

# UN GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK UK

## 2024 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT



**Global Compact**  
Network UK

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# INTRODUCTION

## A vibrant, resilient network

Since stepping into the role of Chair of the UN Global Compact Network UK, I have been inspired by the way our community comes together to help each other address the most material sustainability challenges and opportunities of our time. Together, we are committed to continue this collaboration to shape what responsible and thriving business means in today's rapidly evolving global landscape.

2024 represented a year of structural improvements and significant growth for the Network. We've been busy improving our governance, financial processes, and talent roster to help us help our members even better. In June, we published our first Annual Report and Accounts as a Charity and appointed three strong and diverse new Trustees. In July, we welcomed our first in-house Human Resources manager, who will help the Network build on its foundations as a people-centred organisation, while enabling us to grow and evolve. Our Board Governance & Risk Committee, established at the end of 2023, began operating at full capacity, making significant progress in strengthening our risk management approach. This may not sound that exciting, but we know we need to be well set up to help our members face into more complex and more imminent sustainability issues.

2025 marks a significant year for the UN Global Compact Network UK as we conclude our 2022–2025 strategic plan. It presents an opportunity to embrace a decisive push toward achieving our goals, and a challenge to do that in a smart and strategic way that understands and works with the head and tailwinds the sustainability agenda faces. We will be making additional investments in our operating capacity, capabilities, and the key enablers of the value our members tell us they want us to bring.



David Schofield  
Chair, UN Global Compact Network UK

That means: driving even higher engagement that counts, with both new, growing, and leading members; expanding our reach and influence across the UK, acknowledging that many solutions are both global and local in nature; and stepping up and out to play an even more impactful role in shaping the policy environment we all operate in.

The strength of our Network lies in the active participation and commitment of our diverse membership, in our true partnership. In 2025, we will focus on deepening member engagement, with particular attention to supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), aiming to build a vibrant, resilient network where every member feels supported, valued, and empowered to contribute to our collective goals.

Expanding our presence across the UK is crucial to amplify our impact. We will achieve this by increasing visibility in key regions and enhancing our presence outside London through in-person events and regional partnerships. Building on our long-standing SDG Roadshow, our Social Sustainability team will lead Social Mobility Regional Consultations, engaging with industry leaders and local governments to promote a fairer and more diverse workforce.

A key priority for 2025 will be the implementation of a robust advocacy strategy, supported by a newly established Advocacy Steering Group, to position the UN Global Compact Network UK as a leading voice in responsible business priorities and practices.

As we step into 2025, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to our members, partners, Trustees, and Advisory Group for their continued strong engagement with the UK Network throughout 2024 and their commitment to advancing the mission of the UN Global Compact further and faster in 2025. I also wish to recognise the incredible work of our team, whose passion and expertise drive our success.

I look forward to continuing to work to serve this community to drive impact and advance our mission to create a world we want to live and do business in.

# A YEAR IN REVIEW



For the past several years, our annual members' survey has revealed that the top reason companies join the UN Global Compact is to have a positive impact on people and planet, so we put a great deal of effort into inspiring and enabling our participants to do just that.

Restructuring our programme delivery capacity into Environment, Social, and Governance Teams has allowed us to increase capacity and build subject matter expertise across the spectrum of corporate sustainability issues and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2024, our teams effectively identified compelling programme topics and the right speakers to bring out their material aspects. Inspiring ambition and enabling action with best practice case studies, these expert practitioners shared their experience of overcoming barriers to achieve organisational sustainability objectives.

It is truly gratifying that our programming in 2024 was so well received by Network members and the wider business community in the UK and internationally. We made a conscious decision to diversify our outputs last year, and our mix of Accelerator Programmes, Working Groups, webinars, in-person events, and reports attracted high levels of engagement. This report presents programmatic highlights from the past year. If you missed them when they were first offered, almost all can be found on our website and/or our [Sustainable Business Learning Platform](#).

Our Annual Summit at the iconic London Guildhall in October was particularly noteworthy. Partnering with the City of London, we convened 500 in-person attendees (and another 500 joined virtually) to engage with a stellar line-up of speakers. The strength of our movement was clearly evident in the enthusiasm and commitment displayed by our community that day.

Investments in our organisation's governance and operational capacity, especially in the areas of participant engagement and recruitment, contributed to our continued strong membership growth through 2024 despite some headwinds. With further investments coming online in the weeks ahead, we look forward to reaching new heights in 2025.

Any hope of the UK achieving net zero and a sustainable future relies upon engaging SMEs. Smaller companies currently make up approximately half of our membership, forming a core part of our participant constituency. We expanded our SME-targeted programming in 2024 with our Social Sustainability for SMEs webinar series, and we will continue to develop in this area going forward.

To conclude, my team and I take pride in what we achieved in 2024 and look forward to working with you in 2025 to help make your businesses more sustainable and successful.



Steve Kenzie  
Executive Director  
UN Global Compact Network UK

# ABOUT US



## UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the [United Nations Global Compact](#) is a call to companies to align their operations and strategies with Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption.

