annual Communication on Progress report, we aim to communicate the actions we have implemented, in order to successfully integrate these principles into our business culture, decision making and daily corporate operations.

This report is also important for us as it reflects our progress and strong commitment on each of the four areas of UNGC: Human rights, Labour rights, Environment and Anti-corruption. We acknowledge the importance of each of them and we see each principle as an aspect of our responsible operations.

I invite you to explore this report so you can learn more about how we operate in a responsible and sustainable way and how we implement UNGC principles in our day-to-day activities at AFEA.

Kind regards,

Dimitra Lignou

Deputy CEO

Head of Corporate Communications and CSR



1. Our Profile

1.1. AFEA at a glance

AFEA Travel and Congress Services has been operating in the MICE and Corporate Travel industry for more than 40 years. The company is based in Athens since 1977 and since 2002 it operates offices in Thessaloniki. AFEA provides services to a wide client portfolio such as major international corporations, private companies and enterprises, scientific and educational organizations, as well as public institutions, in Greece and worldwide.

We collaborate with an extensive network of partners and therefore we are able to recognize and respond accordingly to each client's need with flexibility and immediacy, by providing reliable services as well as creative ideas. The company is a leader in the corporate travel and meetings industry and is committed to provide "value for money" solutions with return on investments for its clients. We operate both as a partner and as a consultant for our clients by providing our expertise and know how.

AFEA is a member of the most prestigious international meetings and travel associations, such as ICCA, IAPCO, EFAPCO, HAPCO, ACVB and IATA and is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact. In 2019 AFEA became also a member of CSR Hellas Network, with the aim to expand its knowledge and connections in best practices in CSR & Sustainable Development.



AFEA demonstrates leadership in its sector and aims to continue its daily operation, based on values directly connected to CSR & Sustainable Development and to actively support the integration of sustainable business practices in the tourism industry, by offering services that benefit society and environment. Such a service is the provision of [Sustainable Events](#) organization.

STATS AND FIGURES			
27.756	176	16.987	59.459
BUSINESS TRAVELERS	MEETINGS	DELEGATES	ROOM NIGHTS

1.2. Our Mission, Vision and Values

AFEA is committed to acting with Sustainable Development in mind and this is reflected to our Vision, Mission and Values. Sustainability is not just part of what we do, but part of who we are.

VISION

Being a leader in the MICE and Corporate Travel Industry by providing added value services to our clients, while contributing to Sustainable Development.

MISSION

We are committed to providing high quality services, to creating and promoting a culture of corporate responsibility, oriented towards today's needs and challenges, by adopting practices that promote Sustainable Development and innovation into the full range of our activities.

VALUES

Innovation | High quality | Teamwork | Support for our employees | Open communication | Trust and responsibility | Integrity and transparency | Leadership

1.3. Our services

AFEA operates as a partner and consultant to the client, by providing them with expertise and know how in the business travel and meetings industry, and by making maximum use of its tools, such as the meetings and events capabilities, supplier negotiation ability, offline and online technological resources and others.

Our services	Our Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress & Event Management – PCO • Destination Management - DMC • Meetings & Incentives • Corporate Travel Services • Luxury Travel Experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Ticketing Management software • Online Registration & Accommodation Management software • Online Abstract Management software • Wide network of suppliers worldwide • Graphic design • e Marketing tools, e.g. e-newsletter, website content management system • Social media management • Travel Agency ERP • Reporting

2. CSR & Sustainability at AFEA

As one of the leading companies in the MICE and Corporate Travel industry, AFEA is operating with responsibility for its clients, employees, the environment and the local communities. AFEA is today the only provider of “Sustainable Events” services in Greece, a fact that underlines the innovating corporate spirit, as well as our approach to sustainable development.

At AFEA, we take sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility seriously: We have developed and implemented a Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability strategy which allows us to manage our impacts and increase the value we bring to our stakeholders.

Additionally, during 2017, AFEA became a signatory of United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), proving the company’s commitment to uphold the 10 Principles of UNGC and to operate with sustainable development in mind.

Our care is to manage the sustainability issues that are related to our operations and to be aligned with sustainability practices in the MICE and Corporate Travel industry.

