



This project is funded
by the European Union

Building **CROSS - SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



TOOLKIT FOR
SELECTING AND
IMPLEMENTING
COLLECTIVE SDG
ACTIONS BASED ON
BEST PRACTICES OF
THE EU COUNTRIES



Network Bulgaria

CONTENT

1	ORGANIZATIONS	09
2	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	12
3	QUOTES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS	14
4	GLOBAL AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (MAKING GLOBAL GOALS LOCAL BUSINESS: A NEW ERA FOR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS)	16
5	UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	22
6	EUROPEAN AGENDA FOR ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	26
7	KEY ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR FOR ACHIEVING THE SDGs	30
8	SDGs IN THE CIVIL SECTOR	34
9	PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE NGOs AND BUSINESS	38
10	LOCAL NETWORKS – A TOOL FOR ACTION	40
11	STEP BY STEP GUIDE TOWARDS STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN ON SDGS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR	50
12	COLLECTIVE PROJECTS	56
13	EXAMPLES FOR GOOD PRACTICES	58
14	RESOURCES	61
15	BIBLIOGRAPHY	63



Dear readers,

We would like to present you the toolkit for selecting and implementing collective Sustainable Development Goals actions based on best practices of the EU countries. It aims to provide sector practitioners, policy and decision-makers access to information step-by-step guidance and user-friendly classified information for the upcoming negotiation and clarification process of SDG prioritization in North Macedonia. It should enable readers to overview the role of each stakeholder in this process.

The toolkit is based on information and expertise gathered over several years from the Global Compact Network Bulgaria Association team and members, existing resources and knowledge of and through research carried out by various institutions. Examples from the active projects of the organization and other EU countries illustrate the principles of operation and exchanging. It is intended that the toolkit be developed and updated over time building on experience and knowledge generated through various activities at country, regional and international level.

This toolkit has been developed through the “Building cross-sector partnerships for sustainable development” project (EuropeAid/138660/ID/ACT/MK). Funding has been provided by the European Union. The project is managed by the Konekt Macedonia.

The Authors

1

ORGANIZATIONS



KONEKT

Konekt is a Macedonian civic association established in June 2008 by a few enthusiasts who believe that Macedonia has a potential to grow while relying on local resources and capacities. It's mission is to stimulate and promote the private donation and social responsibility aimed at effective and long-term development of Macedonia.

Konekt strives to become the key tool for connecting the donors with the civil sector by creating positive impact on the society. The organization enables the constituents to implement their visions related to the changes they want to see in their communities. As a single organization, which addresses this socially significant topic in a comprehensive and dedicated manner, Konekt enables:

- ▶ support to companies for the purpose of developing a responsible business and strategic investment in the community;
- ▶ development of smart and considerate individual and family philanthropy;
- ▶ support in the process of building long-term partnerships between CSO, citizens and companies;
- ▶ positive environment for philanthropy and social responsibility (SR) aimed at achieving real social change.



Agora - Center for Promotion of Civic Values is a non-profit, non-partisan organization established in 2001 that works on national level in Macedonia. The vision of the organization is successful democratic advancement of people and communities. Agora's mission is strengthening all stakeholders and promoting processes that would lead to development of a democratic society.

Agora fulfils the following aims and objectives:

- ▶ promotion of participatory decision-making methods in institutions and organizations at all levels;
- ▶ promotion of gender equality through research, lobbying and actions for gender mainstreaming;
- ▶ support to local economic development through trainings, networking and technical assistance;
- ▶ promotion of advanced ideas and skills related to the implementation of the main aims of the organization;
- ▶ development of significant network of professional contacts between all stakeholders working in the areas of Agora's mission.



Network Bulgaria

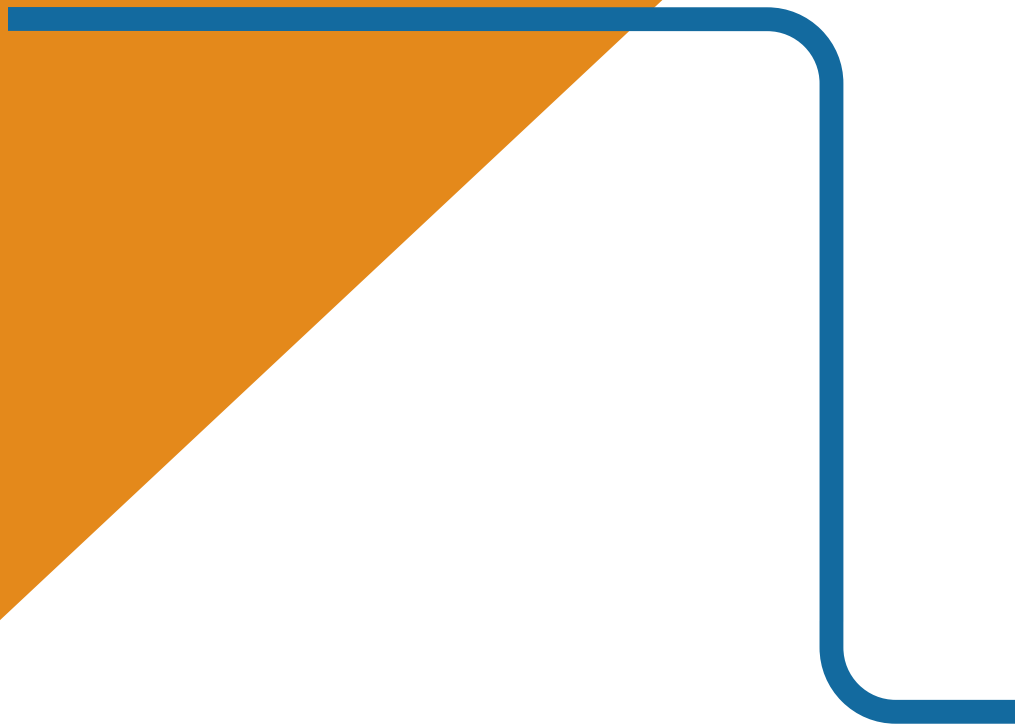
The UN Global Compact Network in Bulgaria is a platform for the responsible business in Bulgaria and for the time of its existence it has built for itself a recognizable image and has developed collective projects with public importance, which have a positive impact on the sustainability of business and society.

We are proud that a large number of our member companies are socially responsible. These are Asarel, Aurubis Bulgaria, Bulgaria On Air, Higher University of Insurance and Finance, Contour Global Maritsa East 3, Mobiltel, Overgas, Eurobank Bulgaria, Solvay Sodi, TechnoLogica and many more. The Network does not simply promote adherence to the values of the Global Compact but rather uses its Ten Principles as a tool which can creatively address the needs of the society and stir a change in the citizens' culture. We have created a unique work approach and a tradition on uniting capacity in order to achieve a new level of Corporate Social Responsibility, namely CSR 2.0 – Collaborative Social Responsibility.

Today and for the future years, the work of the Bulgarian network will be under the motto "Business as a force for good" following our Strategic plan 2015+ as part of our work on the Sustainable development goals. We actively work on the European Pact for Youth, too which is an initiative of the European Commission and CSR Europe.

2

PROJECT
DESCRIPTION



The overall project objective is to contribute towards enhanced public-private dialogue and active participation of the civil society and the business sector in achieving sustainable development in the country as part of its EU integration process.

Specifically, the project partners will provide framework for cross-sector partnerships in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the EU integration reforms. It aims to enable civil society, business and public sector to:

- a) Consult each other,
- b) Work together and identify priorities, and
- c) Generate ideas for joint sustainable development initiatives.

The project will provide solution for the need to unlock and operationalize the economic, social, environmental and ethical promises of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs in Macedonia. Further on, it will fill the gap of lack of awareness of how the SDGs are linked to the EU accession process which is crucial to the country's development and contribute to the process of development of bottom-up approach that includes all relevant stakeholders into the process of setting the country's priorities in

the context of SDGs and EU accession.

The experience of the project partners shows that companies, CSOs and public institutions need structured models for engagement with the new sustainability challenges societies face. That is why project activities are organized in 4 project components and are implemented within a timeframe of 15 months.

Component 1: Setting baseline for SDG implementation in context of EU accession.

Component 2: Outlining SDG framework for Macedonia.

Component 3: Transfer of knowhow from neighbouring EU member states.

Component 4: Catalysing collaborative action for sustainable development.

The partners Konekt, Agora and Global Compact Network Bulgaria expect to improve the understanding of stakeholders on the SDG priorities in relation to EU integration. Through the transferred know-how and best practices from neighbouring EU member states they will further increase buy-in for public-private partnerships by key stakeholders (CSOs, businesses, public institutions) in Macedonia.



3

QUOTES FROM THE ORGANIZATIONS



Konekt is committed towards promoting the social responsibility of companies and provides support in building long-term partnerships between civil society organizations, citizens and companies. We believe that when social responsibility is integrated into the business strategy, it

enables the company to increase productivity, innovation and long-term sustainable development. In this regard, we see a huge opportunity for companies to engage in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as a way to contribute to building a sustainable society. Through the Goals of Sustainable Development, companies are seen as a driver of social change, not as a generator of problems. Due to this, we want to use the potential of the business sector, not only in financial terms, but in terms of the unused opportunities provided by new trends and technology and putting their business processes in the interest of solving social problems. For this to function successfully, we believe that it is necessary to identify partnerships with other stakeholders in the society, the civil sector and the institutions.



Kristina – AGORA:

The work towards the achievement of SDGs comes very naturally for us in AGORA because it is closely related to our mission for promotion of processes that will lead to development of a democratic society.

We try to bring the goals closer to the local communities, thus to encourage and support processes that ensure equality of women and men, which strengthens local economic development and builds sustainable communities. We believe that it is impossible to fulfil without building partnerships with other stakeholders in the community, especially with the business sector that is often excluded from these processes at local level. Therefore, in addition to inter-institutional cooperation, it is necessary to be established cooperation with other sectors (especially civil and business) in order to be used the overall existing potential and to achieve better results for reaching the goals for sustainable development.



Ognyan Trajanov

Owner and CEO of TechnoLogica

Chairperson, Global Compact Network Bulgaria

In the companies, we unite diverse professionals to achieve more and higher results.

In the Global Compact Network Bulgaria, we gather for the same purpose, companies from various scale and industries to work collectively for the Global Goals. For us the SDGs are a shared vision and guidelines for action for welfare not only for nations and companies, but also for the single human being. Technologies make the world smaller, more accessible, and the role of everyone - more visible. Being part of a team, of a movement and going towards common goals you feel significant and your life - more meaningful.

We use the synergism of our companies to achieve broader change for the society. As the Global Goals unite the whole society, we strive to transfer this synergism as a working approach at national level with the other stakeholders.

4

GLOBAL
AGENDA FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
(MAKING GLOBAL
GOALS LOCAL
BUSINESS: A
NEW ERA FOR
RESPONSIBLE
BUSINESS)





“It is increasingly evident that the opening of the world economy, the liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation in the 90s greatly increased the role and influence of the multinational corporations, but neither the governments, nor the companies are willing to deal with the adverse consequences of this.”

John Ruggie, Professor,
Harvard University

One of the most striking socio-economic developments in recent decades has been the emergence of core *principles* with respect to the governance, management and operations of business organizations, and other entities operating in the private sector.

The United Nations has been at the forefront of this development with two initiatives in particular: the UN Global Compact (and its Ten Principles), and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Both the UN Global Compact and the Guiding Principles offer sets of normative principles to guide business policy and conduct, especially pertaining to the notion of “do-no-harm”. With respect to the UN Global Compact, companies commit to a set of Ten Principles, all drawn from key UN Conventions and Declarations, in four areas:

- i) human rights;
- ii) labour;
- iii) environment;
- iv) anti-corruption.

The Guiding Principles, meanwhile, provide further conceptual and operational clarity for the two human rights principles

championed by the UN Global Compact and set a minimum standard of conduct for companies to prevent and address the risk of adverse human rights impacts linked to their business activities.

Eighteen years go fast, but in 2000, the world looks very different indeed. The Globalization has just started; global investments are in their zenith, and civil organisations are pushing for liberalization.