**63**  
country networks

**167**  
countries



**25,493**  
global participants



## UN GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK UK

As one of 63 Country Networks, the UN Global Compact Network UK connects UK-based organisations that are part of the UN Global Compact in a global movement dedicated to driving sustainable business. Through an extensive programme of activity, we promote sustainability leadership to create a world we want to live and do business in by inspiring ambition, enabling action, and collaborating to shape the business environment.

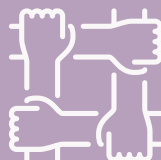
**907**  
UK participants



**862**  
business participants



**45**  
non-business participants



**6,157,570**  
UK employees





# GOVERNANCE

The UN Global Compact Network UK is governed by a Board of Trustees who are elected by Network members to oversee the running of the organisation.

Trustees also sit on the [Network Advisory Group](#), along with a diverse panel of Network members, providing invaluable guidance to the Network Secretariat on strategy, programmatic activity, and growth ambitions.

We believe that an effective Board must be diverse. Our Trustees represent companies of different sizes from a range of industry sectors. The Board have also committed to having more than one Trustee from an underrepresented ethnic group and that no gender represents more than 60% of Trustees.

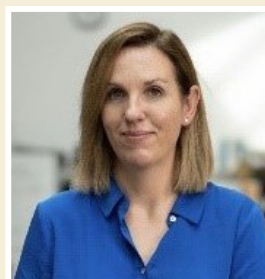
## Our Board



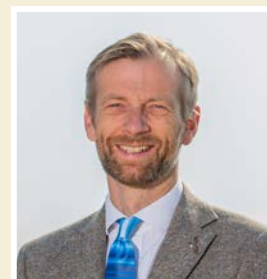
**David Schofield**  
Sustainability Director,  
Aviva



**Charlie Bronks**  
Head of ESG,  
Crown Agents Bank



**Ruth Chapman**  
Executive Managing  
Director,  
Dulas



**Samuel Gardner**  
Head of Climate Change  
and Sustainability,  
ScottishPower



**Hiba Khan**  
Civil Engineer &  
Sustainability &  
Social Outcomes Lead  
for International  
Development Services,  
Mott MacDonald



**Rachel Moseley**  
Director, Sustainability,  
London Stock Exchange  
Group (LSEG)



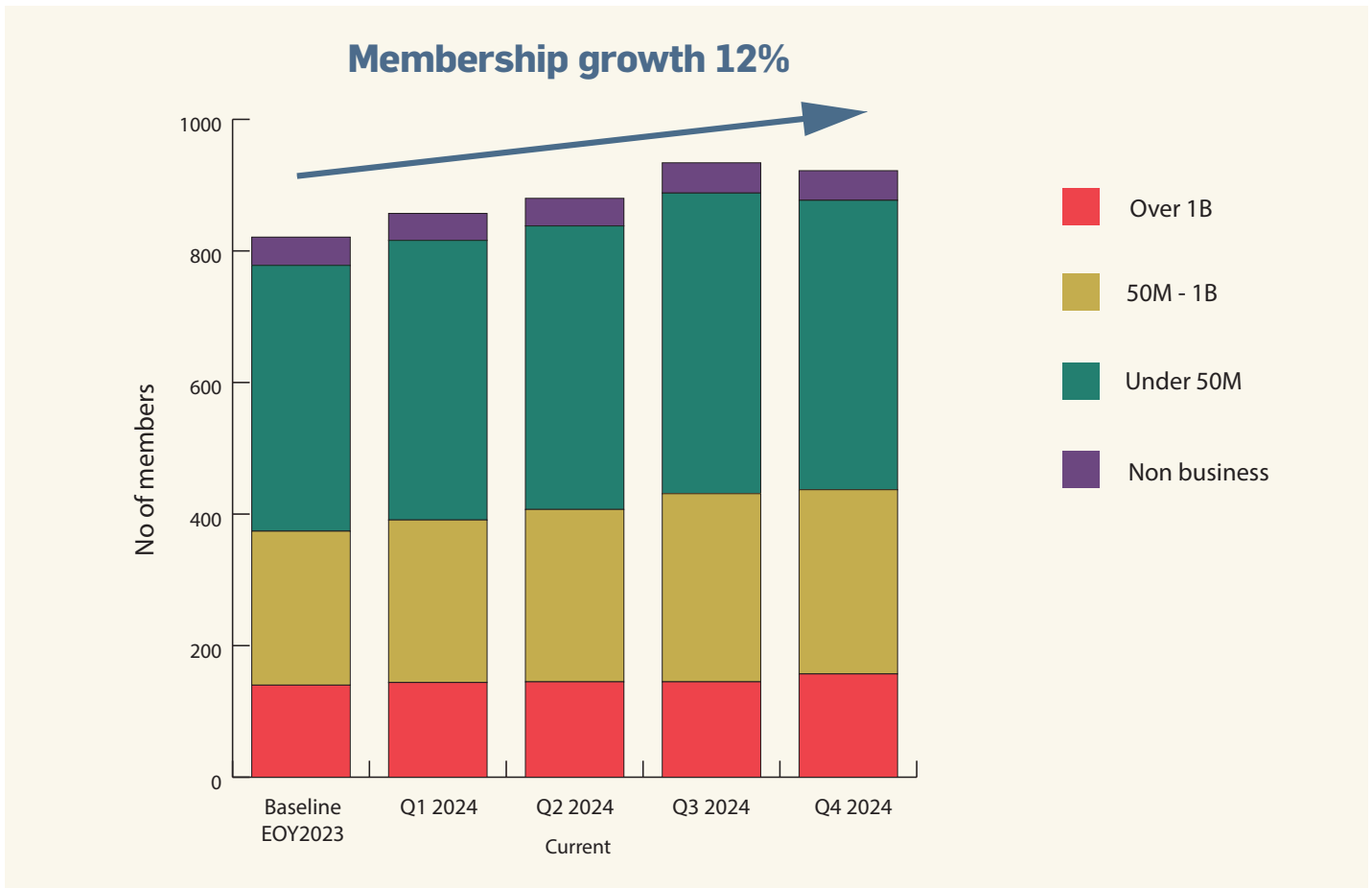
**Matthew Sparkes**  
Sustainability Director,  
Linklaters



