

caroline downey

Sustainability professional with skills in Human Rights Environment Due Diligence, environmental management, gender, ethical trade, and climate change. Extensive field experience and partnership working in sensitive arenas involving public, private, NGO and civil society sectors. An excellent track record of developing and implementing policies and strategies. Qualified in the Arts and Sciences, with extensive multi-sector, cross-cultural and overseas experience.

key skills

- High level communications, training, networking and relationship-building skills.
- Highly creative, strategic and pragmatic thinker with an entrepreneurial approach.
- Strong organisation and management experience across work streams and sectors.
- Excellent research and analytical skills with the ability to process complex information and make sound decisions. Familiar with ToC, Log Frames and MEL.
- Excellent understanding and practical expertise in climate, supply chains and gender.
- Flexible and adaptable to changing priorities, open minded and welcoming of feedback.

professional experience

Executive Director: 2016 – present. Women Working Worldwide, Manchester, UK.

International charity supporting and enabling women's rights in global supply chains.

- Established training courses and tools on collective bargaining, negotiations, communications and gender awareness with over 2,000 people engaged and over 90 trainers trained.
- Created 30 student placements through networking with all students securing relevant jobs or continuing into higher education.
- Over 200 students reached in the last 4 years through lectures on gender for the International Development Course at Manchester University and strong links made with other academic institutions.
- Comprehensive deep dive into an analysis of gender equity in bananas, flowers and tea, with guidance framework, case studies and blogs to inform companies and retailers.
- Consultant for ETI, Oxfam, Aldi, Sedex, Amfori and BSCR on company compliance to Base Code, Safe Spaces for FoA, with a 'gender lens' resulting in improvements in HRDD.

Senior Human Rights Adviser: 2022 – Present. Oxfam GB.

- Development of evidence of how private sector companies have the potential to contribute to poverty reduction, gender equality, social justice and climate justice.

Consultant: 2021 – Present. MM Flowers, Alconbury, UK.

- Lead on developing Living Wage pilot in East Africa with Fairtrade and major retailer.
- Collaboration with all departments to undertake gap analysis of company HRDD to improve performance.
- Established Modern Slavery Statement review, KPIs and training programme.
- Created detailed roadmaps of action items and project goals and generated reports to improve sustainability, HREDD and planning.

Sustainable Sourcing Manager: 2019 -2021. MM Flowers, Alconbury, UK.

- Business lead on human rights and environment due diligence, reporting into Directors.
- Mapping and risk assessment of T1 & T2 supplier sites for both fresh and non-perishable from across the globe with a HREDD approach.
- Development and implementation of a two-year sustainability strategy to achieve challenging targets across a range of ethical and environmental objectives, contributing to a 25% increase in business.
- Successful co-management of a multi-stakeholder VSCF/UK aid project, 'Building resilience in flower supply chains in Kenya'. 9,000 workers supported, key insights into worker need for future work, and winner of the Coop Treating People Fairly Award.
- Managing compliance across Sedex and major ethical and environmental certifications achieving 100% compliance for regular growers in 2 years.
- Set up a company-wide environmental working group to monitor Scope 1,2 and 3 emissions. Lead for data uploading onto monitoring platforms and targets set for KPIs

Smarter Choices Programme Manager: 2014 – 2016. Sustrans, Yorkshire, UK.
Executive Director: 2005 – 2014. MERCi, Manchester, UK.
Executive Director: 1999 – 2005. Mersey Basin Trust/Campaign, Manchester, UK.
Senior Environmental Policy Officer: 1997-1999. Oldham Borough Council, UK.
Recycling Officer/Environment Officer: 1992-1997. Oldham Borough Council, UK.
Researcher ICI: 1990 – 1992. University of Salford, Salford, UK.
Environmental Consultant: 1987-1988. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.
Environment Officer: 1985-1987. Ministry of Water Resources, The Gambia, West Africa.
Communications Adviser: 1983-1985. Ministry of Agric/VSO, The Gambia, West Africa.

other skills and experience

Consultant - Ethical Trading Initiative

Consultant on gender issues for ETI's corporate members' and sharing of good practice

Reviewer – ETI Base Code

Reviewer of ETI's corporate members self-assessments on their ETI base code.

Consultant - World Bank -Ukraine

Sharing learning and developing statutory guidance for community engagement in Ukraine

Consultant - Salford University/British Council – China

Work with Chinese Government over a four-year period to develop curriculum for Education for Sustainable Development in Shanghai. Resulting in new Chinese ESD curriculum.

Consultant/lecturer - India

Visiting lecturer at Avinashilingam University in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu- Women in Sustainable Development, and the role of literature in redefining social norms.

Lecturer/ Presentations/Publications

Lectures and presentations include: Gender in global supply chains, Climate Justice, Ethical Procurement, Systems Thinking, Eco-literacy, Water, Behaviour Change for Climate Change. Publications include: Safe Spaces-FoA, Why Trees are important, Eco Cities, Better Farming.

Conference and Event Planner

Successfully delivered over 500 conferences and events – including - 'Rethinking Prosperity', in partnership with Manchester University, Steady State Manchester and London Borough of Enfield. 'Earth Rights' on ecocide, with author and UN barrister Polly Higgins. 'Blue Economy' first UK conference for international entrepreneur and systems thinker Gunter Pauli.

Trustee/Director Experience

Village Aid (an international charity working on trade and self-sufficiency in West Africa), Voluntary Sector Northwest, Director of Together Works (promoting Social Enterprise in Greater Manchester), and now MEEN – Manchester Environmental Education Network.

professional bodies

Fellow RSA – Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts

Associate ICRES – Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability, ongoing

Expert CDKN – Climate and Development Knowledge Network – Roster of Experts

Member Permaculture – Permaculture Network

Member AI - Appreciative Inquiry Network

IEMA – Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

qualifications and training

Feminist Leadership – Clore

Modern Slavery – Stronger Together

SROI –New Economics Foundation

PTLLS Train the Trainer - WEA

Human Rights Due Diligence – ETI/Ergon

Roots of Learning – Schumacher College

Systems Thinking– Schumacher College

Techniques of Participation - ICA

Leadership and Management L3 - ILM

Environmental Auditing - University of Salford

education

University of Salford

Salford Crescent

MSc Environmental Resources

Sustainable development, natural resource management, International Development, Environmental Management Systems, EIA.

University of Gloucester

(Glos. College of Art and Design)

Gloucester Campus

BA Graphic Design (Distinction)

Graphic design, photography, printing, communications, marketing, advertising.

contact

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