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# List of Acronyms

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CEFE</td>
<td>Competency based Economies through Formation of Entrepreneurs</td>
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<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>CI</td>
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<td>CO2</td>
<td>Carbon dioxide</td>
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<td>DEI</td>
<td>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
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Introductory Remarks

I am very happy that we have succeeded to come up with our own internal guidelines for sustainability. Not only addressing ecological, but also social and economic sustainability. Like many organisations we have been implementing many standards, mentioned in this Handbook, for years, but it needed a push to structure our mind-set into a strategy for day-to-day implementation.

What else is there to say than a huge congratulations to all the team members involved in the development of these guidelines. We have a young and fresh-minded team. Thinking globally but acting regionally is one of the principles we foresee important for our office life.

Life is changing and more than ever it does it quickly. We, as businesses, cannot hide anymore from our responsibility to think and work sustainable. Specifically, our sector of development cooperation, causes a lot of CO2 emission due to our travels abroad. On top, we see the impact of climate change in our partner countries and run projects on green economy. Naturally, we have to act, what we teach. This Handbook is our way to express commitment and demonstrate our motivation.

Marlinde Baerenz
Managing Partner & Director
Introduction

CEFE International is aware of the importance of sustainability and with the emphasize on progress instead of perfection we are willing to take the challenges we are facing to become a more sustainable organization.

That is why we decided to investigate our strengths and weaknesses in this area and set up actions for improvement. This handbook guides us through our journey by providing us with internal and external focal points on how we want to act and integrate sustainability in our business and private life.

Within this handbook we have laid out on the one hand the changes we made so far and the efforts we are already implementing at the moment. On the other hand, we want to present our ideas and visions for the future. Some of them will be integrated within the upcoming months, while others might take a little longer due to our set focus, time constraints and budgeting reasons.

What is Sustainability?

When most people think about sustainability, going green; using solar panels and riding bikes, comes to mind first. But sustainability is so much more than that. It is commonly defined as “meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It is multifaceted, touching upon every aspect of business activity and all actions a business takes.

Holistic sustainability is divided into three distinct and overlapping dimensions:

1. Social responsibility
2. Ecological balance
3. Economic performance

As depicted, the three dimensions have overlaps and commonalities. It is impossible establish a strong position in either of the three, without taking the other two dimensions into consideration as well.
What is the purpose of this handbook?

This handbook consists mainly of the detailed view into the three parts of sustainability. First, we address Social Sustainability, after that we point out the topics of Ecological Sustainability and finally, we thematise Economic Sustainability. In each chapter we lay out in detail which issues are comprised by this sustainability sector as well as presenting improvement processes, we already underwent actions we are taking now and going to take in the future. We are aware that many of the issues mentioned could belong to several of the categories, as there are strong overlaps between the three dimensions of sustainability. For reasons of simplicity, however, we decided to mention each issue only once, in the chapter we deemed most suitable for it. Interlinkages to other dimensions will be addressed within the respective subchapter.

By writing down our efforts in these areas we follow two main goals:

1. We want to make sure that everyone within our company is on the same page. To achieve the most, it is important that we work jointly towards these goals. For that everyone needs to be made aware of the decisions that were taken on the matter and the consequences for the daily conduct that arise from them.

2. Secondly, we want to present our efforts to our partners and clients. By doing so, we want to move forward as a good example and possibly even inspire others. We also want to demonstrate our commitment to the guidelines, by making them open to the public.
Social Sustainability at CI

What is Social Sustainability?

As its core, social sustainability means the aspects of sustainability that relate to people. It is “a process for creating sustainable, successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work. Social sustainability combines design of the physical realm with design of the social world – infrastructure to support social and cultural life, social amenities, systems for citizen engagement and space for people and places to evolve.”

How do we implement Social Sustainability at CI?

We at CI are taking care about Social Sustainability internally wise as well as externally wise. Internally wise mostly refers to processes and structures within the company and its employees. Externally, we also want to integrate it into our daily business like in the cooperation with partners and work within projects.

Employee’s Health

The support and care of health and well-being of CI’s employees is a continuous and strong commitment we are doing. We see health in a holistic and individual way. This means that it includes actions and activities regarding physical, mental, and social health. Employees are engaged to integrate their wishes and needs in the internal health program.