**Preeti Srivastav**  
Group Head of  
Sustainability,  
Asahi Group Holdings

# 2024 AT A GLANCE

## The UN Global Compact Network UK Community in 2024





## Our programming in 2024

Over

# 15,000

attendees joined  
our 64 events



# 114

companies participated  
in our 6 accelerator  
programmes

On average

# 89%

of event attendees were highly  
satisfied by their experience and  
83% were inspired to take action  
after participating.



# 171

companies participating  
in our 8  
Working Groups



# 2024 PROGRAMMING





# Environment

The UN Global Compact Network UK's Environment Programme supports businesses in setting net zero targets and implementing transition plans in line with science across climate, nature, and water, as well as connecting environment and climate issues to social, economic, and governance issues.

In 2024, over 9,000 people joined our webinar series on [Collecting Scope 3 Data](#), [Addressing Energy-Related Emissions](#), [Nature-based Solutions for Business](#), [Engaging in Corporate Climate Advocacy](#), and [Net Zero Business Transformation](#), gaining the knowledge needed to drive business action in these key areas. Over 20 members participated in our Climate Disclosures Working Group and over 50 joined our three new working groups on Circular Economy, Nature, and Climate.

We also continued to build our influence and strategic partnerships through participation in the Broadway Initiative's alliance of organisations collaborating to meet net zero, the European Peer Learning Group on Climate – a forum facilitated by European Global Compact Country Networks to share knowledge on corporate climate action – and in the UK Business Group Alliance for Net Zero (BGA).

Following our 'Engaging in Corporate Climate Advocacy' webinar series, we partnered with other leading sustainability organisations to co-author the '[Business Associations Climate Action Guide](#)', providing companies with practical guidance on how they can align their business association memberships and indirect climate policy engagement with the Paris Agreement goals.

**“** An informative and interactive series on transformation, that has unlocked ideas and opened doors to new opportunities within my company.

It has broken down the complexities of transformative change for good, and enabled leverage points in every possible topic through great speakers and impressive case studies. Thank you!”

*Webinar attendee*

## HIGHLIGHTS

### NET ZERO BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION WEBINAR SERIES

In partnership with 103 Ventures, we held the Net Zero Business Transformation series, a course-style webinar series which equipped CSOs, sustainability leaders, and their teams with practical tools and knowledge needed to implement meaningful change within their companies. This series outlined a step-by-step approach to the transformation process, encompassing both business and individual actions to establish clear plans to achieve net zero. Key takeaways from the webinar series can be found [here](#).



**Principle 7:**  
**Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;**

**Principle 8:**  
**undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and**

**Principle 9:**  
**encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.**

## ENVIRONMENTMENT





## **CLIMATE AMBITION ACCELERATOR**

2024 marked the fourth Climate Ambition Accelerator programme, an ever-relevant offering as the call to action for the business community advances. The six-month programme supports organisations with setting science-based emissions reduction targets and designing a clear path to the net zero transition.

In line with our commitment to a multistakeholder approach, the UN Global Compact Network UK delivered the Accelerator to 23 member companies in partnership with the UN Global Compact Network Netherlands and with support from Patrons Ørsted and Natura & Co, and En+ Group, who sponsored the programme.

## **NATURE WORKING GROUP**

Our newly launched Nature Working Group provides a cross-sector forum for businesses with material impacts on nature to discuss and work through ongoing challenges related to measuring, addressing, and disclosing their nature-related dependencies,

impacts, risks, and opportunities. In 2024, we guided 18 companies in enhancing their approach to addressing their impacts on nature by aligning with emerging best practices, guidance, and regulatory requirements.

## **C-SUITE BREAKFAST WITH PAUL POLMAN**

As part of our Network Annual General Meeting, we hosted a C-suite breakfast with Paul Polman, business leader, campaigner, and co-author of “Net Positive”. This roundtable-style session brought together 17 Chief Executive Officers and Executive Committee members from participating companies, to discuss the challenges and opportunities relating to setting and achieving net zero and broader sustainability targets.

The breakfast provided a unique opportunity to discuss specific barriers and concerns within the current business landscape, learn from peers, and hear directly from Paul Polman, who shared his insights and experiences as former CEO of Unilever and former Vice-Chair of the UN Global Compact Board.