Logically, the response to these challenges is the springing up of numerous initiatives and organisations. Together they contribute to forming and the validation of a business model that uses the principle of “sustainability” on a global scale. The Global Compact is one of the driving forces and perhaps the one that is the most justified. It is not easy to assess the impact of the Global Compact in terms of promoting the concept of sustainable development. Yet, by encouraging all companies, regardless of the industry, size, nationality or market in which they operate, to take the first steps towards achieving its sustainability, the Global Compact has the following achievements:



Table 1

Indicator	2000	2017*
Business Members	44	8041
Non-economic members	0	4449
Local networks	0	70+
Academic institutions, signatories of the UN Principles for responsible management education	0	600+
Investors, signatories of UN Principles for Responsible Investment	0	1450
General Reports of Progress (UNCoP)	0	47000+

*The data are correct as of 31.12.2018

The figures speak for themselves, but what they cannot recreate is the real cooperation between the business, government offices, investors, academic institutions and the civil society organisations. The Global Compact creates the platform on which they work to achieve a common vision. Over the past three years this vision has been achieved and today, after voting to accept the sustainable development goals, the business receives an important role in directing its efforts on the community, and by working together with other stakeholders, to achieve these goals in the next 15 years.

What is more, the Global Compact is expected to inspire the next generation of business leaders to achieve the low-carbon emission economy and sustainable society.



“We need more companies worldwide to commit to sustainability and take shared responsibility of making the world a better place.”

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations

As an essential driver of economic growth and job creation, the private sector has become an indispensable partner in development.

Private sector engagement in the SDGs is clearly growing. In a way this follows the trend of the last couple of years or even decades. Businesses have been scrutinized for their impact on society and the environment, along with negative PR and consequently less profits or stockvalue. Consequently, most businesses now feature a sustainability strategy or a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) branch and have various social programs. Some have established new product lines following sustainability criteria or redirected their business model.

The SDGs constitute a new but similar element in this shift towards corporate sustainability. In some cases, companies willing to change their business model have identified the SDGs as a tool to refocus their business practices to at least create more resilience in their value chains and to measure risks and opportunities with regard to their business model. And in others cases yet again, companies use the SDG as a business case with profit to be made in new products or areas. However, the scope, intent and impact of business' involvement in the SDGs often stays vague and hard to measure.

Now, with the adoption of the Goals, some big corporations have pledged their support for the SDGs or evaluated the relevance of the SDGs for their own business activities. The idea of business involvement with the SDG is trending but companies are still exploring the proper strategies to better align business activities with the transformative Agenda of the SDGs.

According to a 2017 study by KPMG four in ten of the world's largest companies (Global 250 as ranked by Fortune by total revenues for their respective fiscal years¹) already reference the SDGs in their corporate reporting.

As a matter of fact, the 2030 Agenda gives the private sector a significant role.

1 <http://fortune.com/global500/>

4.1. History of engagement

The call for business engagement in the 2030 Agenda has been answered by various corporations and corporate advocacy groups. The private sector was intensively engaged through many different channels during the SDG negotiations. The agreed Agenda gave a comprehensive framework for a global socio-ecological transformation.

2008 - The UN Private Sector Forum² an annual summit hosted by the UN Secretary General is organized by UN Global Compact. It has a strong focus on the SDGs ever since they were adopted. The participating multinational companies support the SDGs with concrete measures such as pilot projects, gender quota or investment in sustainable infrastructure.

2014 - The UN-Business Action Hub³. It is a forum where UN agencies and business can engage in dialogue, share information and take action to advance e.g. the SDGs.

2014 - The SDG Fund⁴ is an international multi-donor and multiagency development mechanism to support sustainable

development activities through integrated and multidimensional joint programmes. It includes business and academia and supports joint programmes in 22 countries with an approximately US \$70 million budget. To better align public-private partnerships for sustainable development, the SDG Fund has established a Private Sector Advisory Group.

2016 - The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)⁵ is accompanied by a SDG Business Forum. The goal of the co-organizers the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), and the UN Global Compact is to foster dialogue between governments and the private sector.

4.2. Steps of engagement

Businesses can be the motor of the changes needed to achieve inclusive and sustainable economy which provides lasting benefits to people, the communities and markets everywhere. Here is what we need:

1. The companies should join the organisations that maintain the ethical and principled business behavior, e.g. the Global Compact, and to incorporate sustainability as a leading component in its business strategy and everyday business practices.

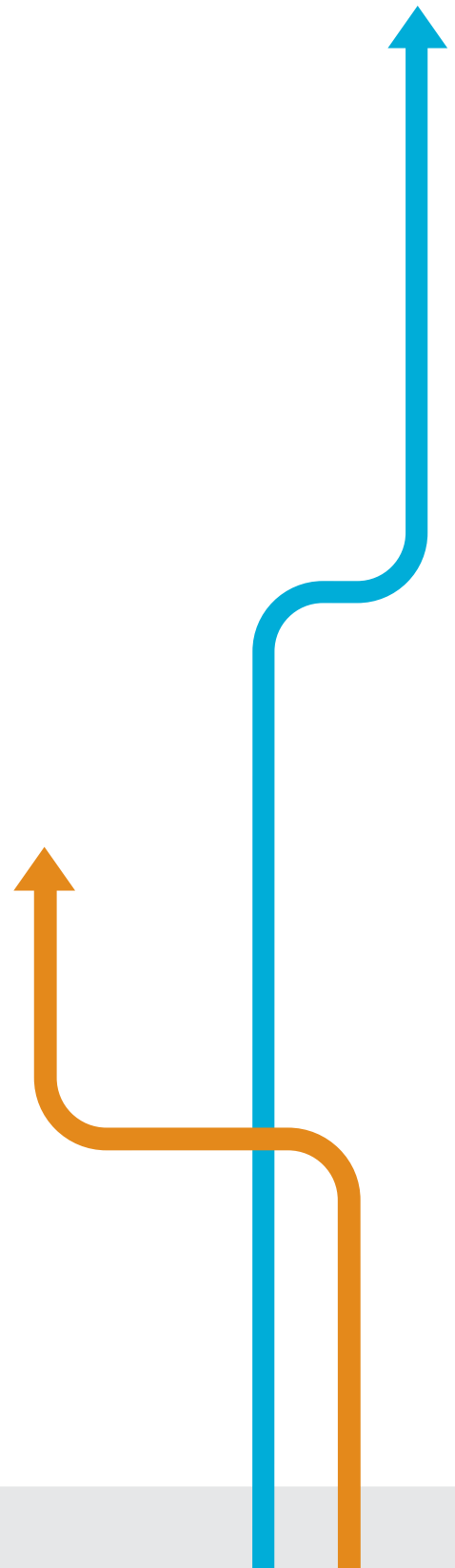
2 www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/PSF2015Announcements.pdf

3 https://business.un.org/en/browse/companies_entities?page=8

4 www.sdgfund.org/who-we-are

5 www.sdgbusinessforum.org

2. The governments should recognize and support the Global Compact and should create a favourable environment for sustainable business also by bringing the relevant legal frameworks in line with the sustainable development priorities.
3. The investors should sign the Principles of Responsible Investment and should guarantee that the environmental, social and management indicators are incorporated into the investment analysis and decisions making process.
4. The branch associations should encourage their members to seek sustainability and accept the principles of the Global Compact.
5. The business schools should comply with the Principles for Responsible Management Education and should incorporate "sustainability" into their curricula and scientific research.
6. The civil organisations should cooperate with the business in order to develop clever solutions regarding the challenges that society faces.
7. The United Nations should actively engage with the private sector to achieve the SDGs and to promote the Global Compact. **In September 2015 the world has changed.**



5

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



“Since there can be no poverty eradication without generation of wealth, we should further promote the UN Global Compact, highlighting the benefits of corporate responsibility.”

António Guterres,
UN Secretary-General
Secretary-General Election



“I have seen first-hand the power of the UN Global Compact’s Ten Principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. They are helping thousands of companies contribute to sustainability.”



“I propose that you, the business leaders... and we, the United Nations, initiate a global compact of shared values and principles,

Kofi Annan,
UN Secretary-General
(1997-2006) World Economic



“There is no Plan B, because there is no Planet B.”

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General
of the United Nations

In September 2015 the world has changed.

In September 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted a plan for achieving a better future for all – laying out a path over the next 15 years to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and protect our planet. At the heart of “Agenda 2030” are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which clearly define the world we want – applying to all nations and leaving no one behind.

The new Global Goals result from a process that has been more inclusive than ever, with Governments involving business, civil society and citizens from the outset. Agreement on where the world needs to go was achieved. Now it is time to fulfill these commitments and this can only happen if unprecedented efforts are taken by all sectors in society – and business has to play a very important role in the process.

The **Agenda 2030** was adopted by the international community on September 25 2015, after two years of intense negotiations, with the aim to set the global goals for development for the period 2015-2030:

17 Sustainable Development Goals;

169 underlying targets;

230 global indicators.

The SDGs, natural heirs of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – the agenda for development for the period

2000-2015 – present very peculiar and evolutionary features: they are entirely dedicated to **sustainable development**, a remarkable achievement of **multilateral cooperation** that confirms that challenges related to sustainability issues are inevitably intrinsic in the new models of economic and social development

they are universal and inclusive;

they are broaden in their scope of action.

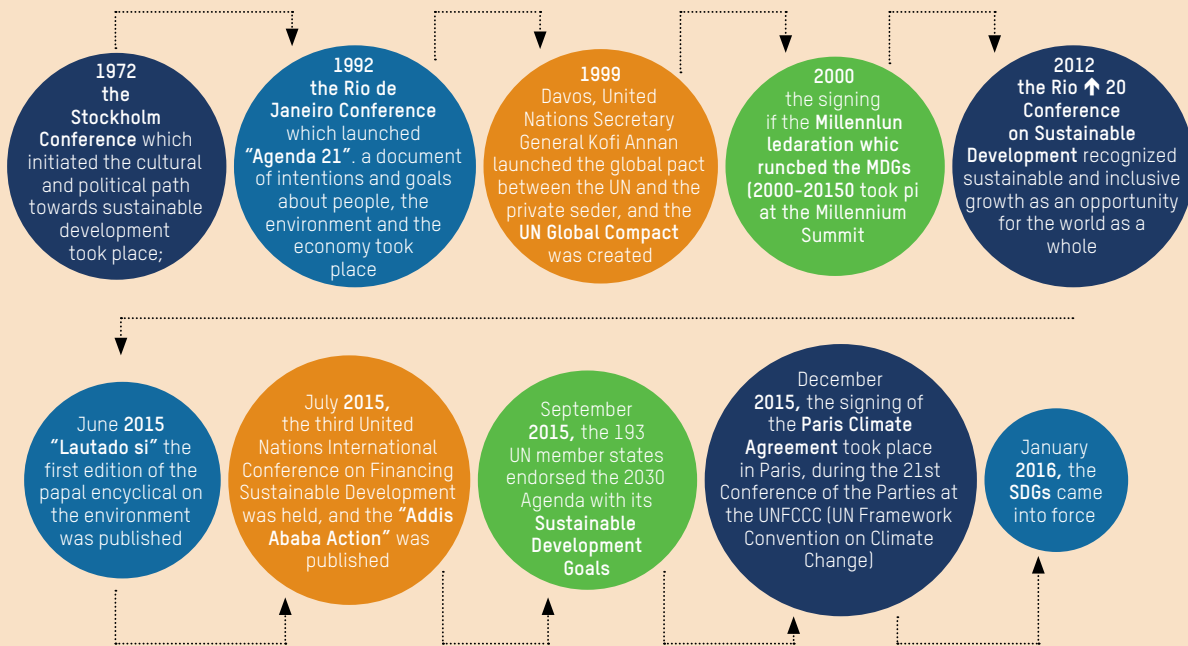
Figure 1 represents some of the milestones in the long pathway towards a common, internationally recognized, institutional framework for sustainable development.

Universality is one of the pillar of the new Agenda, strongly evocated in the claim „*leave no one behind*“. Indeed, differing from the past development agenda represented by the MDGs, that divided the world into developing and donor countries, the **SDGs are equally addressed to all countries in the world.**

5.1. The Global Compact

The achievement of SDGs is not possible without the active commitment by the business.

