

**United Nations System
Private Sector Focal Points Meeting 2010**

MEETING REPORT

**International Labour Organization
4, route des morillons
1211 Geneva
Switzerland**

13-14 April 2010



Representatives of over 30 UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes gathered for the annual United Nations System Private Sector Focal Points Meeting together with representatives from business, international organizations, and NGOs in Geneva on 13-14 April 2010. Over 100 participants were in attendance. Organized by the UN Global Compact Office, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), these annual meetings serve to enhance communication, strengthen learning, advance coordination, and improve collaboration among UN staff working with the private sector.

Discussions focused on leveraging the private sector contribution to advancing the Millennium Development Goals, recognizing that enlightened businesses understand the importance of these objectives to sustainable societies and markets. Based on lessons learned in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti in January 2010, a special focus was placed on how the UN can improve collaboration with the private sector in the wake of future disasters and emergencies. The importance of improving collaboration across the UN system was emphasized as a means of ensuring the integrity and brand of the Organization. In addition, several business representatives with extensive experience in partnering with the UN provided their insights and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of partnerships.

Objectives of the Meeting

The 2010 UN Private Sector Focal Points Meeting accomplished the following objectives:

1. **Enhanced Communication:** Basic information sharing and dissemination about partnership-related activities across the United Nations system including at the country level.
2. **Strengthened Learning:** Training support and capacity-building for Private Sector Focal Points and other important players in the UN system and utilizing the Private Sector Focal Points as multipliers to inform and educate staff in country/regional UN offices.
3. **Advanced Coordination:** Effective networking with staff from across the UN system working on partnership issues further enhance mechanisms to share best practices and lessons learned system-wide.
4. **Improved Collaboration:** Contribute to community-building and a sense of ownership among UN staff working in partnership with business.

Background

In 2009, the fifth Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly on "Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector" was developed and a resolution was adopted under agenda item 59 "Towards Global Partnerships". The Resolution reaffirms the critical role of the private sector in supporting UN goals and acknowledges the significant progress achieved at the level of Agencies, Funds and Programmes and by the United Nations System.

Despite good progress - notably the revision of the UN-business guidelines and the launch of the new UN-business website - additional efforts are needed to place a greater emphasis on impact, transparency, accountability and sustainability. This year's meeting helped to advance the agenda at the global level and at the country-level with a focus on:

At the global level:

- Developing a more strategic approach for working with the private sector
- Building capacities to enhance both fundraising and core business partnerships
- Developing a more coherent approach to partner selection and engagement
- Improving evaluation and impact assessment

- Building a more enabling framework for United Nations-Business partnerships including through the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the revision of the UN-business guidelines process

At the country-level:

- Ensuring alignment between global partnerships and country development agendas
- Enhancing partnership opportunities with small and medium-sized companies as well as companies from low-income countries

A. Recommendations and Next Steps

The following section is structured around specific progress made during the meeting on the implementation recommendations which resulted from the UN-Business Guidelines Revision Process. The various recommendations and next steps coincide with each of the broad implementation recommendations.

1. *The UN Enabling Environment*

- The revised UN-business guidelines provide a more level playing field among UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes as the standard-bearer for private sector engagement. However UN entities are encouraged to refine the guidelines further to more align with their specific priorities in terms of private sector engagement.
- The General Assembly resolution explicitly mentions public-private partnership as a key factor to attaining the MDGs by 2015. The resolution acknowledges that the private sector should play a major role in supporting socio-economic, health, poverty, and advocacy objectives. This is a critical step forward in the UN system's recognition of the contribution of the private sector to their agenda.
- Inter-agency coordination team for humanitarian response needs to agree on a private sector engagement approach and define what it should be in relation to global clusters and how the UN coordinates the response during and post crisis. Clusters must clearly convey needs and information about contributions that they are willing to accept. The UN should explore leveraging local level engagement through the cluster system. Long-term partnerships, to be discussed outside emergency response times, are encouraged (rather than ad-hoc in-kind contributions) during relief operations.
- The Global Compact should become the driving vehicle for the private sector to realize and create core business functions that both have maximum value for the company and simultaneously advance UN goals. Further business investments and social investments should both be advanced in core-business operations and throughout value chains.