**“** As the call to climate action becomes more impactful for all organisations it is paramount that people understand the technical aspects of decarbonisation.

The Climate Ambition Accelerator not only gives its participants knowledge, but also the skills and confidence to be able to meet the challenges ahead. The structure, balance and information within the programme is perfect and has been invaluable to us as an industry leader to formulate our decarbonisation plan. Basically, it’s a must-have for any organisation serious about Climate Change.”

*Richard Lewis, Sustainable Development Lead, Toyota Material Handling UK*





# Social sustainability

The UN Global Compact Network UK's Social Sustainability Programme supports businesses to understand, apply, and uphold human rights and social sustainability standards in their operations and across their value chains.

In 2024, our Modern Slavery Working Group and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group continued supporting members by providing a space to explore relevant challenges and strategies that businesses are developing on these issues.

In collaboration with the Environment team, our four-part webinar series, [Managing Climate-Related Business Risks Through a Just Transition](#), attracted almost 3,000 registrations and 1,000 attendees. We also ran a series of Q&A surgeries which provided UK members with a forum to engage with experts and leaders on a variety of social sustainability topics, including DEI, business and human rights, and decent work.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR SMEs WEBINAR SERIES

Across seven interactive webinars, this members-only series is designed to equip SMEs with the knowledge and tools to advance social sustainability within their own operations and supply chains.

While catering to SMEs specifically, the series is also supporting larger companies in reducing risks within their supply chain and enhancing alignment with their smaller business partners and suppliers on social standards. Attracting almost 300 registrations, the series has so far covered topics such as human rights, responsible sourcing, and living wage, with more to be addressed in 2025.



## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Principle 1:**  
Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**Principle 2:**  
make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

**Principle 3:**  
Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

**Principle 4:**  
the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

**Principle 5:**  
the effective abolition of child labour; and

**Principle 6:**  
the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



## LABOUR





## TARGET GENDER EQUALITY ACCELERATOR

Building upon previous successes, the Target Gender Equality (TGE) Accelerator programme returned in 2024 for its fifth edition, providing companies with the opportunity to deepen the implementation of the [Women's Empowerment Principles](#) and strengthen their contribution to SDG targets 5.5 and 8.5. Over the course of nine months, through performance analysis, capacity-building workshops, and peer-to-peer learning sessions, 13 companies are being supported through the process of setting and reaching ambitious corporate targets for women's representation and leadership, starting with the Board and Executive Management levels.

## CLIMATE AND HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP

This newly launched Working Group enabled peer learning on the interlinkages between climate action and the business & human rights agenda. The group brought together 18 large companies and one SME. Discussions covered themes of Environmental and Human Rights due diligence, the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and Nature-based Solutions and their impact on human rights.

## RAPID FRAMEWORK

Funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the UN Global Compact Network UK developed the RAPID Framework, which supports institutional investors in exerting appropriate pressure on companies to end child labour in supply chains.

Our contribution encouraged the provision of better decision-critical child labour data, clarified investor requirements, and explored what best practice looks like across entire supply chains.



[...] I have led our company's successful completion of the UNGC UK TGE programme, including becoming a signatory to the WEPs. This commitment has led to a significant increase in our WEPs Gender Gap Analysis score, reflecting substantial progress in gender equality within our organisation.

Some metrics to demonstrate impact include successfully completing the TGE programme and doubling our WEPs Gender Gap Analysis score from 29% in September 2022 to 58% in March 2024."

*Raquel Gomes,  
Head of Innovation at RedCompass Labs*



It is great to see a practical toolkit being developed to support investors. I particularly liked the emphasis on metrics, evidence, and transparency. But most important of all was the focus on real world change – investors can be influential in protecting the most vulnerable workers across the globe."

*Dame Sara Thornton, ex-UK Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Professor of Practice in Modern Slavery.*





# Governance and SDGs

In 2024, our Governance and SDGs team developed holistic programmes and resources for companies to embed sustainability into their strategy and take collective action to achieve the SDGs by 2030. With only five years to go until 2030, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must advance faster than ever.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### SDG INVESTMENT FORUM

Organised in partnership with UN Global Compact HQ and Accenture, our SDG Investment Forum brought together UK government officials, high-level representatives from leading companies, financial institutions, and international organisations to explore practical strategies for scaling up SDG-aligned investments.

### SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING WORKING GROUP

Recognising the challenges posed by the rapidly evolving ESG reporting regulatory landscape, we launched a new Sustainability Reporting Working Group for 2024. The group, formed of 31 businesses, empowered participants to leverage the opportunities of integrated reports and provided a safe space for collaborative learning and knowledge exchange on the intricacies of ESG reporting. Topics covered included recent and upcoming mandatory frameworks (including CSRD) and their impact on UK companies, risk and assurance, double materiality, and data collection and value chain engagement.

### FASHION BUSINESS SECTOR EXCHANGE

In July, we convened over 80 professionals from the fashion, textiles, and sustainability industries at Soho House to get ahead of the curve. Our expert speakers discussed the themes of balancing slow vs fast fashion, how to manage disruption in supply chains, and the future of sustainable fashion while attendees heard best practices from leaders in the space, inspired progress through networking, and met potential partners to accelerate collective action in the sector.

