

## UNICEF UK MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT, 2024

This statement is published in accordance with Clause 54 of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the 'Act') which requires organisations to set out the steps they have taken during a financial year to prevent modern slavery in their business and supply chains. This statement covers the activities of UNICEF UK for the financial year ending 31 December 2024.

### Introduction From Philip Goodwin, CEO of UNICEF UK

Human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour ('Modern Slavery') continue to be prevalent across the world, including in the UK and represents some of the worst violations of human rights.

I am pleased to give my personal commitment to UNICEF UK's determination to prevent modern slavery in all its forms in our operations and to promote the best possible working conditions of everyone working with UNICEF UK. I fully endorse our Modern Slavery Statement.

It is the responsibility of all UNICEF UK people whether they be trustees, employees, contractors, or suppliers systematically to avoid risks of modern slavery and to report any concerns confidentially and without fear using our whistleblowing procedures. This statement provides a summary of how we have addressed the issue in 2024 and the actions we have planned for the following year.

### 1 UNICEF UK's organisational structure and supply chains

UNICEF has a unique mandate accorded to it by the United Nations to uphold the rights of children, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A cooperation agreement exists between UNICEF and Unicef UK which provides a framework for aligning operations and is built on our shared commitment to children's rights and human rights more broadly as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. This commitment is the bedrock of our organisation and informs how we operate and how we procure goods and services, as well as the business relationships we hold.

Our approach to human rights is also informed by the International Bill of Human Rights, the International Labor Organisation's Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as well as the Children's Rights and Business Principles developed by UNICEF, Save the Children and the UN Global Compact. It is aligned with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in which we recognise that while States have a primary duty to protect human rights, businesses have a parallel responsibility to respect human rights and are required to carry out remediation wherever rights have been violated by business activities and operations. Although a registered charity, UNICEF UK recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an organisation with commercial relationships, under the UN Guiding Principles, including its responsibility to carry out human rights due diligence to avoid infringing on the rights of others, with particular regard for vulnerable rights holders and to address those impacts where they occur.

UNICEF UK are one of 32 UNICEF national charitable organisations based in industrialised countries – National Committees or NatComs for short. We are a registered charity and company in England and Wales (and Scotland).

With over 350 colleagues, we are led by a Chief Executive and the Board of Trustees. The Board is responsible for overseeing that UNICEF UK is achieving its mission and strategic objectives and that it complies with legal requirements and charity regulations. We are governed by our Articles of Association which are approved by the Charity Commission and set out our charity's objectives, the duties of its trustees and how it must operate under law. You can find out more about our structure and governance in our annual report, published on our website.

Our Modern slavery risks relate to the people we employ, the products and services we buy and the individuals and organisations that we partner with to deliver our fundraising objectives.

We also have a role to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of all children; adding momentum to the global mission to eradicate Modern Slavery.

## **2. Our Supply Chain**

UNICEF UK's Supply Chain is predominantly serviced-based and involves the procurement of services relating to fundraising and marketing, technology, professional services and travel to enable delivery of our operations and activities in the UK. We purchase a relatively small volume of goods for our own use and from October 2024, we began purchasing goods to be sold through our new e-Commerce platform. From the ten high risk products identified by the Global Slavery Index (Walk Free Foundation), UNICEF UK may typically purchase; garments, timber products, electronics and coffee. We have taken steps to prevent modern slavery from our supply chains, as detailed in Section 3.

## **3. Policies and due diligence in relation to slavery and human trafficking**

We have developed a framework of policies and procedures which are adopted across the organisation and are regularly reviewed to identify opportunities for ongoing improvement. The policies and procedures relevant to our work on Modern Slavery are detailed below.

### **UNICEF UK Ethics Framework and Speak Up Policy**

The UNICEF UK Ethics Framework provides the foundation for our organisation and colleague behaviours in our day-to-day operations and encapsulates our values of 'Our Shared Commitment.' The framework was approved again by the UNICEF UK Board in December 2022. The Ethics framework runs alongside the UNICEF UK Speak Up Policy. This is in place to provide an open, safe and transparent environment and enable every colleague, irrespective of their role or level to speak up in the interest of the public against suspected wrongdoing at work.

### **Culture and Environment**

At UNICEF UK, we recognise that giving colleagues choice and control over their work and how they do it contributes to reducing the risk of creating situations that can lead to modern slavery. Examples of this include:

- Our pay scale is never lower than the real London living wage
- Policies which enable flexibility such as hybrid working and flexible working
- Our investment in colleague wellbeing
- Colleague-led networks, which represent and promote colleagues with various lived experiences

- Our staff association provides opportunities for colleagues to raise issues or challenges they may be having in the organisation, and advocate for policy changes
- A range of mechanisms for colleagues to raise concerns for example our speak up policy, staff association, conflict resolution framework, safeguarding and our dignity at work policy.

## **Safeguarding**

As UNICEF UK, we work to build a better world for every child, every day. A world where every child has the chance to fulfil their potential and grow up healthy and safe. With UNICEF named as the custodian of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), we embed the General Principles and Articles of the UNCRC in all we do. This includes Article 19, which declares all children, wherever they may live and whatever their circumstances, have the right to be protected, nurtured and to be free from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation.