- Physical Activities:
  - CI is striving to engage its employees to care about their physical well-being during work and in free time. This means, that the office and working culture integrates elements which are good for physical health. In CI’s office we are offering Yoga and other sports equipment, so employees can do small exercises in the relaxing room. Also, we integrate Energizers and Stretching in our team meetings and motivate to do walking meetings. Additionally, CI is offering its employees a membership in urban sports club. This comprises a wide range of different activities, as gym, participation in sport courses, going to a sauna session and much more. Employees can decide by themselves which offers and when to take.
• Mindfulness
  o CI is also thematizing the topic of mindfulness in daily work. Reading material is provided. Mindfulness activities are integrated in meetings and team events.

• Healthy Food
  o CI is offering free organic fruits as well as water and organic teas in the office.

• Ergonomic office equipment
  o CI is offering ergonomic office furniture and provides Laptop stands and screens to work ergonomically.

• Health Strategy/Workshops
  o CI is having an annual workshop about health and mindfulness in daily office working routines.

Well-being in working and team environment: CI is also caring about general and social well-being in daily work and interactions within the team.

• Supportive team culture:
  o CI is striving towards a supportive team culture, with continuously open spaces, where the team can speak about challenges, e.g., too much workload or other things and get support and feedback from the team members.

• Flexible Working hours
  o With the flexible working hours CI is supporting inclusive and self-determined working based on individual needs.

• Team events
  o Regular team meetings are promoting good relationships between the team members

• HR availability
  o Having a meeting with the HR department is possible whenever needed. Every six month there is a feedback and reflection session where challenges and goals can be discussed

• Office environment
  o The office is designed as a lovely and warm place, with flexible working spots, plants, pictures, etc. CI is striving to high comfort and home-feelings by giving its employees the opportunity to actively co-design the rooms and decoration. Also, a silence room is established, which offers the possibilities to work in a silent environment or have a sleeping break if needed.

Fair Labour Conditions

CI is promoting fair and inclusive labour practises for all its employees. This means, to adapt working conditions to individual needs and situations.

• Work Life Blending
  o We support the individual design of a good work life balance by offering the possibility to work remote, doing home office and with flexible working hours.

• Family friendly
  o Additional to the working options mentioned above, we offer part time labour and sensitivity regarding care work responsibilities. Parents can have individually agreed options for parental leave and an individual reintegration when coming back.

• Internal Academy
  o Our aim is to grow together with our employees and provide them the best possible options to strengthen and widen their competencies. Therefore, we have regular team workshops and courses on different transferable skills.

• Career planning
It is important to us, that the employees can design the career regarding their individual goals and needs. Therefore, we have regular HR feedback sessions.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

At CI, we strive for a continuous improvement in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Important to us is hereby specially to strengthen diversity sensitiveness and an inclusive mindset.

- **Diversity sensitiveness**: Diversity sensitivity is recognizing that there are substantial variations in the workplace, based on religious beliefs, ethnic background, nationality, and other factors, that do have differing opinions and outlooks. CI is seeing diversity as a value and asset. For an appreciative and constructive mindset regarding diversity we provide learning material for our employees and invest in diversity trainings.

- **Inclusive Mindset and Practises**: At CI, we are in continuous improvement and reflection on how to include inclusive practices. We are aware of the topic of gender and we do use gender sensitive language in our communication with partners.

**Sensibilization regarding working in Development Sector (International Cooperation Sector)**

CI is conscious about the sensitive context regarding postcolonial structures in which its consultancy activities are based in. Therefore, we are highly interested in a continuous improvement and self-reflection regarding doing consulting activities in the Global South. To offer enough space and options for this reflections CI provides adequate literature material for further studying, as well as an annually workshop regarding topics such as Critical Whiteness, Post Colonialism, White Fragility, Privileges, etc.
Ecological Sustainability at CI

What is Ecological Sustainability?

Ecological Environment describes the respectful and prudent use of natural resources without being harmful to the environment to assure long-term ecological balance.

At this the surviving and health of eco-systems is one of the main targets of Ecological Sustainability since a neglect of it leads to irreversible destruction and uselessness of valuable limited resources.

How do we implement Ecological Sustainability at CI?

From the perspective of companies, this dimension primarily aims to keep the negative environmental impact of economic activities as low as possible. CI is already considering and implementing many factors relating to this aim. We are not starting from the scratch but still have much space for improvement on different levels. CI is happy to oblige itself to some determined rules that do not only affect the office-life but all its environment and surrounding.