The Fashion Sector Exchange highlighted the need to accelerate transformative change amongst consumers, businesses, suppliers, and policymakers by shifting the narrative, restructuring business models, collaborating for action, and driving policy forward.



The event was followed by a [Fireside Chat](#) with our members ASOS and EY, exploring the vital role of transparency in the fashion industry and its impact on sustainability and business success.



“ Loved the innovation session. Finding ways to bring participants across the value chain together is one of the ways we can accelerate progress towards the SDGs.”


Hannah Simons, Lloyds Banking



## UN GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK UK

### SDG STORYTELLING FOR SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT

Aligning impact with purpose:  
Crafting narratives that drive progress forward faster



Global Compact Network UK

Clyde & Co  
FORSTER COMMUNICATIONS

### USING YOUR SDG STORY TO SECURE BUY IN

Sustainability professionals often hold the responsibility for an increasingly complex, strategic, and broad range of issues, and must effectively engage a wide number of stakeholders on sustainability challenges.

However, stakeholders are more likely to buy-in to an idea if they connect with the idea on a deeper level, appreciate how actions relate to company philosophy, and understand the challenges and opportunities presented.

Stories can spark curiosity, inform stakeholders how a business affects the world, build emotional connections, and persuade people to take ambitious action. By combining the building blocks of storytelling with the fundamental tenets of building a business case, companies can create a powerful narrative that aligns with the SDGs and meets stakeholder expectations.

SDG STORYTELLING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

### REVENUE GENERATION / INCREASED SALES

- Differentiate products and services from competition
- Improve market access
- Customer acquisition
- Extended product portfolio

### BRAND ENHANCEMENT / TRUST

- Improve customer loyalty
- Employee branding
- Employee engagement and retention
- ESG performance and investor attraction

### SUSTAINABILITY DRIVEN VALUE CREATION

### COST SAVINGS

- Resources, energy, and CO2 emissions
- Labour costs
- Selling, general, and administrative expenses

### REDUCTION OF RISK / HARM

- Market disruption
- Regulatory, regulatory, and political risk
- People and planet
- Protection and fulfillment of human rights

### 3 CALCULATE BENEFITS AND INVESTMENTS

This section involves taking the initial value drivers and turning them into a quantitative analysis. This includes conducting internal and external research as well as setting initial assumptions. You will then need to build some part of your company's financials to do this analysis.

Global Compact Network UK

### UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS VALUE DRIVERS

A sustainability business case refers to the financial benefits to business profitability.

- Revenue Generation:** Sustainable business practices can increase revenue by modifying existing products or developing new ones. They can also appeal to a wider customer base and provide a competitive edge.
- Brand Enhancement and Trust:** Sustainable business practices boost reputation and employee retention while attracting loyal customers and investors who value ESG performance.
- Risk Reduction:** Companies around the world are facing increased risk throughout their operations, revenue, and expenses. Sustainable solutions can minimise exposure to regulatory and political risk as well as mitigate reputational risk and negative public perception.
- Cost Savings:** Many sustainable alternatives can result in cost savings by improving operational efficiencies, such as minimising waste and improving the management of natural resources such as water and energy.

### DEVELOP A VALUE TREE

A value tree is a visual representation of the smaller components of a business initiative. This step serves as a mapping exercise to help visually decode where your SDG impacts can create value across four drivers.

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### SHARE YOUR OUTPUTS WITH SDG STAKEHOLDERS

To mobilise business resources behind SDG commitments, it's important to present and frame initiatives towards both sustainability and business benefits.

The key takeaway is to talk your findings – it is important to use language and metrics relevant to the individual(s) you are sharing with so that they can understand and support the initiative.

Global Compact Network UK

### TIPS FOR BUILDING AND PRESENTING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS CASE

**BE HELD BY THE SDGS**  
Try to use clear metrics to identify sustainability, rather than opportunities which would potentially lead to more commercial outcomes.

**DO NOT RELY TOO HEAVILY ON NUMBERS**  
Use this approach as a starting point. Look beyond just numbers and tell a story. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number.

**BE READY TO DISCUSS AND EXPLAIN**  
It is likely that you will be asked to discuss and explain. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number.

**URGE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO TAKE THE LEAD**  
To find ambitious opportunities, it is necessary to think outside the comfort of what the business does well today.

**STAY FOCUSED**  
It is essential to conduct a primary assessment and the business case should be clear. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number.

**DO NOT TRY TO BE PERFECTLY RIGHT**  
Work hard to be directionally correct and look the part. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number. It is not enough to have a number.

## SDG STORYTELLING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

2024 saw the launch of SDG Storytelling for Sustainability, a year-long series exploring how the SDGs can be used as a holistic framework for storytelling to meaningfully communicate ESG strategies.

The UN Global Compact Network UK, supported by Clyde & Co. and Forster Communications, curated an interview series with industry leaders discussing topics such as partnerships and investor perspectives, disseminated action-oriented infographics on building buy-in and double materiality, led a hands-on workshop on finding the thread in sustainability storytelling, and published a comprehensive toolkit, to help organisations craft impactful sustainability narratives and accelerate progress toward the SDGs.