2. *Partner Selection*

- Partnerships with the best potential for success are those where the UN and a business share common goals and vision for the project. It is important that the UN and the business share this information at the outset in order to assure that their objectives are aligned. Typically, the core business objective for a successful project is that it has a positive impact on profits; the UN must consider how this influences their decision to engage.
- In any partnership it is important to seek a strategic fit between specific UN needs and the mission, strengths and objectives of the partnering company. Tailoring a project's specifications to what a company can deliver increases the chances for long term success and sustainability.

- UN entities should share best practices regarding multi-stakeholder partnerships, that involve different types of stakeholders. These partnerships naturally are more complex and can be difficult to maintain in an effective manner, yet they can also yield the best results and have the most impact.
- Information regarding each UN Agency, Fund and Programmes' partnering guidelines should be shared on a regular basis. In particular, information regarding companies and sectors that a UN entity refuses to partner with should be made available so that other entities can make more informed decisions regarding potential partnership arrangements. It is important for the UN to continue to work toward increasing consistency and coherence.
- The key consideration for the UN in working with the private sector should be to generate jobs. The recent financial crisis has left millions world-wide without work. Stimulating markets and opportunities is recognized as an essential component to creating an environment where the MDGs can be attained.

Outcomes from Special Lunch Session on Due Diligence and Partner Selection

- The Global Compact will compile a list of sensitive industry sectors and the agencies that regard them as such, along with a contact point for whom agencies considering partnering with companies in that sector could learn more about the potential risks (e.g. Tobacco Industry – WHO; BMS – UNICEF). The list will indicate all entities that will not partner with companies from that sector, will not accept funds from companies in that sector and/or will not dialogue with companies from that sector.
- The Global Compact will prepare a sample due diligence questionnaire that UN entities can modify and use to obtain additional information when considering potential private sector partners. The questionnaire will seek information that is not normally generated by services such as WorldCheck (i.e. which other UN entities the company has previously worked with and/or approached to explore a partnership opportunity). The Global Compact will also investigate with Innovest the possibility of a shared service for due diligence checks of potential private sector partners and will share this information with interested UN entities.
- The Global Compact will develop a draft sample due diligence procedure, based on best practices already being employed by UN entities to assess potential private sector partners.
- The Global Compact will update the list of UN private sector focal points and will indicate for each agency the main contact points and additional relevant contacts for specific issues or purposes.
- The importance of each UN Agency, Fund and Programme spending time on business.un.org was recognized. UN entities should provide more content, as well as add an actual contact name and photo, if possible.

3. Integrity Issues/Branding

- The UN would benefit from pursuing global equity of its brand. There are several steps that could be taken to pursue this objective. A starting point would be to determine the values that the UN system chooses to maintain and develop.
- Greater consciousness of the one UN brand must occur among UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes. All must assure that they preserve the reputation and image of the UN in their respective partnerships. To increase brand equity the UN could potentially focus on a single operational objective that unites all entities.

- Additional brand-related activities include creating a global equity template, scorecard and team, as well as an annual equity review. In addition a brand equity study would be helpful. The Global Compact will convene a webinar with **Mr. Omar Mahmoud, UNICEF**, and communications colleagues from across the UN System to further advance this agenda.
- All UN entities should acknowledge their role in guiding appropriate and beneficial corporate practices when engaged in a partnership. This applies to corporate practices within the partnership and throughout the business' operations.

