

Pamoja

Why we exist and how we exist together.

Last Mile Climate was built on a single, uncomfortable conviction: that the people most affected by climate change are also the least heard in decisions about it. We exist to change that - not by speaking for them, but by building systems and capabilities that bring their voice, their knowledge, and their agency to the center.

Pamoja is a Swahili word meaning together. It is how we believe real solutions to wicked problems get built: across geographies, across disciplines, and across the distance between those who design systems and those who live inside them. No single actor - individual or institution - solves complex problems alone.

We are a small organization with an outsized ambition. We exist entirely on other people's trust and money. That demands something more than good intentions - it demands clarity about whether our work creates real value, honesty when it does not, and the courage to stop when others are better placed to do it.

The values below are the commitments we make to each other, to our partners, and to the communities we work with. They describe how we want to behave when no one is watching, when the work is hard, and when the right answer is not always obvious.

1. Stewardship Over Spend

Every decision must earn its place.

We treat time, money, and attention as precious - not because we are cautious, but because we operate on an ethical mandate, connecting spending to accountability, integrity and impact. We exist entirely on funding that others have chosen to entrust to us. That trust comes with a responsibility: to make better decisions with those resources than they could elsewhere.

This means we are transparent about what we spend and why. Our team knows where our funding comes from. Our partners and funders can see what their money goes toward. That transparency is not a compliance requirement; it is how we stay honest with ourselves.

Frugality, for us, is a strategic tool - not a constraint. We are not afraid of investment when it unlocks outsized impact. But every significant decision should be able to answer a simple question: Is this the best possible use of these resources to create the greatest real-world change?

In practice: We are aware of what we spend our time on and we challenge spending decisions openly. We choose what works over what merely looks impressive. We invest deliberately in things that leverage - skills, relationships, systems - and we let go of things that don't.

2. Climate Integrity

Our footprint must always be smaller than our impact.

As a climate organization, we are accountable to the same standards we advocate for. That means actively minimizing our environmental footprint - defaulting to digital engagement, prioritizing low-carbon travel, choosing train or road over flights where practical, and serving plant-based food at meetings wherever possible.

We are also pragmatic. High-impact advocacy, inclusion of lived experience, or genuine systems-level change sometimes requires travel, emissions, or resource use that cannot be avoided. We make those choices consciously, transparently, and with a clear rationale.

But climate integrity is not only about footprint. It is about impact accountability. We hold ourselves to clear, specific goals - and we track them. If we cannot show that our work moves the needle on outcomes that matter to real communities, we redesign the work or stop doing it.

In practice: We measure what matters. We make our environmental and impact decisions visible to the team and our partners. We treat 'we've always done it this way' as a reason to question – not simply accept without reflection. Our approach is to explore how our footprint can be minimized while our work is more impactful.

3. Collective Ownership

The best person to lead is the one closest to the problem.

Titles describe roles - not worth, authority, or whose opinion matters most. We enable everyone - regardless of seniority - to be proactive, self-starting, and willing to take authentic ownership of problems. We have a startup mindset: we move fast, make decisions with incomplete information, and learn from doing. Slow, long approval chains are a sign that something has gone wrong - not a sign of thoroughness. Rather we use a close to ground-truth decision-making process: designed to enable credible local decision-making, backed up by senior management critical thinking and risk reduction support.

Managers at Last Mile Climate support local action and bottom-up leadership. Their job is to be inclusive and enable others, remove obstacles, protect the team's focus, and create the conditions for excellent work - not to be the face of every decision or the final word on every outcome.

Humility is a structural commitment. We have designed an organization where ego does not accumulate power, and where the best idea is supported regardless of who had it.

In practice: We facilitate decisions to the person with the most relevant knowledge. We ask 'who is best placed to own this?' before co-developing work. We celebrate those who take initiative and own outcomes – whether it leads to failing fast or to success – and we protect and support their space to do so.

4. Professional Excellence

Good intentions are the starting point – sincere effort and execution the standard.

We hold ourselves to the highest standards we are capable of - and we raise those standards continuously. Our team reflects diverse backgrounds, geographies, and lived experiences. That diversity is one of our greatest assets, but it does not mean we hold different levels of ambition for different people. We believe everyone on our team is capable of excellence, leadership, and growth, regardless of where they come from or what they have lived through.

With access to global knowledge, digital tools, and AI, every one of us has the ability to produce work that is rigorous, credible, and world-class. We expect people to use those tools, stay curious, and invest in their own development - not wait for the organization to tell them what to learn.

We embrace mistakes as a natural part of moving fast and trying new things. We reflect, we share what we learned, and we improve as a result. The culture we want is one where people feel safe enough to fail fast - and accountable enough to learn from it.

Professionalism is how we earn and keep trust - with each other, with our partners, and with the communities we serve. It shows up in the quality of a report, the preparation for a meeting, and the honesty of a difficult conversation.

In practice: We take feedback seriously and give it directly, objectively and constructively. We invest in our own skills and move proactively, without being asked. We finish what we start, communicate when we cannot. It is how we show up for each other more than just how smart we are.

A FINAL NOTE

These values will evolve. We expect them to. As our team grows, our geography expands, and our understanding of what works deepens, we will revisit and revise them - together. What will not change is the commitment behind them: to build an organization worth working for, and work that is worth doing.