### SDG SHOWCASE

HOW COMPANIES ARE CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING AGENDA 2030



Global Compact Network UK

## SDG SHOWCASE

Our SDG Showcase report is a tool for businesses to assess material SDG impacts which highlights good practice examples of the private sector working with a clear plan to advance the SDGs for the future we want. To date, the report has been downloaded by nearly 1,500 individuals.

### THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



### DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

With their coverage of human rights, the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact includes specific labour rights considerations. Principles 3 to 6 obligate participating companies to support the freedom of association and collective bargaining as well as to fight forced and compulsory labour, especially child labour.

TIED TO PRINCIPLE 1  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 2

TIED TO PRINCIPLE 3  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 4  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 5  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 6

PROMOTE DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

By 2030, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) estimates that 585 million people will be out of work. This is a significant challenge for the world, as decent work is essential for sustainable economic growth and social stability.

Business leaders who commit to decent work, improve their own productivity and profitability, and create jobs for their employees. This is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Implementing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices can help businesses attract and retain top talent, improve employee engagement, and enhance their reputation. DEI is not just a moral imperative; it's a business strategy.

### Private Sector Action on SDG 8

**TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO ACCELERATE ACTION**

**UN LEADING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**  
The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) provide a framework for businesses to address human rights issues. They are based on the idea that businesses have a responsibility to respect human rights.

**OECD GUIDELINES FOR MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS**  
The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (MNE Guidelines) are a set of non-binding principles and standards that provide a framework for MNEs to conduct their business in a socially responsible manner.

**UN GLOBAL COMPACT BUSINESS & HUMAN RIGHTS TOOLKIT**  
The UN Global Compact Business & Human Rights Toolkit provides a practical guide for businesses to implement the UNGP. It includes a range of tools and resources to help businesses assess their human rights risks and develop action plans.

**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO) CONVENTIONS**  
The ILO is a specialised agency of the United Nations that deals with issues of employment, decent work, and social justice. It has developed a number of international labour conventions that provide a framework for businesses to improve their labour practices.

**UN GLOBAL CRISIS**  
The UN Global Crisis reports assess the impact of global crises on the SDGs. They provide a range of insights and recommendations for businesses to support the achievement of the SDGs.

### REDUCED INEQUALITIES

The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact require businesses to include social sustainability considerations into their operations with human rights Principles 1 and 2 as the cornerstone of corporate responsibility. Added to that, labour rights should be respected and diversity, equity, and inclusion measures implemented to reduce inequality.

TIED TO PRINCIPLE 1  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 2

TIED TO PRINCIPLE 4  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 5  
TIED TO PRINCIPLE 6

**REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES**

Businesses have a responsibility to promote equality and reduce inequality within and among countries. This is a key objective of the SDGs and is essential for sustainable economic growth and social stability.

Businesses can promote equality and reduce inequality by implementing a range of measures, including: promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting local communities, and investing in social infrastructure.

By promoting equality and reducing inequality, businesses can improve their reputation, attract top talent, and create a more sustainable and resilient business.

### Private Sector Action on SDG 10

Businesses can implement targeted measures to build an inclusive workforce, such as apprenticeships and skills-based learning programmes. These measures can help businesses attract and retain top talent, improve employee engagement, and enhance their reputation.

Businesses can also promote equality and reduce inequality by supporting local communities and investing in social infrastructure. This can help businesses create a more sustainable and resilient business.

**BURRES SALMON'S REVERSE DEI MENTORING PROGRAMME**

Contributing to SDG TARGETS 4.7, 5.5, 10.2, 10.4, 10.5

After working public relations in 2005, Burges Salmon then worked for the public relations firm. The programme offers a unique opportunity for businesses to support the achievement of the SDGs. It is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

The programme offers a unique opportunity for businesses to support the achievement of the SDGs. It is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

# Flagship events

2024 was marked by three flagship events, representing a unique opportunity for participants of the UN Global Compact Network UK to come together and discuss the most pressing ESG issues

JUNE



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 25 JUNE

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) provides an opportunity for Network members to reflect on the past year and discuss how we can continue to support sustainability progress. Hosted in person at Accenture's offices in London, as well as online, this year's AGM featured a fireside chat with Paul Polman, business leader, campaigner, and co-author of "Net Positive". The meeting also featured a panel discussion with speakers from Diageo, the London Stock Exchange Group, Ingka Group (IKEA), and Ørsted UK, focused on navigating the challenges of delivering climate ambition, and the [SDG Pioneers](#) Award Ceremony, an annual celebration of leaders using business as a force for good towards achieving the SDGs.

FEBRUARY



## 2024 KICK-OFF EVENT – 2 FEBRUARY

Held at the beginning of the year, our annual kick-off event is a key opportunity for members of the UN Global Compact Network UK to learn how to maximise the value of their participation by connecting with peers and hear about upcoming engagement opportunities around environmental, social, governance, and cross-cutting themes. Hosted for the first time in hybrid format, the event brought together 100 members in person and over 200 online.

## ANNUAL SUMMIT – 1 OCTOBER

As we entered the last quarter of 2024, the UN Global Compact Network UK returned to the Guildhall in the City of London for the 2024 edition of its Annual Summit, convening an open

forum for trailblazers from business, government, and civil society to explore strategies for bridging the ambition to action gap. More than 1,000 dedicated individuals joined us, with over 500 senior executives at the Guildhall.