4. Institutional Capacities

- Partnerships between the UN and business should have a strong local and regional component. The role of both UN Resident Coordinators (UNRC) and Global Compact Local Networks (GCLN) should be enhanced to support both the coordination of regional partnerships and the application of global partnerships locally. The private sector, particularly SMEs, should be encouraged to liaise with UNRCs and GCLNs to better understand local needs and priorities, thereby maximizing partnership potential. This should include an understanding of how to work within both development and humanitarian contexts.
- Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator should receive guidance and training on how to best engage with the private sector, particularly SMEs. Local UN entities play a critical role in enabling dialogue with the private sector and determining how they can best support work toward the MDGs and during a humanitarian crisis.
- Indicators of partnership success, both in terms of achieving objectives and partnership quality should be collected. The creation of a standard measure should continue to be explored; however for existing partnership UN entities should assure that metrics are in place.

Humanitarian Response

- The Inter-Agency Standing Committee should explore how the private sector could further engage both the UN system and the cluster system as a concrete way of enhancing collaboration. Clusters should ensure that partnership agreements are in place prior to engaging a private-sector organization in providing support during a humanitarian crisis. This process should be communicated more widely to the private sector, particularly those that expressed interest in supporting the most recent humanitarian crises. These needs should be better articulated better to the private-sector (including both the utilization and improvement of the UN-business website).
- It was agreed, given the difficulties in accepting ad-hoc contributions during a humanitarian crisis, unless a company already has a strong relationship with the UN, it should only provide monetary support, until a partnership agreement is established. Stand-by agreements with the private sector are indeed the only way that the UN and the cluster system can manage private sector collaboration in the wake of a disaster or emergency.
- The complexity of the clusters needs to be better articulated to the private sector, as there are various areas of focus (water and sanitation, health, education, etc.) and membership is broader than just the UN – it is comprised of NGOs, donor governments, etc.
- Private-sector organizations/staff need to be trained to understand the complexity of working within a humanitarian response network.

Communications

- Several communications related recommendations were made during the meeting. To broadly address many of these needs it was suggested that the UN Private Sector Focal Points work more closely and effectively with the UN Communications Group.
- The UN should consider conducting an awareness-raising campaign on the MDGs and the role of private sector in achieving humanitarian and development objectives. This would provide the opportunity to spotlight key partnerships and would encourage new partnerships. The campaign could reference business.un.org as a site where businesses can learn more about existing partnerships and launch their own.
- The UN should provide more clarification to the private-sector on terms used and internal procedures to facilitate better understanding of how they can engage with the UN. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) needs to determine best practices for engagement with the private sector and communicate this widely with their humanitarian partners and to private-sector organizations.
- The private sector focal point group provides the best platform to share input and increase collaboration between UN entities. Additional sharing platforms should be explored, such as an internal website or sub-committee working group; this would allow all to stay abreast of decisions made by UN entities to forbid partnerships with a particular sector or company.
- UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes need to better articulate their needs and how the private sector can provide support. Better articulation of needs and partnership preferences will increase the likelihood of a successful partnership that effectively advances UN goals. This also applies to urgent needs that arise during humanitarian crises, the UN should be careful to only communicate needs for which they can accept support from the private sector.

UN-business website.

- The Web platform business.un.org is a useful tool that should be improved. UN private sector focal points were called upon to maintain content and increase their responsiveness to communications and proposals received through the UN-business website. The function of the site to connect UN with business will become redundant if the Private Sector sees no response from the UN.
- The Focal Point Newsletter will remain in place as an important internal communications channel; it will become hosted on the UN-business website.
- Websites are generally only visited if there is a transactional value. Therefore partnerships should be crafted through the site in order to gain more momentum. In addition should use social media, personalities and global experts to generate more traffic to the website.

C. Proceedings

1. Opening Plenary Session and Introductory Remarks

The meeting moderator, **Mr. Simon Zadek**, opened by identifying the key objectives: learn the experiences of UN agencies; identify ways to ensure consistency, notably in terms of integrity; and to explore how the UN can best collaborate with the business community. He recognized the new challenges that exist, such as identifying and scaling key partnerships and establishing proper risk assessment and management mechanisms particularly for companies based in emerging markets. He encouraged participants to work toward gaining more understanding of these issues.