Figure 1: Main milestones of sustainable development 1972 – 2016



The SDGs explicitly call on all businesses to apply their creativity and innovation to solve sustainable development challenges. They present an opportunity for business-led solutions and technologies to be developed and implemented to address the world's biggest sustainable development challenges.

In order to see a real turning point in the valorization of the role of companies globally, however, it was necessary to wait a few more years, until 1999 in Davos, when the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan proposed a global pact for sustainability to the business community. The United Nations Global Compact was a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with ten

universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Global Compact is a leadership platform for the development, implementation and disclosure of responsible corporate practices. Launched in 2000, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world, with more than 10,100 companies and 3,400 non-business signatories based in over 165 countries, and more than 70 Local Networks.

The Global Compact is a momentous step for the United Nations, as it not only recognizes the role of firms as partners of a more sustainable and inclusive



“Companies that do business responsibly and find opportunities to innovate around the SDGs will be the market leaders of tomorrow.”

Lise Kingo, executive director
United Nations global compact

development but because it also directly involves the UN in this private sector engagement project. Our journey officially launches at the Leaders Summit 2016 — when UN Global Compact business leaders gather in New York to endorse the SDG agenda and chart the way forward. Moving ahead, we will continue to awaken our global network to the SDGs — showing both the responsibility and unique opportunity at hand to shape better business models and more sustainable markets.

We will guide businesses in areas essential for making progress, including responsible practices, transformative partnerships, breakthrough innovation and impact reporting.

Over the past 18 years, the UN Global Compact has built the most global platform for businesses to responsibly address the challenges and opportunities they face around the world. We are unparalleled in our ability to unite companies with the stakeholders needed to advance sustainable development: Governments, civil society, labour, educators, investors and the UN — among many key actors.

GLOBAL GOALS, LOCAL BUSINESS

The UN Global Compact’s Ten Principles provide a universal language for corporate responsibility — understood and interpreted by businesses around the world. Our principles resonate with and guide companies everywhere regardless of size, complexity or location.

Now, the SDG agenda gives an enormous boost and focus to our global movement of responsible companies that are working to make business a force for good.

While the SDGs are universal, they will very much be addressed at the national level — where each country will apply their unique history, culture and capabilities.

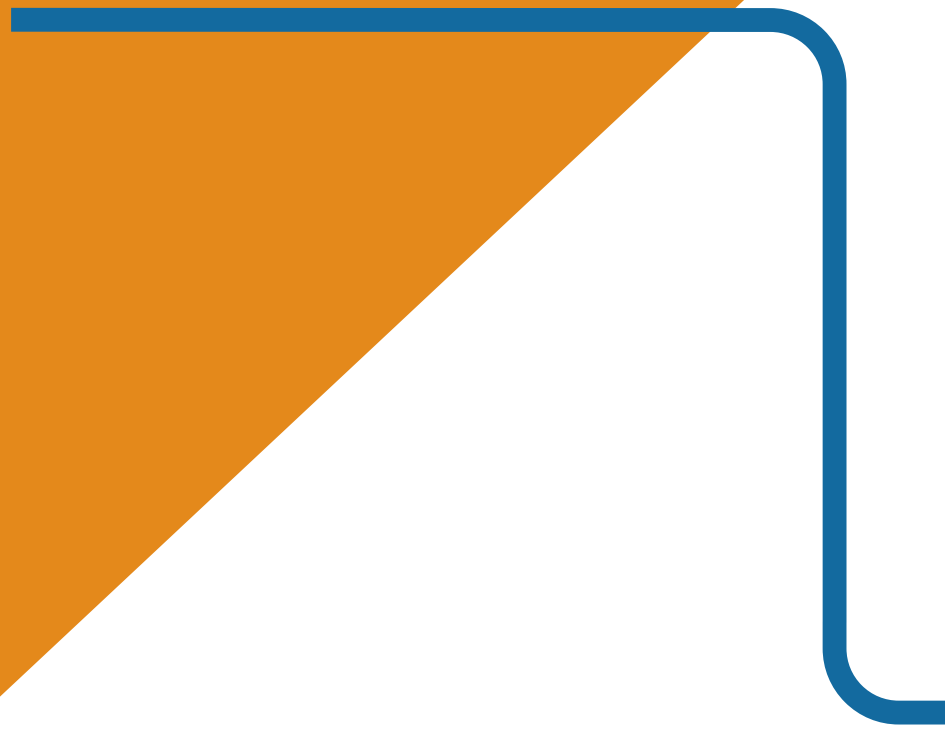
As countries establish and enact national plans for achieving the SDGs, the Global Compact’s Local Networks in approximately 80 countries provide the platform for business to engage with stakeholders from Government, the UN, civil society and communities to map a shared approach.

GLOBAL IMPACT

Global Compact Local Networks are rolling out the global goals to business communities in all regions of the world, ensuring that the SDGs result in tangible and impactful actions on the ground.

6

EUROPEAN
AGENDA FOR
ACHIEVING THE
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The European Union voted the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development as a unique possibility for a better future. The vision of the goals – to take action for people, planet and prosperity – is in complete compliance with the European agenda. The sustainability is regarded as a European brand. The EU firmly declares their commitment to implement the sustainable development goals in its internal and external policy and to play the leading role together with its member countries in carrying out the UN 2030 Agenda.

The first Vice-president of the European commission **Frans Timmermans** says: *"In order to build a future for our children and the planet, we regard the goals for development and sustainability as a leading principle in all aspects of our work. The carrying out of the UN 2030 Agenda is a collective commitment and it requires the participation and co-operation of all of us, including the member countries and the civil society as a whole"*.

On 22 November 2016, a year after the Sustainable development goals of the UN were voted, the European commission presented its strategic approach for achieving sustainable development in Europe and round the world.

The basic planned actions towards carrying out the UN 2030 Agenda are:

- ▶ Including the Sustainable development goals (SDG) in the EC policies and initiatives in every sphere and regarding sustainable development as an important leading principle for all EC policies;

- ▶ Ensuring regular reporting on the EC progress, as of 2017;
- ▶ Coordinating the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda with the governments of the EC countries, the European Parliament, other European institutions, international organizations, civil society organizations, citizens and other stakeholders;
- ▶ Creating a high level multi-stakeholder platform which will support the exchange of good practices on the implementation in different spheres at a national and European level;
- ▶ Building up of a more long-term vision for the period after 2020.

The European commission plans concrete measures as well on each of the seventeen goals. In fulfillment of this commitment there already exists:

▶ High level multi-stakeholder platform of SDGs6:

The platform unites the stakeholders – representatives of the academia, NGOs, businesses, civil society, European Economic and Social committee and the Region committee, so that the Commission can be supported and advised on the implementation of the SDGs at EU level.

6 https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/international-strategies/global-topics/sustainable-development-goals/multi-stakeholder-platform-sdgs_en

International organizations like the World Bank, the UN and the European sustainable development network (ESDN) participate in it as observers.

▶ **The European sustainability award**

The European sustainability award was launched in order to recognise the efforts and ingenuity of European citizens, companies and organizations. It has a clear ambition: to champion inspiring initiatives with a transformative contribution to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The award was created in response to a proposal by CSR Europe – the biggest European business network for corporate social responsibility – and it is carried out in support of the EU multi-stakeholder platform on SDGs.

The first edition of the competition in 2018/2019 is under the theme *“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”, linked to some of the SDGs, and namely:*

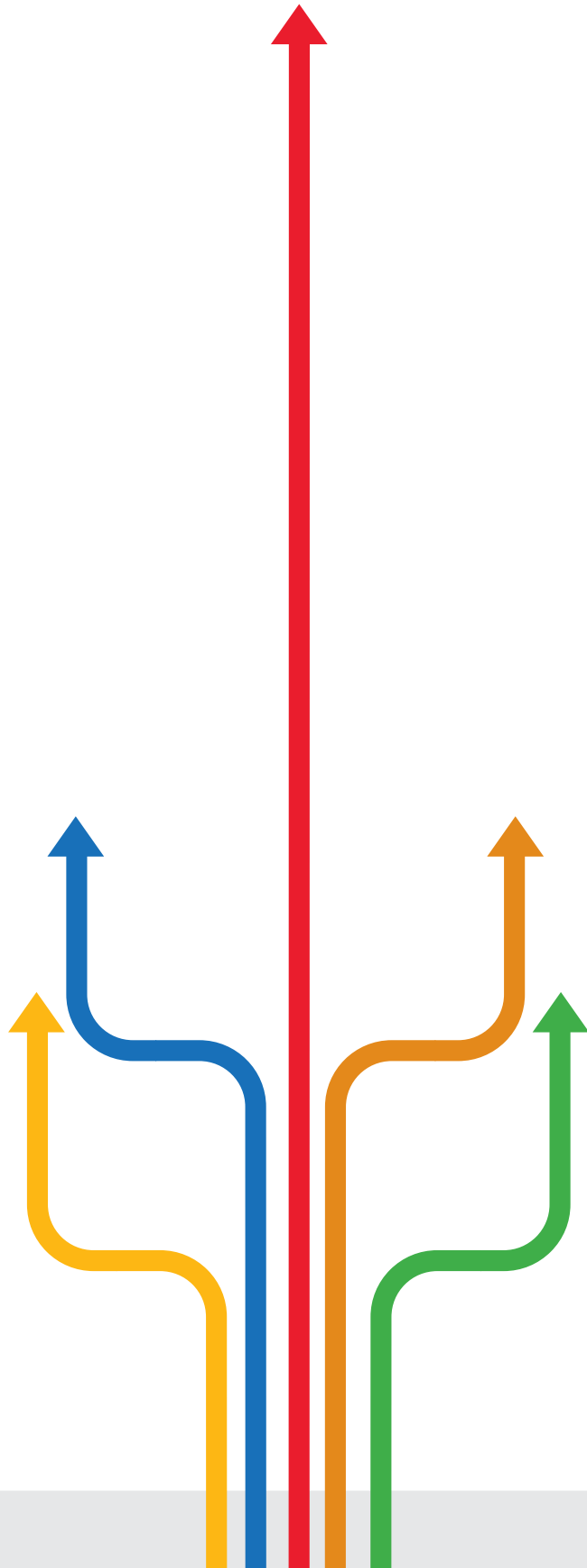
- ▶ Goal 4 on quality education;
- ▶ Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth;
- ▶ Goal 10 on reduced inequalities;
- ▶ Goal 13 on climate action;
- ▶ Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions;
- ▶ Goal 17 on partnership for the common goals.

The competition is divided in **four** stakeholder **categories**:

- 1. Youth organizations;**
- 2. Public sector;**
- 3. Civil society;**
- 4. Private sector.** This category is divided into two subcategories: large companies and SMEs

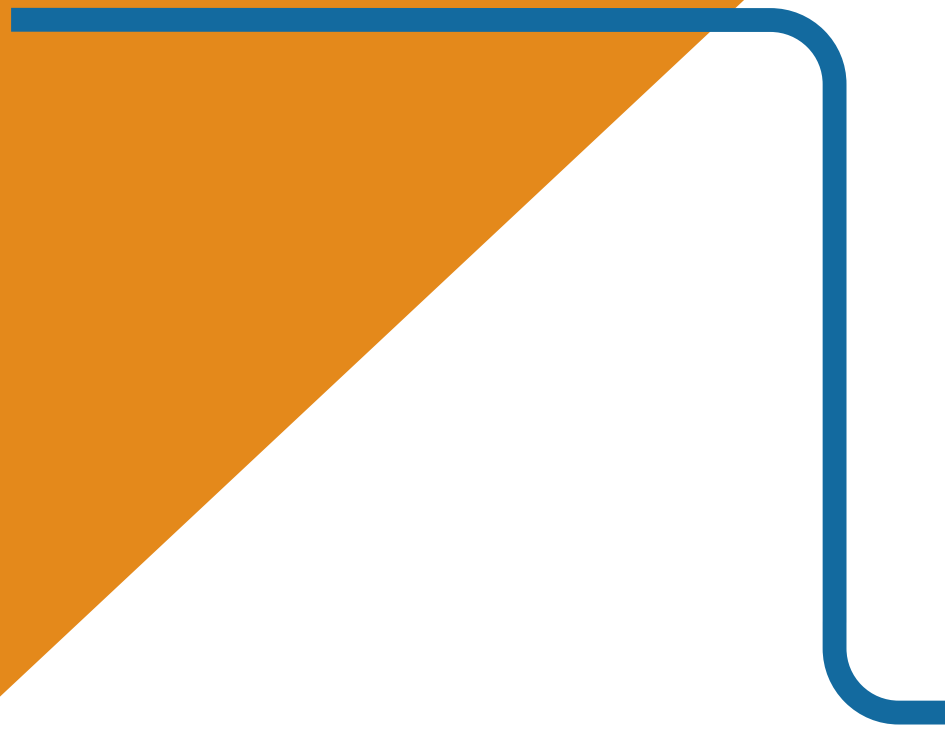
▶ **Monitoring the SDGs in the EU context**

On the Eurostat website there is already a section, dedicated to sustainable development, where you can find the EU SDG monitoring report in an EU context, as well as detailed information on every SDG, visualisation tools and a direct access to data.



