

GC Network in Belarus Annual Report 2007



Main priorities for the Network this year

The Global Compact was formally launched in Belarus on 20 December 2006. The first surge of signatories of the Global Compact comprised of 26 enterprises and business associations formed a national Global Compact network.

The first meeting of the Global Compact participants on 15 March 2007 called for a local Global Compact network to be established as an informal association, and adopted the Rules of procedure for this network.

In its first year, the network focused mainly on studying the relevant international practices, advocacy for corporate social responsibility, new member recruitment, arrangement of charitable activities and events, and on identifying openings for multi-stakeholder projects to be implemented as a part of a UNDP sub-regional programme for seven CIS countries.

Organization

In accordance with the Network's Rules of procedure, a five-member Steering Committee has been selected, and the Executive Director of the Foreign Enterprise Coca Cola Beverages Belorussiya, Alexander Denisov, has been elected as the network's leader.

The Steering Committee includes top managers of two leading business associations, a bank, a foreign venture, and one small business. The Committee meets quarterly. The UNDP regional project «Fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve MDGs in the Western CIS and Caucasus in the framework of the UN Global Compact» provides financial, logistical and administrative support to the network with a grant from the Government of Belgium.

Network participants

As of 1 September 2007, the local global compact network had a total of 36 member organizations from different sectors of the economy, of which 60% are small and medium-sized enterprises, and 10% nongovernmental organisations. Light, food and construction industries are some of the best represented in the network. Over the last six months, the network was joined by eight new members. About 35% of the GC participants report being guided by the rules of business ethics in their daily operations.

The government has a keen interest in promoting corporate social responsibility and expanding membership in the Global Compact. The statement to this effect was made by a Deputy Prime Minister at the formal launch of the Global Compact. The Government has received Recommendations on promoting corporate social responsibility as tool for attracting investments and increasing competitiveness of Belarusian enterprises, as approved by the Foreign Investments Advisory Council (FIAC) under the Council of Ministers of Belarus. An action plan has been developed

based on FIAC deliberations, which has been presented to the Prime Minister of Belarus. Members of the central and local governments are regular participants in information and educational events organized by the Global Compact network.

Activities

The following activities have been completed in the first six months of the Global Compact Network's operations

- Several public information and education events, including: (1) one master-class on corporate social responsibility, (2) a workshop on implementing international standards, including a presentation on ISO 26000; (3) three GC regional outreach meetings with businesses and local authorities.
- A one-day volunteering day at the City Children's Park;
- A directory of Global Compact participants has been prepared, showcasing Belarusian enterprises abiding by corporate social responsibility principles;
- A mailing list has been established, whose members receive regular news updates and press reviews on corporate social responsibility and events related to the Global Compact. A Global Compact web site in Belarus (<http://un.by/ru/undp/gcompact/>) has earned a reputation in informative sources on CSR in the Russian language. Members of the Global Compact network are frequently being interviewed in the media, and are regularly featured in the media, on television and on the radio;
- Work is in progress with the law experts on monitoring and proposing improvements to the existing legislation on implementing CSR principles;
- Over 20 proposals for multi-stakeholder projects have been considered, mostly in the field of children's health and education, youth leisure activities, healthy lifestyle promotion, and SMEs development.

Examples of best practices

Since inception, the Global Compact network has looked for opportunities for multi-stakeholder projects that would help identify socially responsible businesses and coordinate their charitable work to meet specific expectations in society and raise the profile of private enterprise in Belarus.

At present, the most far-reaching and successful activity have been the projects «Healthy child nutrition /school milk» (initiated by Savushkin Product, Belarus' leading dairy company, in collaboration with UNICEF), «Business solves the small city problems» (initiated by «Coca Cola Beverages Byelorussia» and the Mayor's Office of Novolukoml), and «Creating a loan guarantee fund in Belarus» (initiated by the Business Association, Department of Private Enterprise of the Ministry of Economy, and Russia-Belarus Bank);

Another project – to establish a charitable fund to assist children – has been initiated by a commercial bank and is presently under discussion. If implemented, the project will create more favourable conditions for SMEs involvement in charitable work.

The source of biggest difficulty for the network is the lack of practical experience with multi-stakeholder projects, which has already led to a heated debate on the concept and formal arrangements for multilateral partnerships. Foreign expertise would be useful in this regard.

**Attachment:
Network Fact Sheet for 2007:**

Network Management								
Annual Network Meeting (yes/no)	COP facilitation (yes/no)	Helped to facilitate other integrity measures (e.g. complaint mechanism) (yes/no)	Website (if yes, URL)	Name Focal Point	Steering Committee (yes/no)	Steering Committee has non-business participants (yes/no)	Secretariat hosted by	Member fees (if yes, amount for Company/ SME/ other)
Yes, the first one has been conducted on 15 th March 2007	The first introductory meeting on CoP is to be conducted on 11 th of October 2007	No	http://un.by/ru/undp/gcompact/	Mr.Alexander Denisov, Executive Director of “Coca Cola Beverages Belorussia”	Yes	No	UNDP through the Global Compact Project	No

Number Local Network Participants										Government participation in Network
TOTAL	MNCs	SMEs	Micro-enterprises (<10 employees)	Business Organization	CSR Organization	Labour Organization	Civil Society organizations	Academic Institution	Other Stakeholders	Yes/ no
36	0	21	2	33	0	0	3	0	0	No

Number of Activities					
Outreach Events	Learning Events	Policy Dialogues	Partnership projects	Cooperation with other Local Networks	Other activities
3	3	1	3	3	5