2. Leveraging the Business Contribution to Development and the MDGs

The session focused on the efforts undertaken by the private sector to advance work toward the Millennium Development Goals, emphasizing pro-active approaches for their achievement. **Mr. Thomas Stelzer, DESA**, stressed the importance of the upcoming MDG Summit in September 2010. It is a key opportunity to review and assess MDG progress (which over the past 10 years has been mixed) and project how to proceed. The UN will benefit from private sector support, but it is up to the organization to identify appropriate entry points for the private sector. To date three groups have been created to help raise awareness – MDG Leaders; Advocates; and Champions. **Ms. Christina-Anne Kyösti, Capgemini Consulting**, described their work to identify successful and scalable partnerships, which is seen as an important step to enhancing efforts. Their report explores the practical ways for the UN to contribute to the MDGs in collaboration with private sector. Over the past ten years they have noted a significant acceleration of UN collaboration with business to advance the MDGs. **Ms. Nada Dugas, Procter & Gamble**, discussed their partnership with UNICEF to both provide resource mobilization and awareness-raising for women and child health issues. The partnership has been successful in advancing work toward multiple MDGs, UNICEF and Procter & Gamble are now in the process of scaling up efforts by bringing Oxfam into the project. **Mr. Chris Burgess, Vodafone**, described how their partnership with UNDP connects citizens in the developing world to the global marketplace. Through the proliferation of cell phones, 18 million citizens in Kenya and Tanzania were introduced to mobile transfer fund accounts. Together this partnership has generated thousands of jobs, provided internet access with local language browsers, improved health awareness through SMS-based programmes, and innovated social investment funds to create a higher social value. A key consideration raised regarding successful partnerships is that both the UN and private sector should share common goals and vision.

Significant events will be held in 2010 to assess progress toward the MDGs and the private sector contribution. The upcoming Global Compact Leaders Summit (24-25 June, New York) will hold a plenary session titled “Achieving Development,” which will demonstrate the expanding capability of the public and private sectors to jointly address development challenges, and highlight promising initiatives with the potential to have even greater impact with scale. The Global Compact anticipates that several new commitments by CEOs to partner with the UN will be made at the Summit. In addition, several resources will be launched to help guide business in partnering successfully and effectively with the UN. Also during the UN MDG Summit in September 2010 the third private sector forum will be held with a focus on the MDGs. Chief Executive Officers, Civil Society Leaders and Heads of UN Agencies together with Head of State and Government will be invited to discuss how the public and private sector can individually and in partnership with the UN – to scale up efforts. With an opening by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, the event will feature focused roundtable discussions on the eight MDGs designed to maximize peer-to-peer interaction and generate a range of commitments to action – leveraging both individual and collective efforts.

3. Partnering with the private sector to respond to humanitarian crises – lessons learned from Haiti.

The session surveyed how United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes, who's in-country capacity was also affected by the Haiti Earthquake, engaged with the private sector in providing much needed humanitarian assistance. In particular, the support provided by the private-sector through existing stand-by partnerships arrangements, provision of in-kind services/products and funds raised was extraordinary and valuable. The collaboration between the private-sector and the UN agencies has grown significantly, with the support and arrangements now more systematic, since the Indian Ocean Tsunami. However, the UN needs to continue to work on these partnerships, to move beyond one-off disaster response –for all humanitarian crises- and to partnerships that are more systematic, scaleable, and that address the full range of needs of affected populations (from preparedness, response to reconstruction and recovery). **Ms. Susanne Meier, Deutsche Post-DHL**, shared lessons learned from the Disaster Response Teams, which have now been institutionalized within DHL and how they deploy to disaster affected places through a partnership agreement with OCHA. **Ms. Mathilde Panigel Nguyen, Veolia**, articulated how Veolia has supported various UN organizations at different phases of a humanitarian response – from

initial needs assessment to capacity building. The partnership agreements in both cases could not work without mutual understanding and trust that has been built between the UN and these two organizations. Both **Mr. Olivier Delarue, UNHCR**, and **Mr. Mark Cutts, OCHA**, underscored the need for partnerships to be strategic – to focus on the needs of the communities affected. The UN and by de facto clusters need to ensure that businesses know who to channel their support to and what type of support is relevant before a crisis strikes, to avoid determining this at the time of a crisis. Long term partnerships between the clusters and private sector organizations are much more effective and useful when a crisis occurs.