To this extend and in order to advance the way we manage our sustainability and corporate social responsibility issues, we have been engaged in the following activities since 2017:

- Development and communication of AFEA’s **Vision, Mission and Values**
- **Stakeholders identification and mapping**
- **Employee training and awareness raising** on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Events and Environmental Management issues
- Development and implementation of our **Environmental Policy, Policy on Labour Practices and Human Rights** and **Code of Conduct** which were communicated to all staff, as well as to subcontractors/partners and suppliers of the company
- Development of [Sustainable Events](#), as a **new service**, focusing in best managing all environmental and social aspects of an event with sustainable development in mind.

AFEA received the Gold Recognition level accreditation from Ecovadis

The intensive efforts of AFEA have resulted to the **Gold Recognition level** accreditation from Ecovadis, a third-party assessment platform. EcoVadis enables companies to monitor the sustainable performance of their suppliers. Annually over 30,000 suppliers from 150 sectors, 110 countries and 21 CSR indicators are evaluated based on 21 criteria across four themes: environment, fair labor practices, ethics/fair business practices, and supply chain. As a result, AFEA is ranked among the top 5% of companies from all sectors worldwide regarding its responsible business practices.

While we are proud of the progress we have made, we know there is still much work to be done. With the use of technologies and our innovative culture, we are confident that we will further accelerate our progress over the coming years and fully integrate the sustainability practices into our business plans.

2.1. Sustainable Development Goals

At AFEA, we recognize how important it is for our societies to achieve the Global Goals for sustainable development (Sustainable Development Goals) and for this reason we actively support them and align as much as possible our strategy to those standards.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. They focus on the world’s major challenges such as protection of the environment and social inequalities.

We align our strategy on CSR & Sustainability as much as possible with those goals and try to contribute to their advancement.



2.2. Supporting local communities

At AFEA, we recognize the importance of operating with Sustainable Development in mind and we aim to maximize the positive impact for all our stakeholders. To this extend we take various steps towards supporting local communities.

Creating positive impact: We support employment at local communities

We try to create employment opportunities at the local level during events and conferences that we organize. Moreover, we try to engage with local suppliers, whenever this is possible, so that the positive impact is maximized for local communities, while the negative environmental is minimized. For example, transportation services and catering are sourced locally, while also people from local communities are hired to support reception and registration processes.

AFEA is also supporting various organizations and NGOs and their work. During February 2019, AFEA donated 22 computer screens to “Zoodohos Pigi”, an NGO which is focusing in providing support to other organizations and NGOs that support people in need from vulnerable social groups.



Doing good for the society by doing good for the environment as well

AFEA on the one hand is looking to minimize its environmental footprint and on the other hand to support various vulnerable social groups. It is great to have sometimes the opportunity to combine those two! AFEA During May 2019, supported the NGO



“Kivotos tou Kosmou” by donating conference bags instead of throwing them to waste. “Kivotos tou Kosmou” is supporting children in need that come from families of low income.

2.3. Educating young people: investing in the future

AFEA "invests" in the education of the future meetings and travel experts and whenever possible participates in presentations at universities and colleges.

Presenting the "Success Story" of AFEA at the Metropolitan College of Athens

During May 2019 AFEA had the opportunity to present the dynamics of the Meetings Industry in Greece and worldwide to the Department of Tourism Studies of the University of Piraeus and a few days later to present the "Success Story" of AFEA at the Metropolitan College of Athens. On top of that, AFEA joined forces with HAPCO



members and presented the objectives of HAPCO, the position of Conference Tourism in Greece and the stages and demands of organizing a conference at the students of BCA - Business College of Athens.

The aim of this action is to enable students, future professionals, to become familiar with the field of congress tourism, which is constantly developing and "opening" the way for professional development.



The topics discussed and presented, focused on the meetings destination of Greece and its capabilities, the international meetings destinations and the ranking of Greece and Athens worldwide.

Additionally, students had the opportunity to learn about the basic stages of the organization of a conference, the bidding process for a congress on an international level and the key elements of successful executives working in the field of meetings. The participation of the students exceeded expectations, with great optimism and enthusiasm about the future of the meetings and travel industry in our country.

