

CEGESTI participates in the meeting of the Working Group on Human Rights and Labour of the Global Compact, as a representative of the Local Network of Costa Rica

On December 1st, 2014 at the Palais des Nations of the United Nations in Geneva, the annual meeting of the Human Rights and Labour Working Group (HRLWG) of the Global Compact was held.

The objective of the session was focused on reviewing the role of HRLWG, specifically as to what should be their lines of action, initiatives to follow and commitment generation mechanisms. Also, the generation of ideas for strengthening the implementation of the principles of human rights and labour at the local level were addressed, for which a brief presentation of local initiatives of each of the local networks represented was motivated, and dialogue was encouraged by generating questions.

Local networks that participated in the event and contributed to the discussion were: Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, India, Russia, Spain, the UK and the Regional Support Centre for Latin America. The local network of Costa Rica was represented by Ms. Daira Gomez, Executive Director of CEGESTI. It was also attended by Roger Forbes, Coordinator of Responsible Business and Gabriela Roman, Project Manager of CEGESTI.



*Meeting of the Working Group on Human Rights and Labour of the Global Compact.
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Within ten principles of the Global Compact, the number one and two are related to human rights. The first one calls attention to business to respect and support the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights. The second principle calls the attention to businesses to ensure they are not complicit in human rights abuses. The importance of local networks in promoting in many forms these human rights principles of the Global Compact in their respective countries was recognized as a starting point of the meeting.

As part of the session, each of the local networks outlined the progress and initiatives in their respective country. In the case of Costa Rica, it was commented the efforts oriented to the existence of the website of the local network and the launch of the Toolbox developed to identify, select and organize the available information associated with the Principles of the Global Compact, so that the implementation and execution of these principles is facilitated. It was mentioned that the tool contains information about good practices, international conventions and links to websites of interest, among other issues. It is also highlighted the initiatives undertaken by large, medium and small enterprises with regard to human rights, one of the latter Etipres.

Actions on webinars, workshops associated with managing and implementing the principles, training and communication were also discussed; the latter including both the generation of information in the media and social networks.

As part of the session, the dialogue focused on how to leverage the knowledge and experience of more than 80 national local networks of the Global Compact in order to advance in the practice with respect for human rights by companies as well as how to encourage cooperation between networks.

In this regard, as part of the session summary and conclusions, Ms. Gomez, Director of CEGESTI and member of the Global Compact Local Network in Costa Rica intervened framing the following challenges:

- Increase the number of participating companies and in particular small and medium enterprises.
- Establish mechanisms to facilitate small and medium businesses to report their progress towards sustainability according to its context, since the generation of reports can be a barrier for these enterprises to be part of the Global Compact.
- Promote the exchange between members of the local networks and between the north and the south countries, so as to improve the understanding of the particular contexts in which businesses operate
- Strengthen leadership in the HRLWG and local networks in order to influence businesses and attract new organizations to the network.



Ursula Wynhoven, the United Nations Global Compact and Daira Gomez, Executive Director of CEGESTI, representative of the Global Compact Local Network in Costa Rica