

UN Report: Companies must contribute to SDG 16 and promote peace and justice

The SDG Fund, SERES Foundation and Spanish companies present a new study in Madrid on good business practices in the construction of peace

Madrid, 14 December 2017 - Companies can play a fundamental role in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 (peace, justice and inclusive institutions for all), not only in the prevention of corruption, but also by creating the necessary conditions to make inclusive decisions and improve the rule of law, says a study presented today in United Nations Madrid through its [Fund for Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG Fund).

The Companies and SDG report: *Contributing to peaceful, fair and inclusive societies*, published by the SDG Fund in collaboration with its [Private Sector Advisory Group](#), the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and with the specialised legal support of law firm McDermott Will & