

Regional Meeting of Global Compact Network Focal Points: Asia
Key Outcomes of the Discussion

- **What is the value-added of the UNGC**
 - **The value proposition of a UNGC Local Network and of the UNGC more broadly speaking should be more clearly articulated and customized for the Asia region.** Given the traditional role of companies in most countries in Asia, the UNGC should also be seen as a platform for recognition of the corporate commitment that already exists - and not only as an engagement initiative.
 - **One of the most important components of the UNGC value is indeed its association with the UN.** However, there is a need to better articulate why business should partner with the UN and as part of the UN, why they should engage in the UNGC. The UNGC is recognized as the entry point (framework) for the private sector in pursuing UN goals, including making a contribution to the Millennium Development Goals
 - **The multistakeholder dimension of the Compact is another important component** of the value. This aspect should be further pursued at the local level (i.e. closer relations with Government, NGOs etc.)
 - **The UNGC has to evolve from a value-based proposition to a value-creating initiative for participating companies.** The value of the UNGC was especially noted during this meeting linked to the training capacities developed during the “Progress and Value” Workshop session. However additional assistance in making sustainable development a part of corporate strategies is also needed. The “Progress and Value” training course and strategic partnerships with business schools and CSR initiatives could be strengthened in this regard.

- **Incentives**
 - **The UNGC needs additional incentives for companies to engage with the UN and in the UNGC** more specifically.
 - UNGC should create a **rewards system which could be developed at the regional level.**
 - **The role of “champions” in the region is important** in enhancing value and should be further developed (including partnership with CSR entities etc.). Champions should be singled out and recognized both at the regional and national scale.
 - Specifically, the **development of a “COP Notables Council” for the region was put forward**, in terms of an annual ceremony of recognition of “notable COPs” from the region.
 - The Pakistani UNGC Network gave recognition of excellence awards to the Japan Network and the Sri Lankan Network for their notable progress and engagement in the UNGC over the past year.

- **Building the UNGC Brand**
 - **The UNGC should undertake a major brand-building strategy so companies can more clearly see the value of engagement.** This strategy should also include a regional dimension. The brand for the region should be developed around the concept of “sustainable business” not “CSR”. [A useful model/framework for companies to understand social and environmental sustainability, the UNGC principles and the MDGs was put forward by Ravi Fernando and is available on the UNGC website.]
 - **#1: A significant awareness-raising strategy should be developed and implemented** including through the media; consumers etc. UNGC participation needs to become a competitive advantage for companies. What matters most to a company is recognition by other stakeholders of the company’s commitment. In order for such recognition to develop, the UNGC would have to evolve to where the brand carries the credibility that signatory companies are indeed making the necessary efforts to live up to their commitments.
 - **#2: Local Networks need basic institutional sustainability in order to solidify growth** (office, Network secretariat staff, paying members, legal framework, etc).
 - **#3: The upcoming Leaders Summit provides an important mobilizing opportunity to develop and attract new company champions.**

- **Role and functions of the UNESCAP regional project to support the implementation of the Global Compact principles in Asia and the Pacific**

The project will support capacity building within existing UNGC country networks; the establishment of new networks in the region; as well as facilitate cooperation and exchange of experiences between country networks in the region, in particular through activities where economies/efficiencies of scale could be provided.

Key elements of the strategy and requests for support as expressed by UNGC country networks in Asia and the Pacific include:

- supporting activities for existing local networks, including in devising strategies for long term sustainability,
- supporting exchanges of experiences between networks
- working with country networks to build up capacity for implementation of GC principles in company strategies and COPs training
- creating and/or adapting tools to the regional context (translation, reediting of crucial material, toolkit for new networks, etc...)
- survey the region re: UNGC awareness and perceived benefits/drawbacks, in collaboration with local networks (including companies who are not yet participants).
- need to provide recognition to companies but also need to recognize local networks for their progress.