Attendees participated in panel discussions, fireside chats, and hands-on workshops aimed at empowering businesses to bridge the ambition-to-action gap, transforming operations for the benefit of people and the planet. We heard from more than 35 sustainability leaders across the UK's largest companies, including Aviva, ASOS, Haleon, SUEZ, SSE, Unilever, and WHSmith.

As the world navigates complex issues such as resource scarcity, social instability, and a rapidly evolving policy environment, the Summit explored several key themes, including the necessity for stronger supply chain relationships, effective climate resilience strategies, innovative sustainability reporting, and the critical role of worker engagement in driving social sustainability.

Participants also had the opportunity to network and share insights and expertise with industry professionals, fostering collaboration among leading business figures. You can download our key takeaways [here](#).

OCTOBER



# ACCELERATING MEMBERS' PROGRESS



The UN Global Compact Network UK empowers its members to accelerate action towards operationalising the Ten Principles and achieving the SDGs. In addition to our programming, we provide tailored support and guidance to advance our members' sustainability goals, as well as networking opportunities independent of our core thematic streams.

## NEW JOINER BRIEFINGS

In 2024, we introduced 'New Joiner Briefings' to support new members, or individuals from existing ones who are new to the UN Global Compact, in navigating the wide range of programmes, activities, and resources available to them. Run quarterly, these briefings equipped over 80 individuals with best practices to start making the most of their participation in the UN Global Compact.

## MEMBERS' BREAKFASTS

We continued hosting our Members' Breakfasts to provide a safe and informal forum where members can share and discuss ideas, challenges, and experiences with peers. Over the course of 9 sessions, bringing together over 150 sustainability professionals, participants discussed a wide range of topics, including the challenges and opportunities of the evolving reporting frameworks landscape, supply chain sustainability and due diligence, social value programmes and how to measure social impact, and best practices on diversity, equity, and inclusion. In 2025, we are aiming to leverage these sessions to explore hot sustainability topics not covered through existing programming.

“ Informative and direct. Just the right level for new joiners.”

*New Joiner Briefing attendee 1*

“ Lovely introduction to the joys of the Global Compact”

*New Joiner Briefing attendee 2*

“ These breakfast meetings are wonderful... open discussions from a mutually supportive group of professionals all willing to share experiences and ideas with their fellow attendees.”

*Members' Breakfast attendee*



# INSPIRING UK BUSINESSES TO TAKE ACTION



2024 saw an increased effort to reach more businesses and stakeholders in the UK to further advance our strategic goals to raise awareness of the responsible business agenda, promote the Network as a credible and reliable source of information, and establish ourselves as the space for businesses to convert ambition into action. Over the course of the year, we held a total of 42 open events, doubling efforts from 2023, and launched several resources open to the public. Below we highlight some of these.

## **ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE ACTION INFO-SESSIONS**

These engaging webinars were held throughout the year to help businesses explore how joining the UN Global Compact can drive sustainable growth, while addressing evolving sustainability challenges. They showcased the benefits of being part of the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative and provided valuable insights into the tools, resources, and support available to accelerate sustainability efforts and achieve commercial success.

In 2024, we hosted two webinars, reaching over 600 individuals.

## **SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS LEARNING PLATFORM**

Launched in November, our Sustainable Business Learning Platform provides users with access to an exclusive selection of UN Global Compact Network UK resources on-demand.

The platform allows users to easily navigate our offering and access key resources to help tackle their business sustainability challenges. The platform is accessible to all.

## **SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIERS TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Our newly launched Sustainable Suppliers Training Programme supports UN Global Compact Network UK member companies that want to drive sustainability through their supply chain by helping them educate their suppliers – whether or not those supplier companies are UN Global Compact participants.

The training programme, delivered in collaboration with the UN Global Compact Network Spain, will engage 1,000 suppliers of large enterprises headquartered in the UK on the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, the SDGs, and sustainable business development. It will enable businesses that supply large enterprises to gain the knowledge and skills that are fundamental to complying with the national, European, and international regulatory frameworks regarding sustainability.

## **EXTERNAL NEWSLETTER**

Our external newsletter, launched in 2023, continued to update the UK business community on upcoming events and activities, share the latest sustainability developments, initiatives, resources, and tools, as well as showcase our members' achievements.

# OUR SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

Our commitment to sustainability is aligned with the dedication and standards we expect from our members. Integrating social and environmental sustainability into our own organisation gives us a better understanding of what we're asking of our participant companies while also demonstrating our commitment to creating a more sustainable world.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

We are committed to promoting and respecting diversity, equity, and inclusion in our workforce and our external stakeholder community. We believe that having a diverse workforce and fostering an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued and able to fully express themselves is a key element of a successful business. The UK Network has a [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy](#) that outlines our commitments.

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

We prioritise inclusive and accessible digital marketing and communication materials. For example, our website uses EqualWeb, an accessibility widget that allows users to adapt web content to their individual accessibility needs.