To keep it clear and well-structured this part is divided up into the following sections:

Purchase

The supposedly easiest and additionally very effective way to obtain Ecological Sustainability is to follow a conscious, green and strict purchase guideline. That way one can have a positive impact by their daily life decisions not only on the ecological but on the other two pillars, too. It is important for CI and all its employees to become aware of the fact that even small actions are of great value for our green positioning and future. Whether it’s only an apple, a laptop or even a flight to another continent- every purchase counts and has a not to be underestimated impact on our ecological environment.

Due to the quite big range of material purchase this part is split up in three: Food, electronics/IT and office equipment. Overarching travel and parts of resource efficiency could be counted as purchase as well, but these topics will be dealt with later.
Food

According to the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2012) “sustainable diets have a low impact on the environment, contribute to food and nutrition security and enable healthy living for present and future generations. They protect and respect biodiversity and ecosystems, are culturally appropriate, available, economically just and affordable, nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy, while enhancing natural and human livelihoods”.

Four out of nine planetary boundaries are already exceeded among other things because of the recklessly excessive food system of our time. The planetary health Report of 2015 captures the following correlation between environmental – and health damage:

“A good 35% of global food production is dependent on pollinating insects. A progression in insect mortality would have dramatic health consequences because the variety of fruits, vegetables and nuts would decrease. If the insect population shrank by 50%, then there would be an additional 700,000 deaths per year from vitamin deficiencies alone.”¹

Facing these shocking numbers, it is obvious that besides consumers companies also have to do their part to retain planetary borders and that doing nothing is no option.²

Therefore, CI has decided to consider the following food purchase rules:

**Fruits:**
- **Apples, Berries:** Organic AND regional (from North-Rhine Westphalia). If not possible to combine both: regional/seasonal
- **Bananas:** If needed organic and/or single (no bunch).

**Others:** Priority - organic AND regional/seasonal. If not possible to combine both: regional/seasonal.

→ always avoid plastic and too exotic fruits/vegetables
- **Drinks:** are bought in glass bottles whenever it is possible
- **Coffee:** Organic AND fair trade
- **Animal products:** ONLY organic and regional
- **Grain:** organic
- **Catering/Events:** organic and best vegetarian/vegan to limit its CO2 footprint

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¹ [https://www.bzfe.de/nachhaltiger-konsum/grundlagen/nachhaltige-ernaehrung/](https://www.bzfe.de/nachhaltiger-konsum/grundlagen/nachhaltige-ernaehrung/)
² [https://www.bzfe.de/nachhaltiger-konsum/grundlagen/nachhaltige-ernaehrung/](https://www.bzfe.de/nachhaltiger-konsum/grundlagen/nachhaltige-ernaehrung/)
Office equipment and other stuff:

As the daily life in an office requires a lot of consumables it is a good possibility to maintain a sustainable approach and to convert theory into practice. In this connection there are several factors to pay attention to:

**Way of purchase: online versus offline**

The online market is getting more and more popular and especially during the last two pandemic years, as seen in the diagram below, its use rose immensely. As one can see the turnover of online purchases only in Germany has doubled in the years 2015 to 2020. This is, even if it is not yet entirely found out how much emissions are saved by buying locally instead of online, a tremendous number. However, there are guesses of saving in between -32 and +240 % emissions by buying locally. Mostly it is assumed that online trade is harming the environment\(^1\). That is why we at CI try to purchase mostly offline in stores next door. However, if it is not possible due to any reason, we purchase needed equipment in bunches! at the following, sustainable online sites:

Online purchase: whenever possible at

- **Memo** (office needs) - [https://www.memo.de/nachhaltigkeit](https://www.memo.de/nachhaltigkeit)
- **Greenpicks** (office needs) - [https://www.greenpicks.de/de/nachhaltigkeitskriterien](https://www.greenpicks.de/de/nachhaltigkeitskriterien)
- **Fairtoner** (printer and ink) - [https://www.fairtoner.de/](https://www.fairtoner.de/)
- **Otto** (equipment that cannot be found elsewhere) - [https://www.otto-office.com/](https://www.otto-office.com/)
- **Last option: Amazon smile** - [https://smile.amazon.de/charity?orig=%2F](https://smile.amazon.de/charity?orig=%2F)

! Always chose green or compensated shipping whenever there is the option!

Besides paying attention to the procurement path, we of course attach main importance to the bought product itself. By ordering online on the mentioned sites we already ensure a certain sustainable contribution. Buying articles next door, we pay attention to recycled, compostable, plastic- and chemical

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free, second-hand, certified (blue angel, fair-trade, eco-label...) and natural products—depending on their use and purpose.