It is important to leverage the core competencies of the private sector and to have a strategic fit between both partners. Humanitarian organizations (UN and non-UN) should engage in partnerships that can be replicable with other companies and in other countries. UN can strengthen their work by focusing on the identification of scaleable projects, rather than looking for one-off initiatives. The role of SMEs was also discussed, in that the UN should consider whether a business needs to be a certain size before it can consider entering into a partnership; though the UN could benefit from strategic partnerships with SMEs, particularly in emerging economies.

4. Keynote Remarks: Coke, Obama & UN Business Partnerships... What do they have in common?

In his keynote address **Mr. Omar Mahmoud, UNICEF**, began by conveying examples of successful brand campaigns to underscore the importance influence that brand has on public perception. Brand elicits trust, emotion and feeling. He emphasized that brands do not just happen they are managed and doing so over time makes an organization less vulnerable. The UN would benefit from pursuing global equity of its brand. First determine the values that the UN system chooses to maintain and develop. Mr. Mahmoud recommended establishing a global equity template, scorecard and team, as well as an annual equity review. In addition a brand equity study would be helpful.

5. Enhancing UN-Business Relationships

Business representatives with significant experience working in partnership with the UN (**Mr. Afzaal Malik, Coca-Cola**; **Mr. Ismail Jaroudi, MTN Syria**; and **Ms. Patricia Plasencia, Barcelona Futbol Club**) shared details on specific partnership projects. Each business representative conveyed that their company's corporate responsibility strategy had much interconnectivity with UN goals and objectives. Also that long-term engagement with the UN positively affects their bottom line, guides their work toward sustainability and has become essential to their operations. It was indicated that the UN has unique capacity to bring companies from various sectors together to advance common interests. The UN-business website is a great new development to better connect companies from around the world with the UN, and to learn more about UN activities and the business case for collaboration.

Business representatives made several recommendations for how the UN could improve their partnerships.

- Better coordination within UN system. UN should spend less time and money on meetings and more on action; assuring that they can have more flexibility and ability to make quick decisions. The UN should more effectively and consistently share partnership learning system-wide.
- The UN has a tendency to spread its capacity too thin, to better allocate capacity the UN should stay close to ideas stemming from local markets to develop strategic priorities. This would increase capacity to replicate successful partnership projects that currently only operate on a regional level.
- Seek strategic fit, UN should increase understanding of a company's objectives and tailor partnerships that align with a company's mission, strengths and objectives. In order to reach scale and sustainability of key partnerships, companies and the UN need to work better together. This is most easily done for a company when issues relate to a company's core business. However, when the private sector is focused on core business and issues that relate directly to its

profit motive it is often very hard for the UN to engage with the company. The UN must consider how this reality influences their decision to engage.

- Clarification of roles and expectations at the outset and establish a clear governance structure that is owned at the local level with senior support.
- Establish better measures for the impacts of what we do in this area including by creating metrics using company's capacity to monitor activities, as most have these systems already in place.
- Support partnerships that involve multiple business entities, particularly those that are within the same sector. Need external partner to bring competitors to the same table.
- Establish better one UN brand consciousness. To increase brand equity the UN could potentially focus on a single operational objective that unites all entities.

6. Working Groups Sessions

a. Partnership Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Evaluation

A range of elements that can help enhance partnership outcomes were discussed, including the development of key performance indicators, the application of partnership exit strategies and review of experiences with available tools and methodologies including the partnership assessment tool. Identification of universal KPIs remains a challenging prospect; partnerships usually have complex management and governance systems and each partner typically has unique but overlapping objectives.