7

KEY ROLE OF
THE PRIVATE
SECTOR FOR
ACHIEVING
THE SDGS



Unless business action in relation to the SDGs is underpinned with *principles*, companies will be “...quick to jump to promotional initiatives, skipping the essential starting point of reducing negative impacts on people associated with their own business activities and value chains”,

John Ruggie, author of the Guiding Principles.⁷

Both the UN Global Compact Ten Principles and the Guiding Principles have been embraced widely by business organizations around the world. However, with the adoption of UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is some confusion and misunderstanding with respect to the linkage between a *principles-based* approach to business and the realization of broader sustainable development objectives, i.e., the SDGs.

While respecting and implementing essential universal principles must be regarded as Job #1 by business, it is also important to link such efforts with the broader sustainable development challenge, and with the opportunity space

around efforts that go beyond “do-no-harm” to support the achievement of the SDGs.

As embedded in the human rights principles of the UN Global Compact and reaffirmed and elaborated by the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, respecting human rights is distinct from a company’s effort to support or promote human rights. It is a baseline expectation of all companies that they avoid infringing on human rights, and that they address any harms with which they are involved either through their own activities or as a result of their business relationships.⁷ (It is worth noting that the UN Global Compact’s two human rights principles cover both the “respect” and “support” notions.)

The Ten Principles provide a universal definition for responsible business, calling on all companies to operate in ways that, at a minimum, respect fundamental responsibilities in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. In practice, this means making sure that a company identifies, prevents, mitigates and accounts for any negative impacts it may have on society and the environment, and establishes a culture of integrity and compliance.

⁷ “John Ruggie on Sustainable Development Goals and UN Guiding Principles”; 18 February 2016



Companies should carefully consider business risks related to each SDG, and adjust their business practices to avoid doing harm and thereby undermining the SDGs. If all companies were to take

fundamental steps – like respecting employee rights, not polluting land, sea or air, and refusing bribery and extortion – the world would make enormous progress towards achieving the SDGs.



The UN Global Compact Ten Principles and the Sustainable Development Goals

This graphic illustrates some of the primary linkages between the UN Global Compact Ten Principles and the contribution that these can make towards the achievement of the SDGs. By respecting and supporting universal principles, UN Global Compact business participants can play an important role in helping to realize the SDGs.

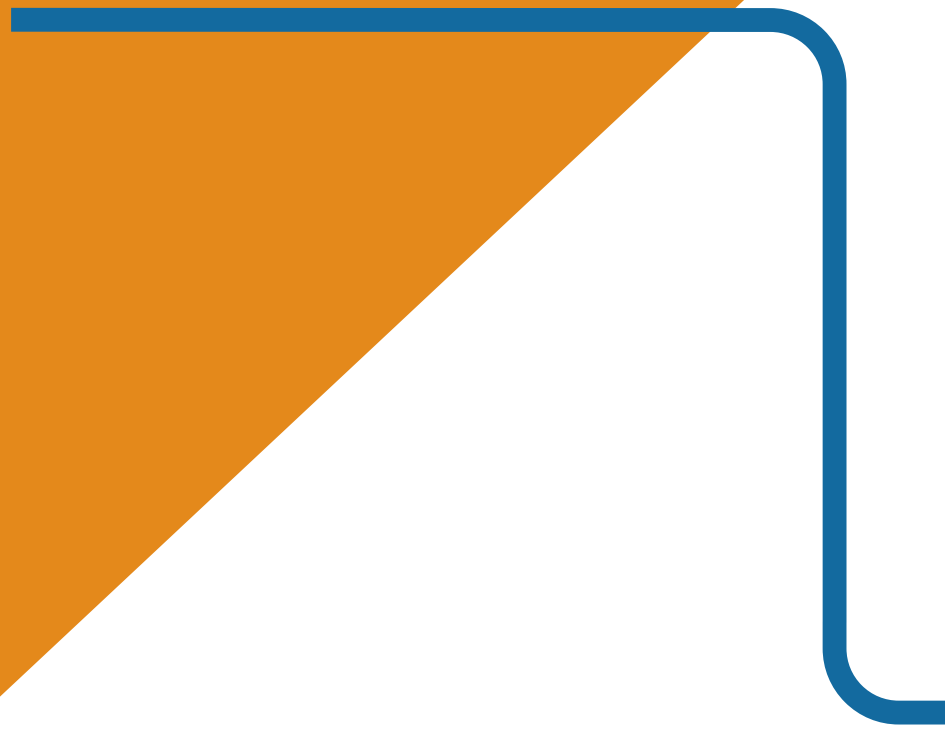
By incorporating the UN Global Compact Ten Principles into strategies, policies and procedures, companies are not only upholding their basic responsibilities to people and planet, but also setting the stage for long-term success. Global challenges – ranging from climate, water and food crises, to poverty, conflict and gender inequality – are in need of solutions

that the private sector can deliver, representing a large and growing market for business innovation.

With trillions of dollars in public and private investments expected to redirect towards achieving the SDGs, there is an enormous opportunity for responsible companies in the coming years. However, as this paper has argued, implementing universal principles is the first side of the coin – “Heads”, if one wishes. “Tails” represents the opportunity space, which encompasses efforts to develop products, services and innovative business models that are good for both society and the bottom line, as well as partnerships, social impact, philanthropy and similar “doing-good” initiatives. Both will be required if the world is to attain true sustainable development in economic, environmental, social and ethical terms.

8

SDGS IN THE CIVIL SECTOR



The SDG business case - is this sufficient?

When it comes to getting business to take action on the SDGs, the main objective is often to demonstrate a business case. Investors and other stakeholder need to be convinced that the company's action to the SDGs is worthwhile economically especially in terms of business risk assessments and opportunities. This is also the strategy of the UN Global Compact. Its SDG Compass states that the SDG "present an opportunity for business-led solutions and technologies".⁸ It furthermore argues that the SDG will provide new growth opportunities and lower risk profiles.

Non-surprisingly, many companies thus opt to implement specific SDGs most relevant to their businesses and stakeholders, or where they might have the most impact when it comes to their CSR strategy. In a 2018 study again on corporate reporting on the SDGs,

KPMG highlights that companies are paying the most attention to SDG 12, SDG 8 and SDG 4 (55% of reporting companies), and paying the least attention to SDG 15, SDG 2 and SDG

14 (26% or less of reporting companies).⁹

Business networks such as the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, to name only one, have similarly done their own evaluation of those SDG relevant to their own or other companies.¹⁰

While this might be understandable from a corporate perspective, the SDGs need to be considered as a connected, universal Agenda, where cherry-picking will not lead to the desired development result. Examples can be best found in the case study on finance, highlighting the limited areas of investments with SDG and green bonds (mostly infrastructure, construction and energy). Investments in e.g. small-scale agriculture, no-take conservation areas or community-based social services might be

9 According to KPMG, of 101 companies around a quarter prioritized up to five SDG, another quarter prioritized between six and ten SDGs, another quarter prioritized between 11 and 16 SDGs and the finale quarter prioritized all 17 goals. <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2018/02/how-to-report-on-sdgs.pdf>

10 www.commerzbank.de/media/nachhaltigkeit/nachhaltigkeitsstandards/sustainable_development_goals/Two pager_Sustainable_Development_Goals_DE.pdf; http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/unctad_sse_2016d1.pdf; [www.pwc.com/gx/en/sustainability/SDG/SDG%20 Research_FINAL.pdf](http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/sustainability/SDG/SDG%20Research_FINAL.pdf)

8 https://sdgcompass.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/019104_SDG_Compass_Guide_2015.pdf

good for people and planet but are simply not profitable enough.

While the number of business pledges for the SDGs are high, the case-studies show that in many cases much of the corporate SDG engagement focuses on PR-friendly business strategies that help companies shine in a brighter light, like additional projects instead of a change in the business strategy. Without an independent and thorough evaluation of corporate SDG engagement, one can thus not be sure about its real impact towards sustainability.

There are also risks in private sector involvement in the SDGs

There are also risks concerning the growing involvement of the private sector in sustainable development. Many CSOs worry about the power and expectations given to the private sector as a development agent and point to the obvious conflicts that exist between profit-based private sector activities and sustainable development.¹¹

CSOs' arguments vary between case studies of human rights violations, examples of corporate tax evasion and fraud, criticism of greenwashing and a general rejection of a growth based economic system. One can observe a crack-down on CSOs, particularly when they are considered to be getting in the ways of a deal between government and private sector or hindering the realization

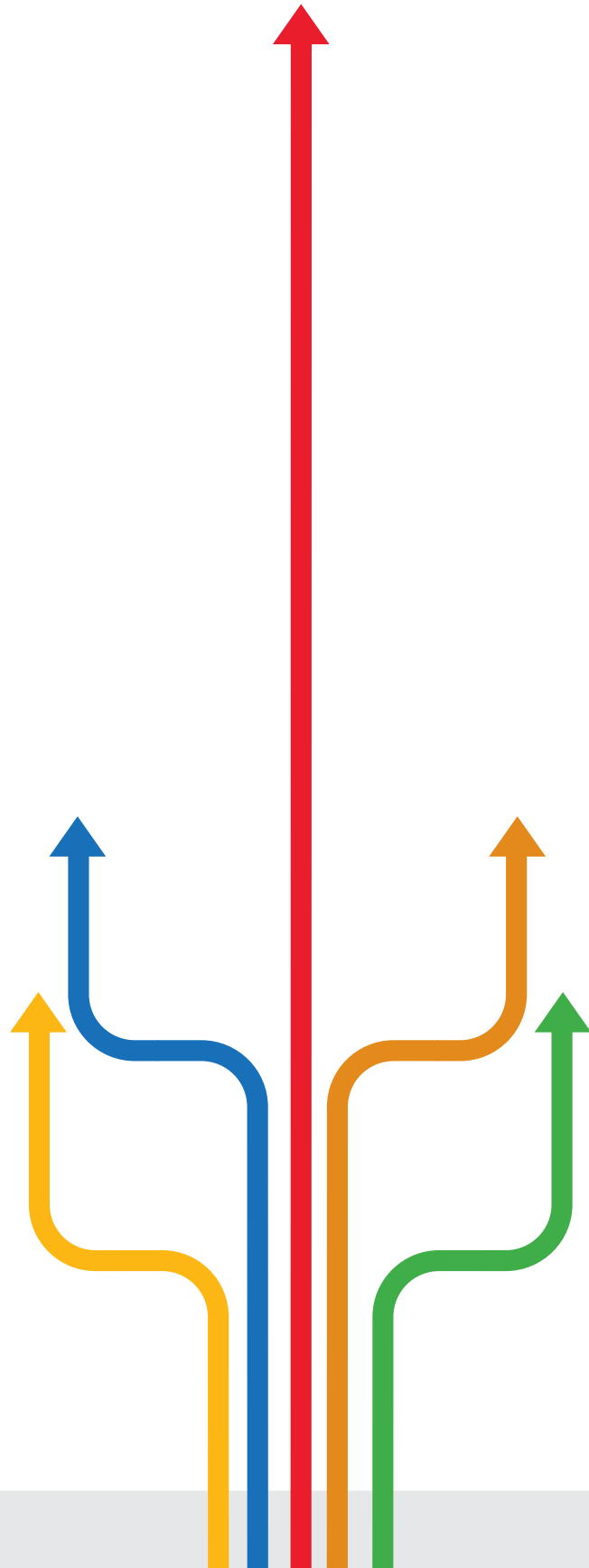
of private project e.g. in infrastructure¹².
Business

activities contribute on a large scale to CO2 emissions, environmental destruction and biodiversity loss and the question remains whether "soft" involvement of businesses in the SDGs will have any effect if it is not accompanied by strict regulation and a fundamental shift in how the global economic system is functioning.¹³ Finally, the SDGs provide a gateway to challenge governments to either create an investment-friendly climate. The case study on tobacco has shown the power of corporate lobbying governments as well as UN, and many more examples can be found