**Traveling**

As a globally acting social business we cannot avoid short and long travels with any kind of transportation. The more important it is to be aware of the negative impact every trip has on the environment. Particularly air-travel is claimed to be the most harming type of locomotion. Besides high CO2-emissions also other substances produced during the combustion of kerosene, such as nitrogen oxides, aerosols and water vapor, lead to the warming of the earth’s atmosphere. But not only the climate suffers from the impact of air traffic: People suffer from airplane and airport noises which increases the risk of stress, heart and lung diseases and concentration problems. Building airports additionally needs huge areas of land whereby natural habitat of animals, insects but also humans is destroyed.⁴

Eventually CI’s aim is to reduce airplane trips as much as possible and use other transportations like bus or train instead. Flights within Germany are for example not acceptable neither to places abroad that are easily accessible by train or bus.

**Choice of Airlines**

Since the green possibilities of airlines are limited by their nature itself it is hard to speak of sustainability in that context. However, even this sector tries more and more to lower their ecological impact using various methods like becoming plastic-free, using reusable cutlery, flying with low weight while fully occupied, investing in new more efficient machines, noise cancellation and using biofuel (Aviation).⁵

Many airlines such as WizzAir, Ethiad, Ryanair, Condor, easyjet and Lufthansa publish their sustainability-manual which makes it easy for CI to check whether we want to book a flight with a specific airline or not. The booking-portal Skyscanner is also labeling the most ecological flight-option which is a useful function for users. Here it is shown at the previous example Cologne-Tirana:

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⁴ Source: Flugreisen | Umweltbundesamt
⁵ Source: [https://simpleflying.com/sustainability-which-airlines-are-leading-the-way/](https://simpleflying.com/sustainability-which-airlines-are-leading-the-way/) (03.05.2022)
CO₂- Compensation

Urgent, important flights will be compensated at atmosfair.de, a German non-profit organization “that actively contributes to CO₂ mitigation by promoting, developing and financing renewable energies in over 15 countries worldwide”.

Source: Offset your flight - atmosfair (03.05.22)
The above cut-out from the website pictures the cost and impact of an example-flight from Cologne (Germany) to Tirana in Albania, a much frequently visited country by Ci and shows that this flight emits almost half as much CO2 as a car in a whole year!

**Accommodation**

As the options of ecological accommodations are not yet very accessible in terms of price and location Ci tries to adapt to a sustainable behaviour within the accommodations by not wasting water, towels, food or other resources. Ci will also try to use accommodation-platforms like booking.com, that offer a sustainability category in their searching option.

This is a first approach of literally staying sustainable abroad or within Germany. Undoubtedly Ci will constantly inform itself about new options in this sector to be updated and to adapt to improvements.

**Resource Efficiency**

For environmental and financial reasons, resources should always be used as efficiently as possible. It is understood as a gentle and at the same time efficient use of (natural) resources that decreases the consumption of material and energy. At Ci we try to deal as efficiently as possible with resources of all kind as shown in the list below:

**Energy**

- Using green electricity from Vattenfall
- Ecosia as standard web browser
- Turning off not needed lights
- Don’t turn up the heating beyond “3”
- Open the windows fully for some minutes instead of leaving it half-open all day long
- Unplug electrical devices and multi-socket outlets when they are not in use
- Lamps are equipped with energy saving bulbs
- During the heating season, close all doors to the hallway, to keep the heat in the rooms
- Turning of water if not needed

**Food**

- No waste: not opening same products at the same time
- Writing opening-date on packages
- Plastic-free
Office

- Use papers multiple times (scrap paper...) or whiteboards
- Not using single-time-use products
- Refillable cleaning products
- Separating trash
- Multiple use of garbage bags
- No paper towels
- Washing machine instead of handwashing
- Sharing electronical equipment

Summary

CI tries whenever realizable to buy regional, unpackaged, chemical- and plastic-free, climate-compensated, and fair-trade- products; always depending on the product’s nature itself. Additionally, products do not have to be necessarily new but can be used or re-furbished. Repairing before replacing!

