The Local Networks Regional Meeting is an annual event for Local Networks in the region to come together and discuss issues of importance that have emerged over the past year and deliberations from the Annual Local Networks Forum (ALNF).

Local Networks in Attendance:
Nigeria
Malawi
Kenya
South Africa
Ghana (represented by Technical Advisor, Maja Rotter)

Observers:
Mr. Fongoh Eric (Cameroon)
Mr. Olivier Agboton (Benin)
Representatives from: UN OCHA, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO

Day 1: 23 November 2015
The session began with updates on the Global Compact’s global and regional growth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in September 2015 with a series of new publications to provide business guidance on the SDGs. Local Networks expressed a need for more resources on how to position themselves following the adoption of the SDGs.

Local Networks responded positively to the introduction of the Bottom Up approach and discussed means and methods of implementation, in particular, how to fund the process and obtain further funding going forward to implement any outcomes from the approach. UN Global Compact (GCHQ) will disseminate further information on the approach, including the manual and webinar recording. Local Network Nigeria will be the first to undergo the process in early 2016 through the next round of the Anti-Corruption grant for the Siemens Integrity Initiative Project.

Continuing on the SDGs, Jobi Makinwa provided a brief overview for Networks on SDG16 and how Networks can engage on governance issues: Anti-Corruption, Business for Peace and Business for the Rule of Law. Local Networks expressed a need for more resources on how to position themselves now that the SDGs have been released. Jobi also announced that the third round of Siemens Integrity Initiative would be upcoming and urged Networks who were interested in applying for funding through the grant to start preparing project proposals on anti-corruption initiatives that GCHQ will apply for in the next round on behalf of Local Networks. Further information on the Siemens project would be made available to Networks as more details are released.
The following two sessions on Fundraising and the LNAG Update and Survey results were combined given that fundraising was a key concern for Local Networks in Africa based on the survey results, particularly fundraising for Network secretariat. Various models were discussed during the session, with Local Networks providing their own experiences as to the benefits and drawbacks to each. Collaborative funding – the joint collection and/or approach for contributions by GCHQ and Local Networks – was also on the table as some Networks expressed the need to have better global-local coordination in collecting funds while others like Nigeria, would prefer that all funds be collected at the global level and shared between the two. It was decided that as each Network’s situation is different, fundraising options would need to be determined on a network-by-network basis with both sides maintaining realistic expectations of what would be possible given resource limitations.

The new Local Network logos and website were revealed and reviewed for approval by the Local Networks. Networks agreed with the current look of the new logos and website. The website, especially will be a useful resource for Networks to have an online presence as many of them lack the resources to maintain an updated website running.

Day 2: 24 November 2015
The second day of the event began with an update on the SME Engagement Project to discuss ways to avoid the high level of delistings among SMEs. SMEs continue to be a concern for Local Networks and they questioned what could be done to better engage them to stay. Again, the need for a strong value proposition was at the core of the discussion, both at the global and local level.

The rest of the morning encompassed a two-part session on local resources and capacity building to better inform Networks of what resources and other stakeholders are available to them in their countries and how to engage with them. The session was broken down into four parts:

- **Multinational companies/LEAD** – Networks would like to see a system in place in which a) Local Networks are mentioned/incorporated into the participant application process so companies can identify other areas where they operate and be automatically connected to Networks located there; and b) companies are able to set up local contact person accounts that will be collected in the database and for which Networks will have access. Networks would like to see more communication from Global in terms of positioning Networks as part of the value proposition of joining the Global Compact and also pushing companies to engage locally so they can uphold their commitment not just where they are headquartered but also everywhere they operate. Networks would also like to see GCHQ require LEAD companies to engage in more than one Local Network, especially outside of their home country.

- **Other UN entities** – Networks felt that GCHQ needs to coordinate better internally in terms of linking Networks with UN agencies as none of the UN agencies in attendance (UNFPA, OCHA, WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF) had heard of the Global Compact and/or were aware of a Local Network in Nigeria. The introductions should be made at the
global level (either through our UN focal point person or through letters to the UN resident coordinator) to provide Local Networks with the mandate to then approach the UN offices in their country. GCHQ should also encourage UN to utilize Local Network as resources whenever possible and appropriate (example: UNICEF consulting opportunities relevant to GC issues that could have been made available to Local Networks) but should also coordinate this first internally at the global level so Local Networks are not bombarded with requests.

- **Academia** – Networks asked to see better alignment and coordination between Global Compact and PRME so the Networks are better aware of what academic institutions are part of PRME in their countries and how they can better work with them. Kenya and South Africa shared examples of how they have worked with PRME Signatory schools in their countries in the past.

- **Civil society** – Some networks expressed frustration with the quality and quantity of civil society organisations in the Global Compact as many were unresponsive and not interested in engagement. UN officials and other organisations in attendance offered some advice and insight into how to work better with civil society and also which resources to seek in order to identify effective civil society organisations in country. Other Networks discussed challenges in the partnership process as organisations may often wish to partner with Networks for self-interested purposes or to take advantage of the Network’s private sector database. It was also noted that there would likely be a huge drop in the number of non-business organisations in late 2016 due to the new COE policy.

Local Network Nigeria Secretariat members were in attendance during the [DNV Impact Presentation](#) in which Consultant to DNV, Adekola Oyenuga, presented his findings from his interviews with the Local Network Nigeria and broader implications for Local Networks. Adekola offered some suggestions for ways in which Networks can better prioritise the needs of companies and existing corporate initiatives to provide a unique value and platform for private sector to advance sustainable development. Both Networks and the Secretariat members emphasized the need for a strong value proposition and how to improve the Global Compact branding. Steering Committee members, Uto Ukpanah and Ayotola Jagun, also shared their thoughts as they related to challenges faced by the Nigeria Network and how companies, particularly those that are engaged as secretariat members can better support the Network, either through secondments of staff to the Network or by taking an active role in Network events. Local Networks were also reminded that they were sent multiple copies of the DNV assessment report via post.

**Next Local Networks Africa Regional Meeting:** Given that the Leaders Summit (22-24 June 2016) will push the ALNF to later in the year (October 2016), Networks discussed the possibility of holding the 2016 Regional Meeting earlier in the year. It was suggested to hold it on the margins of the Global Compact Africa CEO Summit (est. 10 May 2016) in Kigali, however, without a Local Network present in Rwanda, it would be difficult. The Nigerian Local Network also made sure it was noted that their annual summit takes place every October and so it would be best to avoid setting the ALNF in the first two weeks of October if possible. Nigeria also offered to host the next regional meeting if no other Network is willing.