11 www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/GPFEurope/Corporate_influence_in_the_Post-2015_process_web.pdf

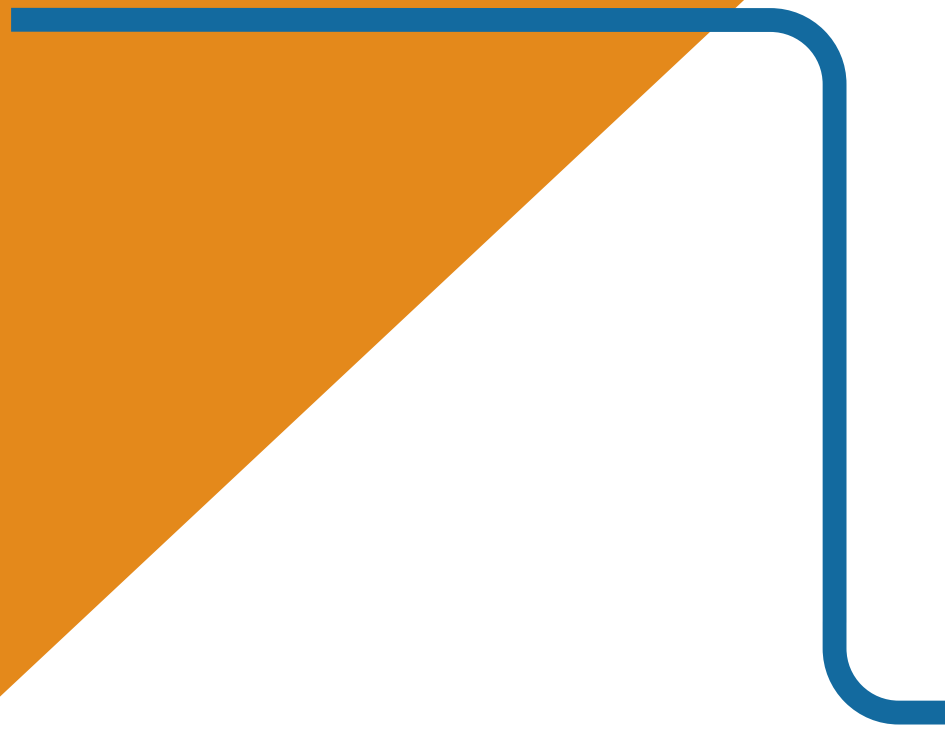
12 www.civicus.org/documents/reports-and-publications/SOCS/2017/essays/the-private-sector-and-the-sdgs-implications-for-civil-society.pdf

13 See for instance publications by www.socialwatch.org



9

PARTNERSHIPS
BETWEEN THE
NGOS AND
BUSINESS



The efforts of the businesses to improve their environmental and social indicators and to

identify their role as responsible corporate citizens provokes them to make major social investment in the communities where they operate. That inevitably leads to interaction with other interested parties, which naturally turns into joint ventures and initiatives.

According to the definition of the UN Global Compact, "partnerships are the relationships between different stakeholders, public and private, in which all participants agree to support a common cause or to achieve a common goal and, possibly, to share risks, responsibilities, resources and subsequent benefits".

The Bulgarian companies realise that they play a major role in the economic and social development through their specific expertise, direct involvement in the market, in the jobs and the services that they provide.

For the key benefits of participating in partner projects, they indicate: building a positive image (GP - 75% , SMEs - 69%), enhancing employee motivation (Large enterprises-45%, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises-54%), и enhancing customer

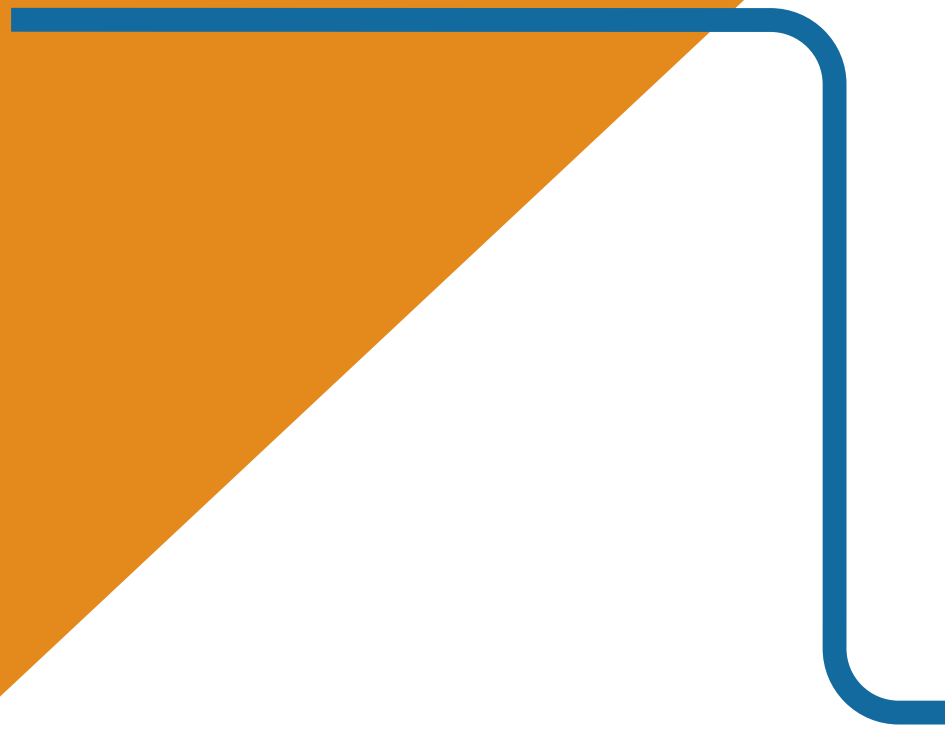
loyalty (Large enterprises-13% Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises-15%).

There are still large companies which do not find any business benefits in the implementation of partnership projects (10%). This is one of the reasons why only 25% of the participating Large enterprises do inform their employees about these projects. The most frequent participation of the companies is the financial support (88%) followed by the voluntary initiatives (63%). Senior managers seldom (18%) see the projects as their causes and most often they "allow" the realisation of an initiative.

As many as 38% of the participating Medium-Sized Enterprises indicate an increase in the market share as its primary basic benefit. That is why 77% of the Top Managers are directly engaged in the planning and implementing of these projects. Unfortunately, only 8% of them evaluate the implementation of their projects.

10

LOCAL
NETWORKS –
A TOOL FOR
ACTION



The local networks of the United Nations Global Compact help towards achieving progress on the application of the 10 principles of the Compact in each individual country.

The idea is that local networks should encourage the understanding of what responsible business is, to “interpret” it and to include it in the national cultural and socio-economic idiosyncrasies. The specific activities of the networks are: dissemination of information and inspiration, influence on the policies in different public spheres, building up a capacity and organizing the members and the partners. In short: the Network is a tool of action and planning – a permanent strategic task.

This mission of the local networks identifies 3 types of activities that are of key importance: communication, advocacy and capacity build up.

Communication

Local Networks of the UN Global Compact **are the voice of the United Nations!**

They can and should inform the society about important decisions of the global organization and make accessible and useful the vast amounts of data, analyses, expert reports and forecasts that it has. At

the same time, the networks are national organizations and reflect the priorities, the standpoints and the specifics of the local stakeholders of the member states – businesses, NGOs, academic circles, media. Thus the local networks turn into a multi-faceted mirror of the ideas and ideals of the international organization; into a great wealth of voices, images, events and testimonies of the results of different interactions and influences that have had the same goals and messages.

The communication activities of the Bulgarian local network aim **to pass the message and engage different people and organizations irrevocably into action.** A basic approach of the network is looking for a dialogue, building up of trust towards the possibility of achieving public change with mutual efforts; the building of perspectives for action on the basis of the best that the separate organizations and the group as a whole can offer to the more general society. An example for this are the communication campaigns and actions on the occasion of the World Environment day and the more practical and versatile messages that they, year after year, communicate.

Last but not least, with its public communications, the Network has the ability to **celebrate its achievements** in the field of its mission; to make sure that the

spirit of pride, prestige and reputation are a model for every involved participant in the organization's mission activities. Some organizations do this by giving awards; others pay respect and recognition with different events or by doing special work with the media and the influencers among its ranks.

The concrete communication activities are well known from other sectors and organizations: regular targeting newsletters with information, special events, work with the media – often in their roles as companies as well; exact reports and other specialized printed materials, video and photo-reports of the activities.

We consider especially important the inspiration and the lasting commitment of business figures, NGOs and education bodies to regularly present in front of the public the standpoint of the responsible organization. In the Bulgarian network, the representatives of the companies and the member organizations of the National council share the responsibility to publicly present the organization and its activities by using their personal experience and pragmatic approach; by focusing on the values that unite us and by using their popularity in a new sphere.

Advocacy

No matter how strong one organization and its members may be, no matter how many thousands of people, their families and communities the effect of its work may reach, in order to multiply the change

we need far-sighted and building policies. Often the activities of the Network are pilot initiatives that show the direction and mark the path towards sustainable development. In order for such initiatives to be realized nationwide, at hundreds of places, simultaneously, with the necessary resources, it is needed to have political will and government planning.

Every year thousands of children are introduced to new types of professions and are challenged to think in a different way about studying and work thanks to Bulgarian network's lovely project "Proud of my parents' work". In the meantime other tens of thousands of children are not that lucky and face the bleak circle of education without perspectives; parents who keep looking for a better opportunities for their children, low expectations of the local community.

The project demonstrates how the topics of career development, responsible attitude towards professional realization and lifelong learning can be presented attractively to children at school. The lessons learned can give information on how to create policies which could help towards the complete integration of this practically oriented approach into the curriculum and in the educational standards. This high goal makes it necessary for one NGO to engage in policy making, although the Network does not have political goals or direct political participation.

The specific advocacy activities that are borne by our network define them as

“public engagement” and they can also be defined as engagement for a cause. The ultimate goal of the advocacy activities is not coming to power and changing the staff of the governing state institutions, but the positive influence on those who make the decisions and those who implement them.

The basic methods of public engagement are the same or similar forms of engagement: submitting widely supported expert suggestions, work with the media, public speaking, quantity and quality research, preparing bills of law, ordinances and legal documents.

In the public engagement leading roles have the collaboration (between sectors, different groups in society, expert and citizen viewpoints), engagement of citizens and institutions, transparency and purposefulness. In order for this to happen, conferences press conferences and round table discussions are often organized. Recently more modern and technological means are also employed such as collecting and voting for suggestions in real time; or business planning and marketing approaches.

The formation of advocacy coalitions – in principle one of the main methods applied when supporting public causes – within the Network is a fact: it is already a group of organisations, different in their mission and activities that are united by their goal and principles. The activation of the Network coalition is easy via creation of plans and work tools for impact.

The Bulgarian network has exceptionally valuable experience with the creation

of the Bulgarian Action plan for support and implementation of the European Pact for Youth, suggested by our partner organization CSR Europe. Without doubt, the EU level document contains important and true observations on the problems among youth and sets valid goals for change in all critical fields.

