

## **Teaching transparency: Capacity building for members and supply chains**

On Wednesday 6 June, GRI is re-launching a program that enables chambers of commerce, industry associations and multinationals to build sustainability reporting capacity among their member companies and suppliers.

The new Business Transparency Program helps groups of companies produce their first sustainability report, from introducing them to sustainability and transparency through to publication.

10,000 participants have now benefited from training through GRI's Certified Training Partners. By enabling member companies to report their sustainability performance with training from GRI's Partners, chambers of commerce, associations and multinationals can help their members and suppliers to identify areas where they can improve, save, and profit.

The Program usually takes 12 months to complete. First, GRI Certified Training introduces sustainability reporting and walks participants through the process of preparing a report. Ongoing support is then provided, including a series of Coaching Workshops as participants follow the reporting process – preparing the reporting process, connecting with stakeholders, defining their report content, monitoring their performance, and writing the final report. The Program concludes with a one-to one meeting to address specific issues in each report.

One of the first multinational companies to join the project was sportswear company PUMA. "What distinguishes this program from many other supply chain programs is that it helps our suppliers to develop their own views, programs and targets related to sustainability, rather than just buying into something initiated by us as a brand," says Stefan Seidel, Deputy Head PUMA. Safe Global at PUMA. "As a result we've had PUMA suppliers winning national and international recognition for their reports, which is a nice confirmation that we are on the right track. With the expansion of the program to Latin America starting this year, we will now cover all our major sourcing regions and the most important suppliers on a global scale."

There is an increasing focus on transparency in the supply chain; multinationals can no longer afford to ignore the adverse impacts caused or experienced by their suppliers. "With the production of PUMA goods outsourced to independent supplier factories, sustainability for PUMA can only be meaningful and credible if it involves our suppliers and covers a wider range of issues both on the social and the environmental side," says Seidel. "Regular reporting to the outside world not only allows our suppliers to share their successes and challenges, but also creates internal momentum to drive improvements and own sustainability actions."

Sustainability reporting is linked to long-term value creation; reporting companies can expect to gain from such advances as improved management systems and employee retention, reduced costs of compliance, enhanced brand recognition and reputation, and enhanced customer loyalty. Seidel is in no doubt about PUMA's ambitions for their ongoing involvement in the Business Transparency Program.

"Participation in this Program is part of a wider sustainability initiative at PUMA, which sets ambitious targets for both our own company and our suppliers. Examples are to reduce carbon emissions, improve working conditions, and at the same time to increase the

percentage of more sustainable products within our PUMA product range. To reach these targets we need manufacturing partners who not only share our vision for a more sustainable future, but also have reliable management systems and programs in place to collect Key Performance Indicators and improve performance over time. Recently the very first PUMA supplier to participate in the Program, Impahla Clothing from South Africa, just opened its own solar power plant. It is innovative projects like these that we hope to introduce and multiply within our supply chain.”

To share in the transformational benefits of sustainability reporting among business networks and groups of companies, join the [Business Transparency Program](#).

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