3. Our progress

As signatories of the UN Global Compact, we implement as much as possible in relation to the 10 principles, in our day to day activities.

A fundamental principle and important factor for our success so far, is the sound governance we put in practice, as well as the care for our people and the environment.

Moreover, we participate in sectoral unions and organizations and we cooperate with other companies and various stakeholders in our industry. We consider this approach as of strategic importance as it allows us to develop partnerships that create shared value for all our stakeholders.

In this section, we present our commitments and actions for each topic for the period covered by this Communication on Progress Report.

3.1. 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.

3.1.1. Our commitment

It is important to acknowledge that a large part of our success is because of our people. We take every necessary step needed to maintain a working environment of mutual trust and respect. We apply extra care for our health and safety and equal rights and opportunities for all.

Taking into consideration the United Nation Global Compact on human rights as well as the International Labour Organization (ILO) our commitment is to:

- “be against any type of discrimination.”

- “provide equal opportunities for all regardless gender, age, political or religious beliefs, nationality or sexual preferences.”
- “respect, protect and put in practice the fundamental and internationally recognized human and labour rights.”
- “provide personal development and career opportunities through continuous training.”
- “be against any type of child and/or forced labour.”
- “protect employees’ Health & Safety” by forming a suitable working environment.”
- “promote a culture of balanced working-personal life.”

This policy applies to all our operations while also communicated to our suppliers and business partners.

3.1.2. Our actions

Human rights

We fully respect all universally declared human rights and gender equality. We engage in no activity that could compromise human rights and we expect the same from our business partners.



It is part of our business culture to prevent all sorts of discrimination at work by providing equal opportunities to all regardless of gender, age, political or religious beliefs, nationality, race or sexual orientation.

Education and training

We recognize that investing in education and training is essential and it results in a more skilled workforce, while increasing productivity and driving business growth.



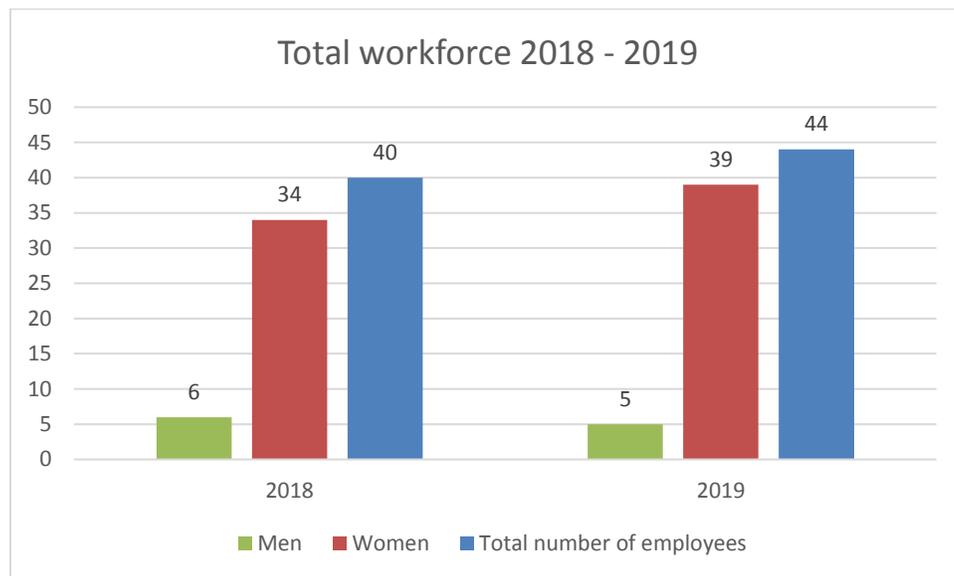
At AFEA we make sure to provide inclusive, equal and quality training as needed and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all our employees, men and women, younger and older.



We provide our employees the opportunity to learn new skills, further develop their knowledge and upgrade their skills through trainings and seminars based on their needs. During last year, 10 employees were trained in 8 workshops and seminars related to the following topics; training on airticket software and technologies, digital marketing and social media, education on meetings trends and new technologies, GDPR, CSR & Sustainable Development, new venues familiarization trips etc.

