



Network India

Responsible Business Conduct in International Supply Chain & Symposium on Responsible Business Practices: Opportunity and Challenges

Dr. Somnath Singh, Programme Manager represented Global Compact Network India (GCNI) at the Focus Group Discussion Workshop on **'Responsible Business Conduct in International Supply Chains' as well as Symposium on 'Responsible Business Practices: Opportunity and Challenges'**, organized jointly by University of Applied Sciences, Chur, Switzerland, Mohan Lal Sukhadia University, Udaipur/India and Atmiya University, Rajkot/India on 22nd March 2022.

Prof. Christian Hauser, University of Applied Sciences, Chur, Switzerland moderated the session and to begin with he shared the outcomes of his research focusing "The Approaches ensuring Responsible Business Conduct in International Supply Chain.

Further, the discussion took place among the 20 experts from diverse sectors (Academia, CSO, Healthcare, Business) who shared their insights and views on how businesses can be made responsible and what approaches can help them in achieving responsible business conduct in line with International Supply Chains.

Dr. Somnath Singh, to begin with, shared that Global Compact Network India as a local arm of United Nations Global Compact, New York provides a platform for Indian businesses, academic institutions and civil society organizations to join hands for strengthening responsible business practices. Talking about its 500 members (Approx.), he shared how the members are engaged actively in GCNI's initiatives to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UN Ten Principle in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. He said that to ensure responsible business practices, each sector should ensure good governance, transparency, ethics and collective action in their approaches. Also, he talked about the Centre of Excellence for Governance, Ethics and Transparency (CEGET) at Global Compact Network India (GCNI) which aims to bring in diverse stakeholders on a common platform to exchange best practices, deliberate upon challenges and make policy recommendations to promote responsible business standards and transparency and ethics in general.

Dr. Somnath Singh emphasized on the role of responsible supply chains in the Healthcare Sector and how this can help in addressing corruption challenges. He shared that Corruption in the healthcare sector is an undeniable reality and arguably the most serious ethical crisis/issue today in India. The healthcare service is considered as one of the most corrupt service sectors in India; Almost everybody in the country has been a victim of some form of graft or malpractice. Therefore, understanding corruption, its varied nature and its adverse effects on health outcomes is necessary for all the sectors to steer clear of fraud, but also to devise effective strategies to tackle the menace and safeguard the moral vision of transparency and accountability.

Giving a brief overview of UNGC's supported Project "Scaling Up Anti-Corruption Collective Action within the Global Compact Networks", Dr. Somnath Singh shared that, under this project, GCNI is

focusing on strengthening transparency in healthcare ecosystem: Price transparency and value-based care in India and the collective action is the primary approach through which diverse sectors/supply chains are ethically engaged in removing/minimizing corruption in healthcare sectors. He also shared the kind of collective action initiatives taken by GCNI to strengthen Anti-Corruption Collective Action in India.

Apart from this, Dr. Somnath Singh had also shared his views and insights on how local Indian suppliers (especially SMEs) can be enabled to conduct business in line with International Responsible Management Standards. He said that SMEs have now become the backbone of Indian GDP; SMEs integrate GVCs (Global Value Chains) as direct exporters (trading), upstream suppliers of exporting firms (supplying), or importers of foreign inputs and technologies (sourcing). They can also partner with multinationals (partnering) or become multinationals themselves.

Further, he suggested the following steps to enable local Indian suppliers (SMEs) to conduct business in line with International responsible management standards –

- ✚ Enhance capacity of SMEs (Impart training on International responsible Management standards).
- ✚ Provide opportunities and platform to start international collaborations.
- ✚ Provide support and guidance to understand and follow due diligence and compliance processes.
- ✚ Establish network between the Government and SMEs so that Govt can encourage them and their innovations; thus, they can get direct benefits of Govt schemes and programmes (Loan and grant programmes) to stimulate their business activities.

In the concluding remarks, Dr. Somnath Singh said that..

- The suggested tool is very effective but training and development efforts may be required for implementation.
- Anti-corruption should be linked to responsible conduct particularly for companies which are not directly under US FCPA and UK Bribery Act.
- Supplier relationship management can be very useful in responsible business conduct in India.

Reflections



Christian Haus...

Dr. Sachin Gupta

Jeanine Rainal...

Eleanor Jehan

INTERNET CENT...

Ramkumar Subr...

sanjay gaikwad

8 others

You