A conscious approach to travel of all kinds is understood as natural at CI and includes summarized:

- Thinking ahead if a journey is necessary
- Train or bus is always preferred over individual car rides or planes
- Whenever possible (according to your own assessment) use public transport during business trips
- Plane travel within Germany is no option
- Compensating flights
- Thinking locally: come to the office via foot, on your bike or with public transport
Economic Sustainability at CI

At CEFE International, Economic Sustainability is of key-importance. Not only in the internal conduct, but as especially since most projects focus on business development and growth strategies, this is highly relevant in our daily business.

What is Economic Sustainability?

Economic Sustainability, also often called sustainable growth, refers to practices that support long-term economic growth without negatively impacting social, environmental, and cultural aspects of the community that the business operates in.

Two factors are decisive here:

- **LONG-TERM GROWTH**: a company should strive for long lasting and impactful results compared to short-term success.

- **NO NEGATIVE IMPACT**: in its business conduct, companies should include not only their specific economic goals, but understand that all their actions have an impact on the society and environment they act in. It is in the company’s interest and the interest of our society to reduce the negative impact of businesses.

Economic Sustainability is interconnected with social and environmental aspects. Therefore, it is closely linked to the concept of Green Growth. This is a hypothetical path of economic growth that is environmentally sustainable, by growing within in the limits of the planet and moving away from profit being the only indicator of business success. To achieve this goal, it is important to consider, whether the motive is growth itself or whether it actually makes sense in terms of business effectivity, reach, income, goal achievement. The social side of sustainable growth refers to strategies that focus on long-term results by counting on a good reputation, customer satisfaction, to maintain and grow a community. Within this community social and cultural values are not considered to be “a nice to have” of business conduct but fulfil key functions in supporting the businesses’ growth.

Another highly relevant concept regarding Economic Sustainability is “efficiency”, be it efficiency of natural resources, financial resources or working time. Only if resources are handled in a responsible way, the most efficient and thereby most sustainable form of growth is reached.

How do we implement Economic Sustainability at CI?

As mentioned, Economic Sustainability contains different facets. The following sub-chapters will give an overview, how different aspects of sustainable growth are implemented into the daily work at CEFE International and within projects.
Innovative Growth Strategy

CI follows an innovative growth strategy, based on five core principles:

1. **Invest into research and development**
   
   a. To grow, it is important to keep up with new trends, innovations, global development, and fresh chances. To do so, we regularly conduct team-trainings and workshops on different topics. In addition, we invest into academic literature that is available to everyone in the office.

2. **Observe customers and ask for ideas**
   
   a. We constantly involve the network of Cefistas into our decision-making. This is done via regular Facebook and LinkedIn Surveys. Further, every three months the “CEFE Master Mind Meeting” takes places with highly involved and motivated Cefistas, to brainstorm ideas and develop plans.

3. **Use difficulties and complaints as a starting point for innovation**
   
   a. At CI we see challenges as a starting point for improvement. Whenever we see room for changes and innovation within our ways of working, we come together to find joined solutions and come out better in the end. In our weekly team meetings, we have a section set aside to discuss about our challenges and to receive ideas, feedback and recommendations.

4. **Watch the competition and research their innovations**
   
   a. We are in close contact with members of organizations and companies in the business field. In the reoccurring “Facharbeitskreis” we exchange knowledge and brainstorm on current matters.

5. **Ask staff for ideas**
   
   a. The staff is constantly involved in the creation of new ideas and decision-making. The hierarchy at CI is very flat and everyone from student assistants to the CEO gets together regularly. Three to four times a year, we hold a team-workshop to reflect on the past months and redirect focal points. In addition, we have a digital “wish list” where employees can add big visions, but also small ideas for change. Lastly, almost all employees are a member in at least one of our think tanks that do intensive research into specified concepts, ideas, and plans.
**Staff Acquisition and Management**

For a company to run and grow smoothly, the employees are of key-importance. During team-workshops and via the wish list, the creativity and ideas of employees are always incorporated in decision-making.

We provide opportunities to our staff to climb up. While our company is small and consist of flat hierarchies, employees always have the chance to grow. We invest in their personal development through workshops and trainings. Further, employees are encouraged to take on new responsibilities, whenever the chance arises. It is not uncommon within our companies that interns evolved into assistants and are now taking over managing responsibilities.

CI invests in its employees. About once a month, we have a workshop on soft-skills or content matters. These trainings are either facilitated by internal team members or external experts. They include, for example, trainings on time-management and representation of the company or topics like Circular Economy and other project-related inputs. Thereby, we ensure not only that the employees can develop their personal skills, but also improve and broaden our offers to our clients.