In the case of Bulgaria, however, it was necessary that before the Network began its work on topics that it finds relatable, to support the engagement process in a meaningful way for all stakeholders interested in the present and future of the Bulgarian youth. The acceptance of a document as a national action plan is straightforward for the participation of the key interested parties, which are expected to fulfil it, in terms of its creation and validation.

That is why the Bulgarian network sought to gather in one place young people and other affected parties – the educational institutions, the administration of the Ministry of education; business representatives, young activists – and organized the development of a plan that corresponds to the mutual priorities and interests.

The meeting uses the format of a conference but it also includes elements of a “world café” (in separate topical groups the participants discuss the problem and the ideas on how to solve it; at the next stage the participants change tables and contribute for the discussion of a different group) and the design thinking. Several skilful moderators provided the contribution

and participation of everyone. The presence of politicians and public figures increased the motivation and the engagement of everyone.

As a result the prepared document is more exhaustive and enriched by the participation of different groups and communities. For its Action plan the Network chose crucially important topics and decided to work towards finding solutions for them from its viewpoint and depending on resources and stakeholders interested to take action; in addition it provided information for further plans and for rationalizing different sectors and sub-groups.

Some basic advice for advocacy campaigns:

1. Make sure to be well informed about the problem and the political documents that cause and support it. Be aware of the manner in which the specific political system or institution works and what the mechanism to bring changes is.
2. Think of solutions that are easy to present; they should not necessarily be the experts' opinions and wording.
3. Write a communication plan and act according to it.
4. Word your message, appoint the people who will deliver it and the channels of distribution according to the public you want to call into action.
5. Collaborate with other interested parties, with whom you have similar interests; share different roles in the advocacy activities with them; and from

there on – share also the “responsibility” for the success!

6. In the Network or in a broader coalition try to build a consensus and to create trust among the members; support the spirit of cooperation and work according to clearly set rules.
7. Discuss in detail the results of your actions and do not miss the chance to learn from the experience – mark your mistakes and remember to celebrate the achievements.

Building up the capacity in the members and the partners

It is customary for the level of knowledge, experience, expertise and access to resources to be different between the members in a local network. In the beginning it is possible that some of the founders could have a capacity that is more adequately suited to the organization, which they share by creating the Network. Gradually, by using this, the Network accumulates its own capacity which is accessible back to the members.

The network has the possibility to build capacity via specialization of people and the member organizations in all basic fields of the necessary competences, so that they could really be the best in what they do and so that the success of the advocacy activity of the Network can be guaranteed to a large extent.

The basic skills that are connected with advocacy should be built up in the following aspects:

1. Data research and data processing skills

The preparation of the political documents requires correct and detailed argumentation, which is the result of careful data collection, its analysis and use to validate or reject hypotheses of what and how should things be done to bring change in the problem situation in the concrete social sphere. These skills provide a capacity for making questionnaires and surveys, focus groups, preparing analyses with facts, estimates and concrete recommendations which can be used in preliminary Impact assessment of a certain new regulation. These skills also determine the preliminary preparation of the Network for a meeting with opponents, the media and the decision makers.

2. Skills for working with the media

Often in the advocacy activities we use the media, when the direct work with the decision makers does not yield results and there is no good perception of the Network's opinion. The media works according to their own rules, the keeping of which requires specific knowledge and skills which we need to build up. First, it should be clear that the media do not take sides in principle; they present the different viewpoints of the suggestions, so we have to be ready to discuss our arguments against the information that was released by the opponents. In addition, media representatives may not be as competent as we are, so we have to count on our abilities to clearly and exhaustively represent our position so that it can be rendered correctly.

3. Legal knowledge and skills for preparing legal documents

In this aspect of advocacy competence we include the understanding of what the actual reason of the problem is – if it is at the work of the institutions, problems with applying a law, imperfections in sub-law documents, insufficient human and financial resources or the lack of clear information, disclosure or promotion of possibilities.

It is a common mistake of the advocacy groups to conclude at the stage of data collection and report writing with recommendations, which have not been addressed properly; if addressed at all they are not been “translated” into legalese in texts; do not specify the practices, the regulations or the policy which need to be changed. The unjustified expectations that someone else out of our group – the politicians themselves for example – will continue working on their own initiative, to a large extent compromises the resources, effort and motivation put into it.

4. Skills to facilitate and organize interested parties for action.

It was mentioned earlier about the strength of the coalition and the need of allies when leading complex advocacy activities. Gathering the suitable people in one place is not at all enough to open new and fruitful discussion on general strategies and plans. A meeting that was incorrectly conducted can ruin otherwise sensible and reasonably looking collaboration. What is needed, are individuals with experience and skills in managing big groups of people,

in negotiating, mediation, facilitation and setting up the next useful steps. Outside people are a good option but the people and the organizations within the Network should develop these skills as part of the leadership of the cause and the initiative.

5. Organization and logistic skills.

Even the simplest engagement campaign requires following of a certain algorithm and detailed planning of various logistic issues: when should we start the event; when should we send out the invitations, how to acquire a permit for an outdoor event; when to invite the media; how to provide comfort and equality when presenting the partners, etc. Million little details which, if not planned on time, could lead to poor presentation of our cause; diverting the interest to other, random events or focusing on our weaknesses, instead of on our strengths.

The final goal – the good policy

The responsibilities for the good policies should not be left entirely to the will and effort of the politicians. Networks like ours should constantly remind the institutions that the policies need to be based on evidence; should be the end result of involved citizens and should not be limited to one ministry, if the issue involves three ministries. That is why, of course, we need competence and knowledge, which give us a broader horizon and place us a few steps ahead.

We cannot have good planning and good engagement actions without a clear idea of what good modern policy is. Here are some of its characteristics:

1. A good policy looks into the future

The process of formulating a policy clearly defines the results and the effects that the policy aims to achieve by showing us a long-term instead of a short-term vision, based on statistical data, trends and expert forecasts on the development of the social, political, economic and cultural factors. A policy like this also means it should be in sync with the common political strategy of the government, it should contain a basic and backup plans and preliminary set clear results.

2. A good policy accounts for the external factors

The process of decision making accounts for the impact of factors in the national and international situation; it is based on the experience in other countries; it reviews how the policy will be communicated to the interested parties and the public. As examples of “external” approach of policy making we can point at the availability of political mechanisms as work groups; interdepartmental committees and dialogue networks between the affected parties. Another example is importing good practices from other countries by accounting for regional differences and a well prepared communication strategy, with tools and different messages to the different external audiences.

3. A good policy is innovative, flexible and creative

The decision making process is flexible and innovative, it questions the established manners of problem solving; it encourages new and creative ideas and, when possible, improves the established decisions. Examples for a creative approach in a political process is using alternatives for public discussion (different from the officially organized debates), encouraging outside opinion in the teams in charge, openness to creativity.

4. A good policy is based on evidence

The advice and decisions of politicians are based on the best available evidence from a wide range of sources; all main stakeholders participate at an early stage and during the development of the policy. All suitable proof, including that given by experts, is presented in an accessible and understandable format. In order to support this approach of making a modern policy, it is advisable to summarize the results of existing research and to order new ones, when the data is not enough. The process includes consulting a variety of internal and external expertise and the accounting of different opinions on the policy topic.

5. A good policy is inclusive

The process of decision making accounts for the impact on and it meets the needs of all people, directly or indirectly affected by the policy and it directly includes the key stakeholders. The inclusive approach means the availability of impact assessment – consultations with the

people and organizations which are involved in the delivery of services, based on the policy; with the people who use the services and includes the feedback in the evidence which justify the policy.

6. A good policy is integrated

The process concerns the issue as a whole and aims to establish an ethical, moral and legal basis of the policy, without being limited to a certain institution (e.g. a ministry) or an aspect of the problem (e.g. the provision of services). What is taken into account are the issues and needs as well as the necessary management and organization structures; what capacity improvement do they need; what finance or human resources will be required. Examples for such processes are: the definition of a horizontal as well as a vertical goals and their direct connection with national or international strategies and documents.

7. A good policy can be monitored.

The existing policies and the established practice should be constantly observed and revised to guarantee that it will actually deal with the problems that it was brought about to solve; having in mind the effect it had, too. The approach aspects for reviewing the policy include the availability of a clear monitoring plan with adequate performance indicators and a result that should be performed often enough and by well qualified people. Another example is the good work of reviewing the feedback given by suppliers, end users of the services and other government institutions and departments that are directly or

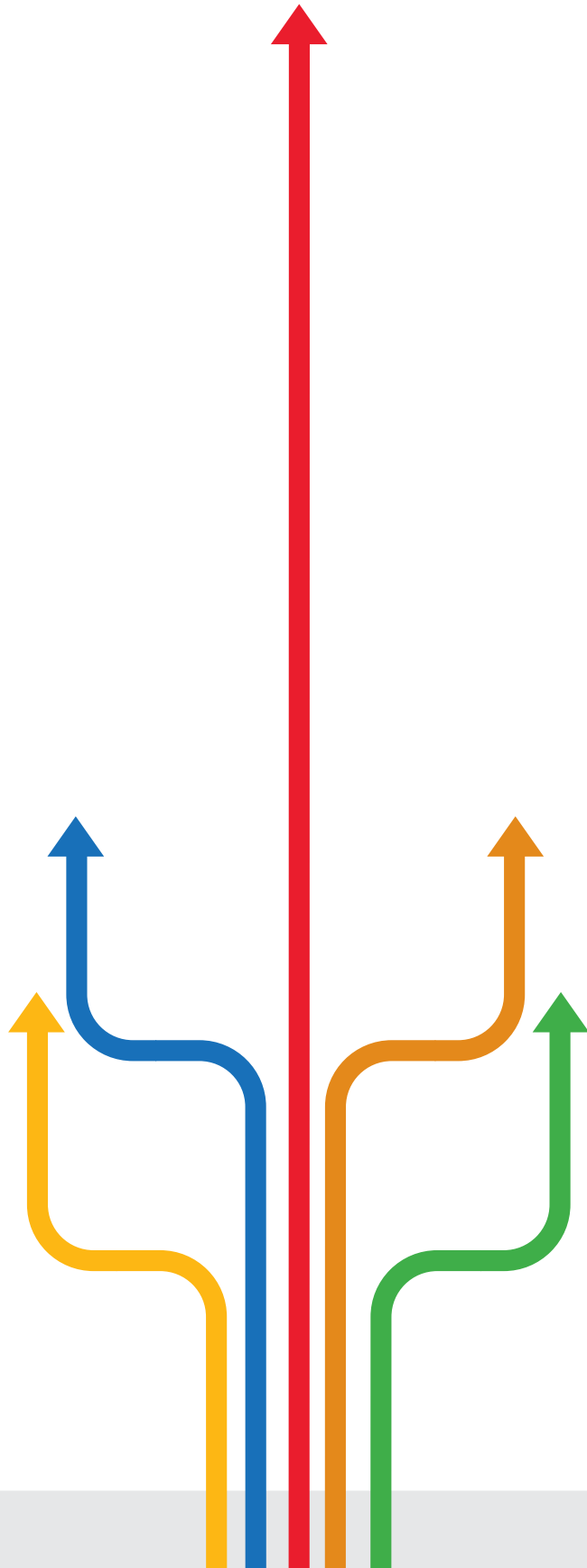
indirectly involved in the application of the policy.

8. A policy is regularly evaluated.

The regular evaluation of the policy effectiveness is included in the process of decision making. The approaches for policy making that demonstrate commitment for evaluation include a preliminary evaluation plan, which contains clear indicators for effect and success; preliminary chosen and defined tools for making such evaluation, included in this plan.