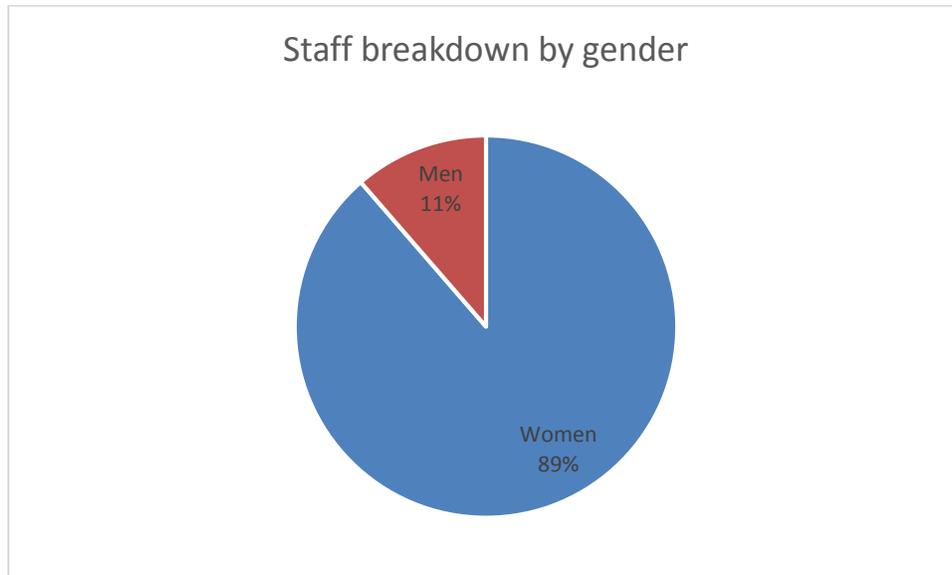
Number of employees*	2018	2019
Women	34	39
Men	6	5
Total number of employees	40	44

**as per the end of October*



Moreover, during last year, we invested in our employees’ training on our Policies and Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability program to further strengthen our commitment to our mission and goals. Lastly, we are very proud to offer to a young undergraduate student the opportunity to develop his skills in practice, as part of an internship program.

We became aware of no cases of violations of any human rights related to our activity during last year.



AFEA implements a policy of no discrimination based on any personal trait, including nationality, or ethnic origin. During 2019, 2 of our employees were from Philippines.

Distribution of employees by age (2019)	
< 30	5
30-50	32
>50	7

AFEA continues supporting the program “Health for All”

AFEA, through the program “Health for All” supports the health of vulnerable social groups. Nowadays, more than ever before, the need for equal access of the vulnerable population groups in health information exchange, health care, as well as support and rehabilitation through the health and social care system, is imperative. AFEA is aware of this need and through its Corporate Social



Responsibility program, contributes actively to the financial support of the actions of the “Health for All” program in order to preserve the health of vulnerable social groups.

More specifically, AFEA supported the action of the volunteer group of the “Health for All” program, which visited and offered health services in areas of mountainous Thrace (Alexandroupoli, Municipality of Soufli – Evros and Orestiada, Rodopi, Municipality of Komotini etc.) between 19th and 23rd September 2019. The action had a great response and 264 children in total from minority and repatriated families received clinical examination, vaccinations and dental checkup.



3.2. Labour Rights

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.

4.2.1 Our commitment

We are committed to maintain workplace practices beyond minimum legal requirements. Open door policy, mutual respect, decent work, workplace security, personal development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination are some of AFEA’s core values regarding workplace practices.

Recently we developed and implement a “Labour Practices & Human Rights Policy” which is in accordance with the Principles of the United Nation Global Compact as well as the International Labour Organization (ILO). At AFEA we are committed to continue respecting employees’ rights and we make sure that all our employees are aware of this policy, as well as their rights and responsibilities at the workplace.

4.2.2 Our actions

Working environment

Companies that focus on women’s empowerment experience greater business success showing an increase in productivity, organizational effectiveness, return on investment and higher consumer satisfaction.