Mr. Tom Harrison introduced the partnership assessment tool developed by **The Partnering Initiative** based on a typical partnership cycle. The working group agreed that given the challenges of determining common reporting requirements (e.g. varying characteristics of partnerships across the UN system); it remains worthwhile to maintain the independence of the UN. Disclosure requirements ought to be determined and communicated carefully to assure that matters such as each partner's objectives, project impact, partnership itself and time are taken into account. Three such potential universal KPIs that were endorsed during the session were advancement of the MDGs, embedding the Global Compact principles and synergy of the partnership itself. A company's adherence to Global Compact principles and the MDG agenda should also be considered as a prerequisite for entering into a partnership with a business. In addition, at the outset of a partnership the UN and private sector counterparts should assess whether the partnership they are about to enter is sufficiently designed for scale.

b. Delivering as One UN with the Private Sector at the Country-Level

The session provided an opportunity to share views and discuss how the UN can better collaborate at the country-level in the spirit of "Delivering as One". When the UN delivers with one voice it is easier for the private sector to engage with the Organization at the country-level. Discussion particularly focused on local and regional entry points for the private sector to work with the UN. **Mr. Ismail Jaroudi, MTN Syria**, acknowledged that partnering with the public sector is typically a very challenging process; however the Global Compact is important facilitators to establishing and maintaining effective partnerships. Further local UN entities such as Global Compact Local Networks and UN Regional Coordinators play a critical role in enabling dialogue with the private sector and determining how they can best support work toward the MDGs. However, Resident Coordinators need training to learn how to better engage the private sector and to better understand the UN rationale for partnering with business. Further on the local level, the UN should explore the best manner to engage SMEs, and strengthen their ability to partner with the UN. **Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Resident Coordinator, Syria**, emphasized that a successful UN-business partnership is based on a common vision and mutually beneficial objectives that aim primarily at achieving development and not solely for raising profits. **Mr. Aeneas Chuma, Resident Coordinator, Kenya** mentioned that many businesses are motivated to enter into partnership with the UN as it lends credibility to CSR programmes and links them to national priorities and local needs – thereby facilitating cohesion of efforts toward more focused and holistic objectives. The private sector should be involved in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) planning process. The UNDAF is the strategic programme framework for the UN Country Team. It describes the collective response of the UN to the priorities outlined by a particular country. UN can play an important broker role in terms of involving the private sector in the development

planning processes of countries. Specifically the Global Compact should do more to enhance advocacy and awareness-raising on the ground to ensure more companies understand the value of good corporate citizenship and the business case for collaboration with the UN.

c. Improving Humanitarian Response

This session explored the key role that the private sector can play in mobilizing attention and resources to meet a dramatic rise in humanitarian needs. **Mr. Jan-Erik Kjaer, EMC**, shared examples that typified collaboration between humanitarian actors and business that demonstrate private sector willingness through stand-by partnership agreements with the UN to both better respond during an emergency and strengthen preparedness. Other examples showed the local nature of key partnerships, for both disaster relief and preparedness. All participants agreed with **Ms. Olaug Bergseth's, IFRC**, sentiment that they should not wait for an emergency to engage in partnership discussions. For long term planning it is important that the private sector understands humanitarian mechanism and procedures, and that humanitarian organizations understand business constraints and products/services that they can provide during a sudden onset crisis. The Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) (at the global level) and Humanitarian Country teams (on the ground) need to agree on private sector engagement approach and define what it should be in relation to global clusters and the coordination of the response during and post crisis. **Mr. Chérif Ghaly, OCHA**, underscored this point by emphasizing that when an emergency occurs, organizations can not look at in-coming offers, it is better to activate existing partnerships. Clusters must clearly convey needs and only those that they are willing to accept. The UN must explore leveraging local level engagement through the cluster system, including SMEs. The new website business.un.org is a useful tool as is, but should be improved. Even if many interesting offers are posted on the site, UN agencies do not have the time to consult it in the middle of an emergency response. An option discussed would be to link the appeals registered automatically with the most appropriate offer(s). Further discussion with Global Compact and stakeholders of the website is needed.