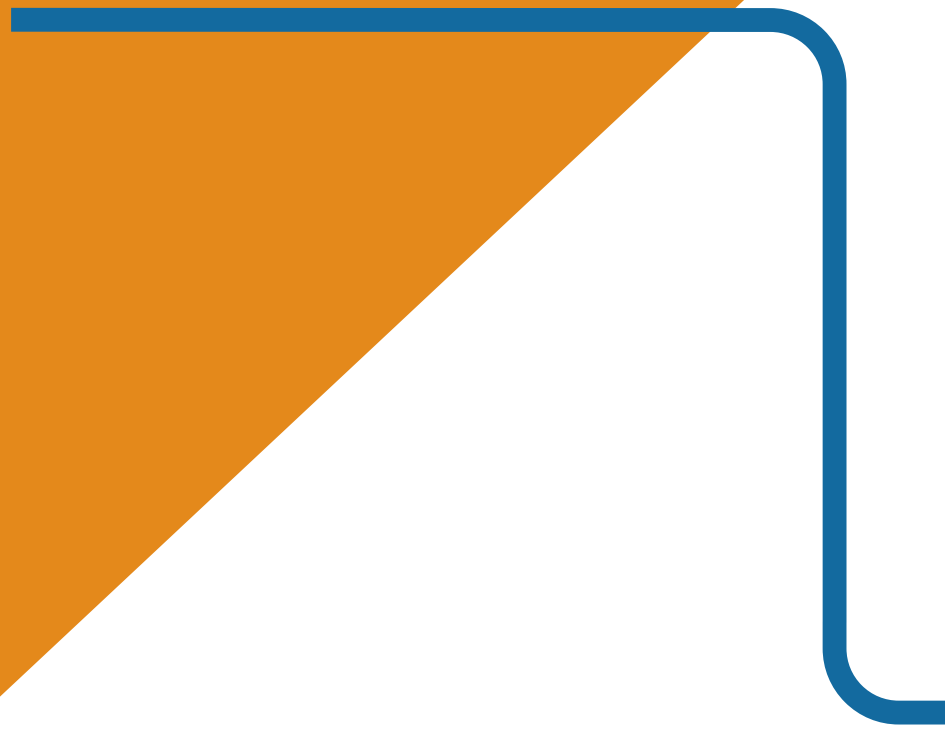
9. A good policy uses experience

A good policy learns from what works and what doesn't work. The academic approach towards policy development includes the following aspects: dissemination of information on the lessons learned and on the good practices; available information on changes and the matching that was made in the policies as a result of past experience; a possibility to abandon some policies completely and substitute them with more useful and effective ones. For the latter we need to have the ability to differentiate a non-effective policy from its non-effective management from certain people and institutions.



11

STEP BY STEP
GUIDE TOWARDS
STRATEGIC
ACTION PLAN
ON SDGS OF THE
PRIVATE SECTOR



Prior to the official adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the UN General Assembly, the members of the GC Network Bulgaria gathered in the beginning of September, 2015, in order to discuss the announced Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a new challenge and a hope for a better world. The meeting was followed by a series of follow-up discussions and debates on the possible implications of the SDGs in the Bulgarian context.

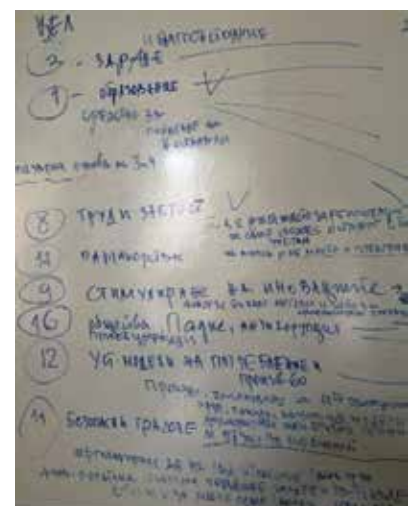
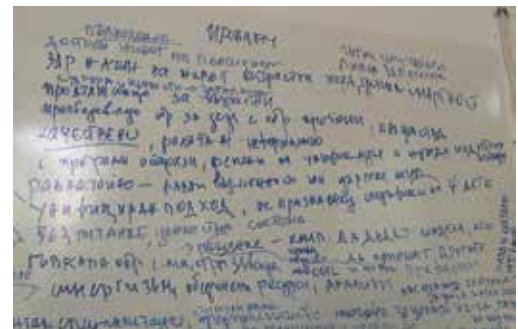
Progressively, the Local Network defined and examined the problems addressed by the SDGs which are of utmost importance given the specificities of the national context and to which the business can contribute. The members engaged in active brainstorming and planning on the ways through which the GC Network can effectively act upon in promoting the Global Goals.

The development of the Strategic Plan is the creative result of a progressive capacity building, previous collective projects, and the joint efforts of the GCLN's members and the secretariat. The Strategic Plan is a Roadmap for the achievement of the specific SDGs in the country - it outlines the defined SDGs, examines the current national status quo of the problems that they address, sets the collective actions which will be undertaken in order to turn the Global Goals Agenda into the local reality, and finally, gives indicators for a successful completion of the planned activities.

11.1. Brief Story on the Creation of the Strategic Plan on the SDGs of GCLN Bulgaria and Practical Steps

On 8th of September 2015, prior to the adoption and launch of the SDGs by United Nations, in order to set a common ground for future network actions linked to the Goals agenda, a GCLN Bulgaria's Day of Strategic Thinking was organized for all members.

The working meeting defined through brainstorming on the national dimensions of the issues that the Global Goals would address.



Problems → Ideas for Solution





Day of Strategic Planning on the Announced SDGs, 12 January, 2016

Having already defined the relevant issues, the members of GCLN Bulgaria engaged in active planning on the actions that the business can undertake in order to translate the SDGs into the local reality in the country.

As a result, on the 1st March, 2016, only 5 months after the adoption of the Goals during the summit meeting in New York, the GC Network Bulgaria presented to the society, the stakeholders, and the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, its *15+ Strategic Plan* on the work and the realisation of the SDGs in the next 5 years. The Network and its members have hence declared their commitment to strive for implementation of the Global Goals in Bulgaria.

“

‘You are part of the legitimate, meaningful way in which an action plan could be built for our development strategy. I would like to shake hands with you because you lead, you undertook the initiative and work towards the Goals’, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

”

‘The Bulgarian business is a pillar for the society. You have a cause of one modern Bulgarian state, where the rules are above all, and where we have joint shared responsibility. The good, meaningful ideas have the ability to acquire the effect of the domino. I am behind you. I am one of you’, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria.



“The Business as a Power for Good” – Presentation of the 2015 Strategic Plan of the Bulgarian Network on the SDGs’ implementation

1st of March, 2016

Mr. Ognian Trajanov handed President Plevneliev a personalized copy of the 2015+ Strategic Plan on the SDGs and on behalf of the Network's members declared the common commitment on working towards the Goals implementation in Bulgaria.



The Executive Director of UNGC, **Ms. Lise Kingo**, recorded a special address to the members of the GCLN Bulgaria on the occasion of the public presentation of the Network's Strategic Plan 2015+ for the SDGs' implementation.

11.2. Practical steps towards strategic action plan on SDGs of the private sector

1. Convene your business stakeholders and partners.
2. Introduce the topic of the Sustainable Development Goals making sure equal understanding by all participants. Use UN materials, videos, guides.
3. List the most important SD goals for the country from business perspective
4. Map the important issues and problems under those SDGs for your country,

selecting only those issues that the business can solve or contribute to their resolution.

5. Brainstorm potential collective solutions to those problems. The key word is *collective*. Each company may have its own SD goals and targets, but in the strategic plan include only the collective ones.

6. Tier the collective issues with indicators and timeframes.

7. Raise awareness. Inspire. Engage.

When the strategic plan is ready continue the pioneer work – the work is not done. Present it publicly inspire the society and other stakeholders in progressing towards the SDGs implementation. Motivate the various stakeholders in developing and sharing their agendas, invite them to work together.

8. Start implementation engaging all participating companies. To ensure commitment convene regular meetings – at least one annual strategic session.

THE ROAD TO THE SDGS

STRATEGIC THINKING
PLANNING PROCESS
RELEVANT PROBLEMS AND
PRIORITIES, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

AWARENESS CREATION
IMPLEMENTATION
PARTNERSHIP
SHARING BEST PRACTICES

11.3. Examples for further steps and engagement in case of the Bulgarian SDG Strategic Plan

"World's Largest Lesson" on the UN SDGs, in cooperation with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Science



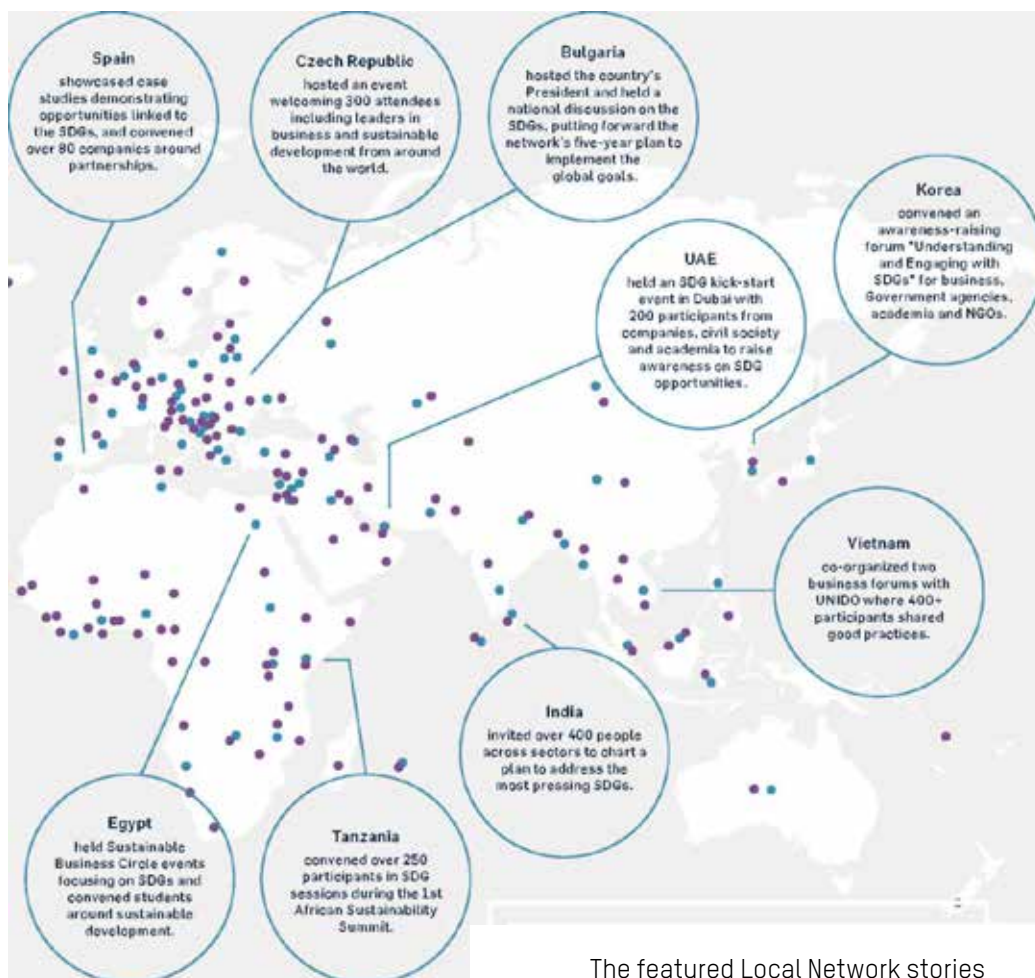
In light of the SDGs promotion and in cooperation with UNICEF Bulgaria and the Deputy Minister for Education and Science, Prof. Kostadin Kostadinov, the GCLN Bulgaria

organized a launching workshop for students in the framework of the 'World's Largest Lesson' Programme, aiming to inform the children and the youth on the SDGs Agenda and empower them to think critically.

In addition, the GC Network Bulgaria was part of the workshop on the development of a new National Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy, organized by the Economic and Social Council of the Republic of Bulgaria and chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister for Demographic and Social Policies and Minister of Labor and Social Policy, Mr. Ivaylo Kalfin. In its submission to the Council, the GC Network Bulgaria presented its 15+ Strategic Plan on SDGs implementation and encouraged the initiation of inter-institutional dialogue and engagement of the state stakeholders on the work towards the Global Goals' implementation.

Given the set groundwork, bold pursuits, and determination, the 2015+ Strategic Plan of the Global Compact network Bulgaria was recognised by the UNGC as one of the first fifteen global actions.