At AFEA we want our people to be happy and doing well. We make sure to maintain a working environment and a culture that promotes respect and equal opportunities for all.

AFEA is a great example of empowering women which is pivotal to the wellbeing of families, communities and nations: 60% of the Board of Directors is held by women, while also 90% of the management team are women.



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Health and Safety at work is a top priority for us. During last year there were no accidents at our operations.

We implement a zero-tolerance policy regarding child and/or forced labour and we expect our partners and suppliers to act likewise. Moreover, we respect, protect and put in practice the fundamental and internationally recognized principles for the human rights and labour practices.

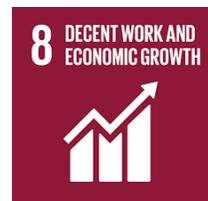
We support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation and make sure to provide a workplace free of any type of harassment, including physical, verbal, sexual or psychological harassment, abuse or threats. During last year no relevant incidents were reported or identified at our operations.

Freedom of association and collective bargaining

At AFEA, there is equal pay for equal work for all employees regardless of gender and age. We comply with the minimum requirements of the National General Collective Labour Agreement (2016) regarding the minimum wage and benefits standards.



All our staff is covered by the legal public medical insurance as described by the National Organization for the Provision of Health Services (EOPYY). Moreover, we offer our employees competitive wages and other benefits such as parental leave, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.



Additionally, all employees receive bonuses in the form of cash checks that can be used for grocery shopping.

3.3. 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

4.3.1 Our commitment

Code of conduct and environmental policy

Climate change is possibly the biggest threat for humanity today. It is clear now more than ever that all companies, regardless their business sector, should act against climate change. We are dedicated to contributing to the protection of the environment and act again climate change.

For us, operating responsibly definitely includes respecting and protecting the environment. We recognize that climate change is probably one of the biggest challenges for our society and economy. We also see that addressing climate challenge can also create new opportunities for businesses and societies and contribute to their sustainable growth and prosperity.



Our constant care is to reduce all negative environmental impacts from our daily operations and to increase the actions that can positively contribute to the protection of environment.



Through the Environmental Policy and Code of Conduct that we have developed and implement, we commit to saving energy and reducing GHG emissions, to minimize the use of materials (natural resources) at our daily operations and to implement recycling practices aiming to the reduction of waste generated by our operations.



As a leader in our sector, we offer our clients the option to organize their events in the most sustainable way. [Sustainable Events](#), a unique service offered by AFEA, aims at managing all sustainability related issues of an event, including environmental.

During last year we continued applying environmental criteria to our procurement practices. We talked with various business partners that we maintain a business relationship and we informed about possible steps that they can make so that the whole industry can move to a more sustainable direction. We continued raising awareness among our partners and suppliers, regarding environmentally friendly practices and precautionary measures.

We recognize that the transformation of the economy and our sector cannot happen overnight. We commit in continuing our efforts and in developing and promoting services that take into consideration sustainable development and environmental protection.

4.3.2 Our actions

Energy

As service providers, our direct impact due to energy consumption is limited. Nevertheless, we take measures to manage and minimize this low impact to even lower levels. To this extend, all lamps in our office were replaced with new ones of LED technology, which resulted in significant reduction in the energy consumption (around 35%).



Waste

Waste generated directly from our offices is mainly paper and some other kinds of waste related to office operations, such as empty toners, aluminum containers and municipal waste. We try to minimize the use of paper to the minimum necessary, and whenever this is not possible, we recycle it.

Last year we estimated that we recycled 500kg of paper (estimation: around 2 kg/working day) and 100kg of plastic and aluminum (estimation: around 0,5 kg/working day). In addition, we recycle an estimate of 180 tonners annually (total consumption per year) and other chemicals deriving from our printers.

Moreover, we aim to minimize waste during conferences and events by taking various actions including initiatives such printing in certified paper coming for forests that are managed in a sustainable way, printing exactly as much printing material as needed, offering name tags / badges that are eco-friendly and without plastic parts and others.