7. The UN-Business Guidelines from Theory to Practice

A general overview of the revision process of the UN-Business guidelines was presented by **Ms. Melissa Powell, Global Compact**. The revised guidelines are now more explicit about the contribution of business to the work of the UN, The guidelines now include negative screens and additional references to the Global Compact, providing an overall value framework for co-operation with the Business Sector. **Mr. Joe Bradley, WIPO**, emphasized the importance of the guidelines by stressing that while WIPO had established relationships with the private sector, it had neither formal partnerships with the business sector nor guidelines to form them. They have recently re-started the process to develop guidelines and recognizes that there is a significant demand for more guidance. **Ms. Noha Bawazir, UNESCO**, moderator of the session, shared UNESCO's experience towards adopting and developing a more strategic approach for working with the private sector, in order to achieve results more efficiently and effectively. This included, notably, developing and formalizing UNESCO-specific private sector guidelines of which criteria and methods were derived from the UN/Business Guidelines as revised in July 2009. The UNESCO-Specific Guidelines provide an institutional framework to work in a more systematic and targeted way in approaching and cultivating potential private sector partners. **Ms. Elvira Goetz, ILO**, introduced the New Office Procedure and Guidelines on Public-Private Partnerships adopted by the ILO on 14 July 2009. She pointed out a difference of definition with the UN guidelines, the ILO considers all non-state actors part of the private sector. Lastly, **Ms. Nicole Carta, UNFPA**, explained that they had developed a policy and guidelines on partnerships in 2009, which are now being reviewed for consistency with the UN-Business Guidelines. She noted their shift towards an advocacy-oriented programmatic focus and away from fundraising and stressed the need for clarifying priorities, addressing capacity issues, exclusionary criteria, streamlining and strengthening due diligence process, and building tools to support country offices. The revised UN-business guidelines provide a more level playing field, however UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes are encouraged to refine the guidelines further to more align with their entities priorities in terms of private sector engagement.

8. Partner Selection: A Focus on Sensitive Industries

The session provided an exploration of the reputational risks for the UN when partnering with companies from sensitive industries; exploring how the UN can decide if a partnership is worthwhile, the grey areas that exist and how to enhance UN collaboration. **Mr. Philip O'Brien, UNICEF**, opened the session by conveying the idea that when entering into partnership arrangements that 90% of decisions made are based on judgments; adding that partnerships with companies that may not seem to be a good fit with the UN can actually turn into a valuable relationship. UN entities shared challenges and opportunities they encountered in exploring and entering into partnerships with organizations that were suspect. **Ms. Natalie Vaupel, WFP**, shared the importance of providing internal staff training prior to entering into a partnership, in WFP's case with a multinational restaurateur. In addition, UN entities raised concerns about specific sectors that they are principally against partnering with. Efficient due diligence mechanisms were frequently mentioned as an approach to improve the partner selection processes (e.g. screening framework that considers the potential partners alignment with UN conventions). When done well they can help to avoid partnerships that have the potential to damage the perception of the UN, as conveyed by the experience of **Mr. Johan Weijers, UNCD**. Additionally risk assessment procedures should be conducted and the results of the assessment should inform risk management procedures. In terms of enhancing coherence between UN entities, deliberations covered alignment between UN entities in terms of organizations and sectors that are off-limits to partnership by certain entities.

The private sector focal point group provides the best platform to share input and increase collaboration between UN entities. Additional sharing platforms should be explored, such as an internal website or sub-committee working group; this would allow all to stay abreast of decisions made by UN entities not to partner with a particular sector or company. The proposed sub-working group would be open to UN entities who work at some level with particularly troublesome sectors (e.g. Tobacco); the group would discuss relevant complementarities to working with these sectors. The matter of refusing partnership for certain sectors that are not forbidden by the UN secretariat was raised, while some entities are principally against partnership with certain sectors, other entities are willing to partner with these sectors in order to provide guidance and learning opportunities. All UN entities should acknowledge their role in guiding appropriate and beneficial practices when engaged in a partnership. In regard to certain troublesome sectors, private sector focal points recognize that a universal stance to not partner may be a disservice to broad UN objectives. Further any decision to not partner with a given sector or business must be supported by data, a monitoring group was proposed as a means to provide such research.