At UNICEF UK, we endeavour to make this a reality for all children. As part of this commitment, we have a duty of care to put in place systems and procedures to ensure that no one, child or adult, comes to harm through our work. We aim to meet the highest standards of behaviour and conduct whenever anyone representing UNICEF UK interacts with children, adults, and the communities they live in, directly or indirectly. This also includes Adult Safeguarding, which encompasses the way we protect and support adults who we meet in the course of our work, as well as the way in which we support our UNICEF UK colleagues.

## **Sourcing products and services**

UNICEF UK understands that the products we use and the services we purchase could have the potential to fuel modern slavery and we aim to work with organisations and individuals who represent a commitment to our organisational values and mandate to uphold children's rights. We continue to strengthen the due diligence measures in our procurement process to ensure that suppliers and partners have relevant policies, procedures and working practices in place. From 2024, suppliers providing us with the goods we sell on our new e-Commerce platform are included in this process.

To support us in eliminating the risk of Modern Slavery in our supply chains, we utilise the UNICEF UK Supplier Questionnaire and the Supplier Code of Conduct which must be completed by qualifying Suppliers. These documents promote high human rights and labour standards to inform all suppliers of our expectations as to how their own companies, as well as those of their own suppliers and partners, should conduct themselves.

The Supplier Code of Conduct is based on guidance/legislation including, but not limited to, the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code, the International Bill of Human Rights and the International Labor Organisation's Declaration. Suppliers completing the Supplier Questionnaire must share details on compliance with human rights and labour standards. For commercial organisations that meet the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, we check that they are compliant.

The Supplier Code of Conduct also includes requirements around equity, diversion and inclusion and safeguarding. As part of our due diligence, we endeavour to work with suppliers that have strong ethical policies and practices.

## **Working with Partners**

UNICEF UK seeks to work with Partners aligned to our ethical standards. Potential Partners are assessed on a case-by-case basis using a risk screening process which flags any reported instances of modern slavery and human rights abuses. As part of the screening process, we check that potential partners for whom the UK's Modern Slavery Act 2015 is applicable, have published an up-to-date Modern

Slavery Statement. By assessing potential partners on ethical and human rights criteria we can better manage the risk of Modern Slavery occurring across our Partnerships.

## **4 Risk assessment and management**

UNICEF UK recognises Modern Slavery as a potential organisational risk which is monitored within UNICEF UK's Risk Register. This Register tracks the causes and effects of significant strategic risks to our organisation and is monitored each quarter by the Risk Management Group, by UNICEF UK's Chief Financial Officer. The risk register is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee and included within the Board of Trustees board meeting packs as a standing item for review. If a significant issue arises, such as a mitigation control failure, this will be escalated to the Audit and Risk Committee. Our Chief Executive and Board of Trustees have oversight of our governance systems and a process for escalation to the Board is in place.

## **5 Training and capacity building**

We recognise that the responsibility to tackle Modern Slavery is a shared one across all departments within our organisation. In 2021 we designed and put in place an "Introduction to Modern Slavery" eLearning module for colleagues.

This short course provides an overview of how fast-moving global markets play a huge influence on consumer behaviours and in turn both supply chain dynamics and labour patterns which often link to causes of Modern Slavery. Learners are also informed of international frameworks including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), relevant legislation and policies and procedures within UNICEF UK to prevent incidences of modern slavery in our own supply chains.

All UNICEF UK colleagues attend a three hour 'Introduction to Safeguarding training,' which includes how to prevent, identify, and respond to abuse and harm to both children and adults. Modern Slavery is included in the adult safeguarding section of the training. Started in 2024, all line managers at UUK complete an additional 'Safeguarding for Managers' training, which includes building safe environments and identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns about colleagues.

## **6 Advocating for Change**

In line with our global mandate to uphold the Convention on the Rights of the Child and promote the rights and well-being of all children, UNICEF UK remains strongly committed to playing our part to eradicate Modern Slavery, and specifically any form of child exploitation and abuse, responding to key advocacy opportunities as they arise. We continue to call on the UK and devolved governments to

implement the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child published in June 2023, including those relating to modern slavery, child exploitation and abuse.

## 7 Moving forward

At UNICEF UK we recognise the importance of continued improvement, strengthening our practices to address potential risks of Modern Slavery and human trafficking taking place in our organisation and supply chains. We are committed to collaborating with stakeholders across civil society, policy and corporate sectors who are equally dedicated to tackling Modern Slavery and improving wider labour practices in such a way which reduces peoples' vulnerability to exploitation.

We are also committed to the following activities:

- Launch an updated version of our in-house Modern Slavery training to include updated policies and practices at UNICEF UK
- Increase the frequency of Modern Slavery training, with a particular focus on employees working in higher risk roles
- Continue to build on the steps we are taking to improve our due diligence processes for working with Suppliers



Signed: .....

**PHILIP GOODWIN, UNICEF UK Chief Executive**