## SPEAKER DIVERSITY

The UK Network organises over 100 events every year, each providing a platform for our speakers to inspire and share their knowledge with hundreds of people. To ensure that we provide equal opportunities for speaking roles and share a wide range of perspectives at our events, we send a bi-annual anonymous Speaker Diversity Monitoring Survey to our presenters. We track a range of diversity indicators including ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, and socio-economic background.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GROUP

The UK Network is a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Group on the UN Global Compact Country Network Hub. This allows us to communicate our practices with other Country Networks around the world, as well as share national and company examples, spark conversation, and share outcomes with others.

## LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER

The UN Global Compact Network UK has been an accredited Living Wage employer since 2019. All Secretariat staff are paid at least the London Living Wage. We recognise that paid internships are key to enabling decent work, equal opportunity for employment, and growth within the organisation for young people, particularly for candidates of varying socio-economic backgrounds.

## RECRUITMENT VIA APPLIED

Since 2019, we have used Applied's blind hiring platform to eliminate bias from our staff recruitment process. Using anonymised applications and predictive, skill-based assessments, we identify talent that might have been overlooked by reviewing CVs alone. Each job posting includes diversity disclaimers and, where possible, we use gender and ethnically diverse interview panels.

## NET ZERO TARGET

The UN Global Compact Network UK has made a commitment through the [SME Climate Hub](#) to:

- Halve our carbon emissions before 2030;
- Cut emissions to zero before 2050; and
- Share our progress on a yearly basis.

In support of these efforts, we have formed a cross-functional team to conduct quarterly monitoring, risk assessments, and annual reporting on our net zero progress. Our Net Zero Taskforce, led by the Head of the Environment team, is comprised of one team member from each of our programming teams, one member from the Participant Engagement and Impact teams, and our Chief of Staff. The Taskforce is currently working on our second Net Zero Report, which we will publish in the spring.





# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025



2025 marks a milestone year as we conclude our 2022–2025 strategic framework and embrace an ambitious push toward achieving our goals. Building on the structural improvements and strategic advancements of 2024, we are well-positioned to deepen our impact in the year ahead.

Our focus for 2025 includes driving member engagement, particularly among SMEs, expanding our reach across the UK to amplify our impact, and implementing a robust advocacy strategy to position the UN Global Compact Network UK as a leading voice in promoting responsible business practices.

To advance these goals, we have developed several programmes and initiatives. A new Programme Navigator Tool will help members and prospective members identify the most relevant programmes and resources for their needs. We are increasing the number of in-person events, especially outside London, while continuing to diversify our programme outputs. Members-only programming will include a four-part in-person workshop on Sustainability Essentials for Core Functions. Our Environment team will launch two open webinar series on adaptation and resilience and advanced scope 3 emissions. Within our Governance & SDGs programme, the [2030 Vision: Uniting Europe in the Fight Against Illicit Financial Flows](#) initiative will bring together UN Global Compact private sector participants, civil society, government, and academia. The initiative will embed business integrity principles across company operations, advocate and advance policy recommendations, and foster international standards to improve economic, political, and social conditions across Europe.

Our Social Mobility Regional Consultations will engage with industry leaders and local governments across UK cities to promote a fairer and more diverse workforce in the UK. Finally, a newly established Advocacy Steering Group will help us operationalise our advocacy strategy. This will include assisting us with formulating appropriate KPIs and taking forward policy asks.

We look forward to making 2025 our most impactful year yet, working together to create a world we want to live and do business in.



United Nations  
Global Compact



For 25 years, our Ten Principles on human rights, labour, the environment, and anti-corruption have helped define corporate responsibility and influence global policy and practice.

For 2025, we join CEO and Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact, Sanda Ojiambo, in calling on all participants to accelerate your engagement with our global sustainability movement. This call to action is clear: we must all move forward much faster to meet the pace and scale the future requires. The needs are unprecedented, but so are the opportunities.



## ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

As a special initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General, the UN Global Compact is a call to companies worldwide to align their operations and strategies with Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption.

Its ambition is to accelerate and scale the global collective impact of business by upholding the Ten Principles and delivering the Sustainable Development Goals through ambitious, accountable companies, and environments that enable change. With more than 21,000 companies and 3,300 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and 63 Country Networks, the UN Global Compact is the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative — one Global Compact uniting business for a better world.

For more information, follow us on [LinkedIn](#) (United Nations Global Compact) or [X](#) (@globalcompact) or visit [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

## ABOUT THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK UK

The UN Global Compact Network UK is part of the world's largest responsible business initiative, the United Nations Global Compact, connecting UK companies and other organisations in a global movement dedicated to driving sustainable growth. Through an extensive programme of activity, it promotes sustainability leadership to create a world we want to live and do business in, by inspiring ambition, enabling action, and collaborating to shape the business environment.

The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, rooted in UN treaties, provide a robust foundation for corporate sustainability and business action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For more information, follow us on [LinkedIn](#) ( UN Global Compact Network UK) or [BlueSky](#) (@globalcompactuk.bsky.social) or visit [unglobalcompact.org.uk](http://unglobalcompact.org.uk)

## DISCLAIMER

The inclusion of company names and/or examples in this publication is intended strictly for learning purposes and does not constitute an endorsement of the individual companies by the UN Global Compact Network UK.

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Please cite this publication as:

*UN Global Compact Network UK, 2024 Annual Activity Report*



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