Good Practice: Sustainable events by AFEA

Events, small or large, have significant impacts on the environment as usually they are related to extensive resource (materials, energy, water, etc.) use and therefore waste generation. Using less of everything by increasing efficiency and choosing products, suppliers and processes

with an improved environmental profile, benefits the environment, trains attendees, inculcates environmentally friendly behavior and builds credibility for the organizations involved. A responsible or sustainable event is the event which is designed in a way that potential negative impacts are managed and minimized, while it leaves a beneficial legacy for the host local community and all parties involved, including raising awareness and maximizing positive experience for all.

AFEA, launched its new service: **Sustainable Events**, with the aim to support its clients on the organization of their future sustainable event, conference or corporate meeting. This new service promotes the respect to the environment and practices of responsible behavior and consumption.

More information regarding the service can be found [here](#).



IS YOUR EVENT SUSTAINABLE?

PEOPLE **PLANET** **PROFIT**

What makes an event responsible/sustainable?

3.4. Anti-corruption

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

4.4.1 Our commitment

AFEA provides a wide range of high-quality services with reliability and professionalism. For us it is a non-negotiable commitment to conduct business in an ethical way and to respect national and international laws and regulations.

We are committed in making business in the most transparent and ethical way possible. Corruption is a serious obstacle to economic and social development around the world with significant negative impacts on sustainable development. Corruption particularly affects business growth, escalates costs and poses serious legal and reputational risks. It also undermines fair competition, impedes long-term foreign and domestic investment, and distorts development priorities.

AFEA is committed in operating with zero-tolerance to corruption practices and expects the same for its business partners. Bribery, of any form, is a negative practice and completely opposite to AFEA's business ethics as it does not reflect, at any form, Company's culture and policies. AFEA operates in alignment to its Code of Conduct which has been communicated to all stakeholders including employees, partners, suppliers, third parties such as lawyers etc. with the aim to operate on the basis of these guidelines and principles.

4.4.2 Our actions

Anti-corruption measures

AFEA assesses the risk of corruption on its daily business practices. We have developed a specific mechanism to prevent illegal actions in all forms. As part of our strategy, we evaluate the possibility of corruption and we take measures to prevent any incident. For this reason, we pay specific attention on the transparency of the contracts and transactions we made as well as in the selection of our partners.



GDPR: Protecting Personal Data

AFEA fully complies with the General Data Protection Regulation of EU about Personal Data and a relevant Policy has been developed and is available in the website.

Moreover, as part of the contracts and collaboration agreements that we sign with our business partners, we frequently perform due diligence about business ethics and sign their Codes of Conduct as well as extensive legal provisions regarding business ethics and anti-corruption measures. AFEA is always operating with the highest standards of ethical behavior.

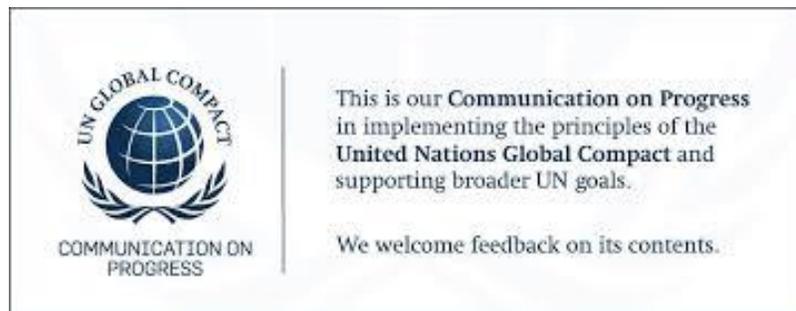
As a result of all above mentioned measures, no incident of corruption has been reported to the company during the reference period of this report (as well as before).

4. About this Report

This report is AFEA's second Communication on Progress Report on the United Nations Global Compact. It covers the period of October 2018 to September 2019. This report is a confirmation of our commitment to promote and uphold the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact in our everyday operations.

We are, therefore, committed to the continuous contribution to the Sustainable Development, the engagement with our stakeholders for the creation of added value for all, as well as the compliance with the existing legislation and with the aim to maintain and pursuit transparency, integrity and inclusivity in all our actions.

This report was developed with the support of AIPHORIA Consulting and was approved by the Board of Directors of AFEA on 8th November 2019.



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