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## BUSINESS SECTOR ENGAGEMENT POLICY

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- Objective:** Through this *'Policy Paper for Business Sector Engagement'*, Support To Life (STL) recognizes that setting up engagements with the Business Sector (BS) can help to sustainably complete our projects and reach our objectives. Since we began engaging with the BS in 2012, we have always believed that it can play a significant role in the fight against poverty and in human rights protection and promotion:
- In a context where public aid has decreased and proportion of the population in need is, to the contrary, increasing, diversification of funding sources is becoming more and more important. Thus, we believe in the positive contribution of BS Engagement **for the long-term sustainability of our projects.**
  - We also see having partnerships with the BS as a great opportunity for our organization to **access new skills and expertise.** By engaging with business entities, we want to seize the opportunity to benefit from different working methods and approaches, and from new expertise and resources, in order to bring innovations in our projects.
  - Finally, we assume that engaging the BS in our projects can have **long-term positive impacts for our target population.** Such partnerships can lead the BS to act more responsibly in its interactions with target communities, and also prove an added value for their economies, for example through the creation of new opportunities for work.
- Scope:** Applicable to all department members eager to engage with the business sector.
- Responsible:** The Director of STL is the overall responsible; and all managers have a particular responsibility to ensure their team receive and understand the Policy.
- Strategy:** The policy is approved and signed by the Executive Director of STL. It is accessible for all staff member in English in the Quality Management database.  
All members of STL eager to engage with business sector must read and understand this document.
- Monitoring:** The policy will be monitored by the Quality Management department. Questions will be included about the policy in the annual staff survey to monitor and evaluate the application of the policy.
- Annexes:** Annex 1: STL Business Sector Engagement Guidelines
- Status:** Approved
- Effective date:** 09/04/ 2015
- Revision date:** January 2016
- Approved by:** Sema Genel Karaosmanoğlu, Executive Director of Support To Life.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

By engaging with Business Entities, **we strive to include them in the poverty alleviation agenda and set up sustainable long term strategic partnerships.** This Policy Paper has been developed in order to define the framework and the principles of our engagement.

## WHAT DOES STL UNDERSTAND BY BUSINESS SECTOR ENGAGEMENT (BSE)?

Support To Life mainly works with enterprises and business companies of different sizes. We might work in partnership with small entities, such as microenterprises, SME (Small and Medium enterprises), as well as Lead Firms, Multinational Corporations and Business Groups. STL wants to involve the Business Sector in its different programs in order to ensure their efficient, effective and sustainable implementation.

## WHAT IS NOT A BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT FOR STL?

For STL, the following partnerships cannot be considered as Business Sector Engagement:

- An engagement where we directly **support building small businesses and the BS as a project beneficiary.**
- An engagement in which the business sector actor is providing financial or material support **only to meet social or public relations goals.**
- An unbalanced partnership where the Business Sector is the **only decision-maker.**

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Even though we believe in the positive impact of the BS on our projects, we do not think that Business Sector Engagement is the panacea for all problems. With the aim of setting up quality BSE, we have defined a range of eligibility criteria. Our engagement depends on:

- Business entities' (BE) **impact on environment:** we exclude BE directly involved in nuclear activities, fossil fuel, GMO, and importation of seeds; we prioritize companies having an environmental policy.
- Business entities' **respect of labor laws:** we exclude BEs directly involved in Child Labor and exploitation; we prioritize BEs having a code of conduct in terms of respect of labor laws, ethical standards and a Corporate Social Responsibility policy.
- Business entities' **respect of human rights:** we exclude BEs whose activities violate human rights or found guilty in the past of human rights violations.
- **Business sectors:** we do not engage with BEs directly involved in **armament and weapons.** We do not engage with BEs directly involved in **pornography.**
- **Business practices:** we do not engage with BEs found guilty of **fraud, criminal activities and corruption.**
- **Transparency:** we want to engage with BEs whose **audited financial statements** are available.
- **Common goals:** We want to engage with companies which are committed - and prove this commitment - to our core values and goals.

## AREAS OF WORK:

A BSE can consist of:

- **Programmatic alliance:** we engage with the BE through a programme of a specific component of a programme. The partnership can be established in various forms: contributions in-kind, trainings, supply of tools, volunteering of the BE's staff, field research etc.
- **Advocacy support:** in this case, the BE supports our advocacy strategy, for example through awareness raising, campaigning or training in advertisement and media issues.
- **Fundraising support:** the BE only participates in the fundraising strategy, by making cash contributions or helping to develop the strategy.
- **Research for innovation:** the business partner helps, for example, to find new solutions to existing development issues, to develop new projects or new aspects of projects.
- **Technical support:** in this case, one of the partners provides technical support.
- **Networking activities:** the partnership can help to bring local actors together and work together. Here, the aim of the BSE is to facilitate the actions of the permanent local actors. Sometimes, STL plays this role of facilitator for some business entities.