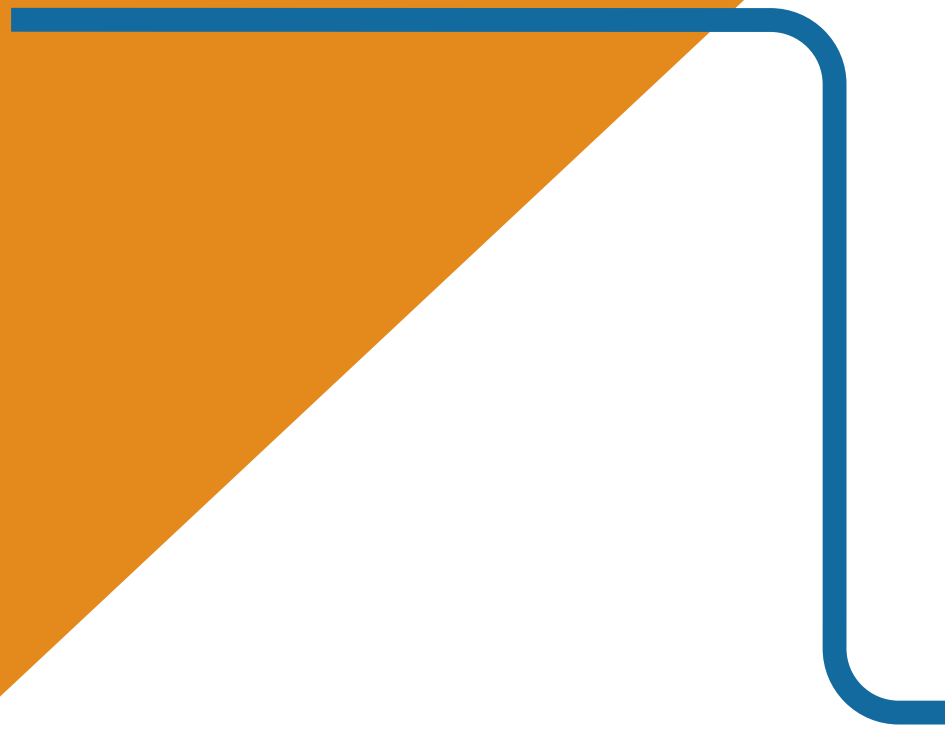


The featured Local Network stories were submitted by networks, and provide a snapshot of SDG activities on the ground. In addition,

SDG events have been held in the following countries as of June 2016: Austria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Greece, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and Uruguay.

12

COLLECTIVE
PROJECTS



In order to mobilize action in support of the SDGs, the GC Network Bulgaria is to utilize its acclaimed work approach and proven tradition of uniting capacity in carrying out its **collective projects**. Ever since its establishing the Bulgarian Global Compact Network leaders agreed that the members will strive towards impact and results.

Practical steps

The work on developing collective projects through applying the vast diversity of capacity and resources available, together with the opportunities for exchange of experience, provides synergy, effectiveness and efficiency. As a result this leads to achieving better results in terms of projects' scale and quality, and it gives us better insight of the invested resources. Each of our collective projects brings high level of satisfaction, motivation and sense of purpose.

The power of collective projects

Advantages

- ▶ Optimization of expenses
- ▶ Systematic approach and internal coordination
- ▶ Scale of results
- ▶ Third party evaluation
- ▶ Leadership and innovation
- ▶ Sustainable partnerships

Benefits from participation

- ▶ CSR expertise
- ▶ Sharing and exchange
- ▶ Supporting partnership
- ▶ national Responsible brand
- ▶ Collective actions
- ▶ Creating policies on national, European and international level

When developing a project, the companies, which initiate the project, identify a common issue, brainstorm and find concrete solutions, set a plan and identify the elements needed for putting the idea into practice. Then, all of the participants invest accordingly.

After the pilot edition of the project, a manual is developed that encompasses the gathered experience, methodological guidance, indicators, budget, eventual risks, pieces of advice, as well as numerous examples. The manual is enriched each year and ensures successful and easier joining of new companies to the collective project. The newly-joined companies receive training and the necessary support on the spot.

13

EXAMPLES FOR GOOD PRACTICES

13.1. Proud of my parents work

To give an example of our work, the collective project 'Proud with my Parents' Work' aims at helping children understand the role of the labor and creativity as a basis of satisfaction, self-esteem, and fulfillment, by enabling them to follow through the labor process of their parents in the workplace. Another objective of the programme is to provide young people the opportunity of career-orientation.

The culmination of the initiative is the Bazaar of Professions, which is established as a separate public event. Each year hundreds of pupils, teachers, and parents visited the fair and took part in the presentations of various professions and career orientation workshops.

The project falls under Goal 8 – *Decent Work and Economic Growth*.

The programme focuses on the values of labor, diligence and learning and it contains the social message "money is not an end in itself"; Addresses important social issues in the sphere of education in relation to the professional orientation of the youngsters; Guarantees a successful execution,

effectiveness and efficiency based on the experience from previous editions; Has various options for realization, a positive message and energy; Enjoys high publicity and interest from the media and is honored with various awards.

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME INVOLVE? . . .

. . . An Open-door day event; Welcoming the employees' children at their parents' workplaces and presenting their professions through specially developed educational programmes; Introduction to other interesting and important topics such as: money and their role, safety at the workplace and when surfing the Internet, healthcare, protection of the environment, etc.; Presentation of the company's business and the professions involved; A joint meeting of all participating companies; Children's bazaar of professions at the end of November – one-day event in two parts – a conference for the companies and a programme for children, young people and parents together with lectures presenting various professions and lectures for career orientation

13.2. Responsible Choice

As another example, in March 2016 was launched the new edition of the 'Responsible Choice' programme under the slogan 'One Matters'. The programme falls under Goal 12 – *Responsible Consumption and Production* and aims at empowering citizens with an increasingly proactive stance and confidence that their everyday consumer choices and acts matter. The programme was born as a common idea of

the GCLN members and was started with the participation of the UNGC Former Executive Director, Mr. Georg Kell.

13.3. National Action Plan on Pact for Youth

In 2017 the GC Network Bulgaria joined the Pact for Youth.

The Pact for Youth is initiated by the leading European business network for responsible business, CSR Europe, and the European Commission, and aims to improve the professional opportunities for young people through creating business-education partnerships and providing new traineeships or entry-level jobs. This type of partnership is the new norm of behaviour in Europe. EU's business leaders and educational institutions have created over 23,000 collaborations, while meaningful apprenticeships, traineeships and entry-level jobs are already over 160,000 in Europe.

The GC Network Bulgaria together developed a National Action Plan implementing the objectives of the European Pact for Youth

Eight priorities of change, involving all key stakeholders: teachers, students, parents, schools and universities, companies and branch organisations as well as non-governmental organisations, are set out in the National Plan.

The National Action Plan focuses on eight action priority areas aiming to improve the quality of education, teacher training, active involvement of companies and parents in the management of educational

institutions, personalized education and early professional orientation for each child. The Bulgarian document is one of the 24 national plans adopted, and the participants stood up in front of the European Commission with three joint proposals for new policies:

13.4 Games for good project

In 2017 the GC Network Bulgaria successfully executed the pilot edition of its project called "Games for good". The project's purpose, goals and ideology are directly related to Sustainable Development Goal 3 "Good Health and Well-Being".

This project aims to show the Network's members that the responsible companies, the good health of the employees, the sports and the charitable causes can be a successful combination that brings positive final results.

Within this project, the Bulgarian network organises sports tournaments where each of the companies participating, has pre-selected a charity cause in the name of which they give their maximum effort to win the competition's prize fund.

During the pilot edition four separate tournaments in several different sports disciplines: football, tennis on court, cycling and volleyball were organised. A total of 93 enthusiasts coming from 5 member companies took part in the competitions, and 7500 BGN (3800 EUR) were given out for charity.

Following the success of the first edition,

the “Games for good” project continued in 2018 with a higher number of enthusiasts taking part, with four new tournaments with the stronger motivation of exercising one’s favourite sport in the name of supporting a worthwhile cause.

Each and every participant in the “Games for good” project is a winner because sports and exercise helps uniting people over a meaningful cause, promoting a healthy lifestyle, inspiring the team spirit and bringing the feeling of unity among the participants.

In 2010 several companies in Bulgaria, motivated by their corporate social responsibility consciousness, decided to establish the Association GC Network Bulgaria. Since its official launching by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the GCLN coalesces companies and non-governmental organizations that work together via collective projects of added-value importance for the society. The Network does not simply promote the 10 Principles, but uses them as creative tools that can stir a change in the culture of the society. Through its work the GCLN became an example of a sustainable development business organization which via its collective projects placed the traditional concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on another level – CSR 2.0, collaborative social responsibility.

First, the Bulgarian Network operates in a specific, former Eastern bloc context, where the responsible business still needs to acclaim its position as a benefactor in the society. The still existing sense of mistrust

towards the private sector represents a particular challenge to the business’s efforts in implementing the SDGs Agenda. As a SDG Pioneer, the Network will be able to strengthen its message that the business will be a proactive part in setting the road for the Global Goals’ implementation. The development of the *2015+ Strategic Plan* was a serious step in proving the role of the business as a force for good.

Finally, each of the Network’s member companies already has a recognized and prominent socially responsible business. The role of the GC Network Bulgaria is to gather, channel, and multiply their separate efforts in collective projects which translate the SDGs into the local reality. Therefore, the SDG Pioneer programme support will provide our collective work as a Network with a new overall impetus by inspiring us to go that extra mile in mobilizing local businesses in advocating for sustainable development.

14 RESOURCES

- 1.1. SDGs with indicators
- 1.2. Bulgarian Strategic plan 2 pages

15 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Civicus State of Civil Society report 2017 - <http://www.civicus.org/documents/reports-and-publications/SOCS/2017/essays/the-private-sector-and-the-sdgs-implications-for-civil-society.pdf>

Corporate influence in the Post-2015 process - https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/GPFEurope/Corporate_influence_in_the_Post-2015_process_web.pdf

EU Directive 2014/95/EC on disclosure of non-financial information and diversity information

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/sustainable-development-goals_en

European priorities in the SDGs - http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3883_en.htm

Make it your business: Engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals - https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/sustainability/SDG/SDG%20Research_FINAL.pdf

SDG Compass. The Guide for business action on the SDGs - https://sdgcompass.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/019104_SDG_Compass_Guide_2015.pdf

The Strategic Plan - http://www.unglobalcompact.bg/en/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/BMGD_Goals2016-Strategic-plan-in-Eng-2.compressed.pdf

World Largest Lesson - <http://www.unicef.bg/bg/article/Balgariya-se-vklyuchi-v-provezhdaneto-na-Nay-golemiyat-urok-v-sveta/934>

Useful links

www.unglobalcompact.org - UN Global Compact
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs> - UN Sustainable Development Goals

<https://www.globalgoals.org/resources> - SDGs' resources

www.sdgfund.org/who-we-are - Sustainable Development Goals Fund

www.sdgbusinessforum.org - High Level Political SDG Forum

www.csreurope.org - CSR Europe

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/overview> - Eurostat

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3529&NewSearch=1> - EU Multi-stakeholder platform on SDGs

konekt.org.mk - Konekt

<http://agora.org.mk> - Agora - Center for Promotion of Civic Values

www.unglobalcompact.bg - Global Compact Network Bulgaria

Authors: **Elitsa Barakova, Darinka Georgieva**

Editor in chief: **Dr. Marina Stefanova**

Produced by: **Konekt, Macedonia**

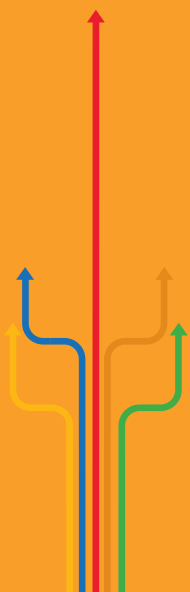
Design and pre-press by **Koma dooel,**
Skopje

Printed by **Indesign** Skopje, Macedonia

Part of the project "Building cross-sector
partnerships for sustainable development",
contract EuropeAid/138660/ID/ACT/MK

© Konekt, 2019

All rights reserved. Licensed to the
European Union under conditions.



This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Konekt Macedonia and its partners, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



Network Bulgaria