For the benefit of our employees, we created an attractive working and office culture. Employees are offered fully flexible working hours, with a minimum of mandatory, fixed meetings. This is supplemented by the possibility to work from wherever it is most suitable to the employees. While presence in the office is always appreciated, to increase the team spirit and strengthen interpersonal relationships, CI tries to make Home Office possible whenever needed, nondependent on current pandemic regulations. To increase well-being, the office environment is comfortably furnished and arranged, and hygiene products, drinks and snacks are provided. In addition, we regularly offer joined leisure time activities, including pic-nics, meet-ups at cafes, Christmas and carnival parties, joined sport sessions, city tours and many more, to connect within the team.

**Data and Knowledge Management**

Regarding efficiency of time resources, knowledge and data management has a big impact. If it works smoothly, it is barely noticeable, but if it does not, big problems arise. Therefore, several strategies to minimise issues are followed at CI:

**Defined ways of collecting data**

- Handling data comes with two main issues: How to collect them in a protected and secure way and how to handle them in a structured way. Regarding the first point, CI makes sure that we are constantly following GDPR guidelines, within projects, contact with externals and our internal daily conduct. We appointed a responsible data protection person that supervises our conduct and repeatedly gives updates and trainings on data protection. We always make sure that no data is collected that goes against personal rights.

- To handle data in a structured manner, we established mechanisms on who collects data, what can be stored, for how long and where.

**Implementing knowledge management strategies**

- We have a folder in our internal data management program dedicated solely to knowledge management. It contains important information on processes in projects, regulations, the corporate image and upcoming as well as passed training opportunities. It further contains
important information for incoming staff on platforms we use, data protection and onboarding processes.

**Regularly cleaning unnecessary data**

- We employ a system and follow defined rules on how long and where information must be stored, if it needs to be moved to another space after certain work-steps have been concluded and when things can be deleted.

**Defined responsible (contact) persons**

- We defined contact persons regarding GDPR, knowledge management and access to data

**Software that fits our needs**

- After testing our way through various communication and data sharing platforms, we have now established a set of tools that fit our needs and follow the data protection guidelines

**Partnerships and networking**

For CI, the global network of Cefistas is at the core of our work. This network is constantly growing and evolving. To deal with the increasing numbers of requests and satisfy the selection criteria for interesting projects, we are creating a base of reliable partners that share the same values.

In addition, marketing plays an important role in growing our reach. We have picked suitable channels to share our message. Via LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and our website, we stay in contact with Cefistas, and people interested in our mission. To get the most out of these tools, we follow a defined content plan, with clear set marketing aims.

**Within Projects**

We consciously try to choose projects that have a component of Ecological and Social Sustainability, instead of solely promoting economic interests and growth, whenever possible. Thereby, we contribute to sustainable growth not only in our company, but also the companies that we work with in our projects.

We are making sure that our projects have a long-term positive impact and contribute to real change on the ground. Therefore, the CEFE method focusses on making an impactful impression on the participants, employs action-oriented and experiential learning methods and tries to adapt to the specific needs of the region or the types of businesses. Rather than solely transmitting information, CEFE aims at creating competences including knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits. The trainings enhance the participants’ ability for self-organised decisions and action taking in complex and continuously changing systems.

CI is aware of having responsibilities also outside the company and within the projects. Therefore, we include sustainability clauses to each project contract where we state our values and interlink it to our sustainability handbook. Within this clause we want to engage our partners to also commit to sustainability within the project.

Lastly, we are working together with local experts. This increases the expertise on the issue and contributes to the best possible product. As a side-product, it contributes to resource efficiency, by employing the most knowledgeable people and avoiding long-distance traveling.
More about our impact can be found in the Global Impact study from 2019\(^8\).

**Banking**

CI holds most of its accounts at “Commerzbank”. The bank has issued a statement to ensure responsible handling of entrusted money. They do not finance new coal and nuclear power plants and do not provide financing to the supply of arms and military equipment to areas of conflict, especially not for so-called “controversial weapons” (including biochemical, nuclear weapons, cluster bombs and antipersonnel mines). Further, they follow a set of human-rights and ecological standards when cooperating with high-risks sectors, such as textile production, mining and wood extraction\(^9\).

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\(^9\)https://www.commerzbank.de/media/nachhaltigkeit/ii__positionen___richtlinien_/Commerzbank_ES_Framework_DE_Final.pdf