9. Improving Internal and External Communications Channels

Effective Communications (both internal & external) are central to building value, learning and promoting the UN-Business agenda. Current UN-Business communication channels and their effectiveness were explored with a view to enhancing these approaches; considering the ongoing improvement to communications tools and capacity a more mature community of practice has developed. **Mr. Eric Falt, DPI**, outlined key communications challenges facing the UN system (e.g. namely external positioning, establishing a culture of internal knowledge sharing, UN speaking more explicitly about private sector partnerships). Two primary communication channels were discussed in greater detail, the UN Business Focal Point Newsletter and the UN-business website (business.un.org). **Mr. Wade Hoxtell, GPPI**, discussed the Focal Point Newsletter explaining that it remains an important internal communications channel, but would benefit from greater in depth input from all UN entities. This would improve the usefulness and robustness of the resource. An overview of the newly launched UN-business website was presented by **Ms. Melissa Powell, Global Compact**. The value of the site as a mechanism to connect the UN to the private sector was exemplified by its usage in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti (January 2010). The website would benefit from greater usage from UN entities, following a training exercise **Mr. Sean Cruse, Global Compact**, called upon UN entities to better maintain content and increase their responsiveness to communications and proposals received through the site. The function of the site to connect UN with business will become redundant if the Private Sector sees no response from the UN. To further enhance internal communication future Focal Points Meetings we should have more in-depth discussion sessions available, more companies should be in attendance, particularly greater

representation of companies from developing markets. To further enhance external communication better links should be established between UN private sector focal points and the UN communications group, particularly to support awareness-raising around business.un.org.

10. Innovation in UN-Business Partnerships

Four innovative partnership projects were presented. These projects each target specific issue areas under the auspices of the relevant UN Agency and have brought strategic partners together to advance UN goals in a specified manner. **Ms. Zoritza Urosevic, UNWTO**, described the “Hotel Energy Solution” project, created in partnership with UNEP, IHRA, ADEME, EREC, the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation, and various Hotels chains. The project aims to adapt tourism businesses and destinations to changing climate conditions, mitigate CO2 emissions, and support investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. **Ms. Garette Clark, UNEP**, presented the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative (SBCI) Common platform for stakeholders addressing sustainability. The project specifically focuses on making buildings more sustainable. **Ms. Regina Castillo, UNAIDS**, discussed two projects, an advocacy campaign held in partner with Body Shop, and an HIV/AIDS prevention campaign conducted with Post Offices worldwide. Both partnership projects exemplify UNAIDS approach to communicating straight-forward ideas through partnerships for maximum impact. **Mr. Connor Doyle, ILO**, described the Better Work Program which provides assessment, trainings and capacity buildings services to establish consistent appropriate labour standards throughout the operations of large multinational companies such as Nike, Levis and H&M. Each of the partnerships reflects a project that advances the MDGs and has a high potential for scale and reach. They are effective case examples that underscore the potential for UN-business partnerships to have widespread positive influence.

11. Concluding Plenary Session

Moderator **Mr. Simon Zadek** encouraged participants to reflect on the meeting around the key themes, insights gained from colleagues, integrity around partner selection, innovation and addressing the role of SMEs. Participants recognize that partnerships of a higher quality are more valuable than a higher quantity of partnerships. He noted that the group's linkages and inter-dependencies are a strength to advancing this agenda. He acknowledged that increasing knowledge sharing and transparency between UN entities better positions the UN as a whole to leverage private sector contributions in a more effective manner to advance UN goals.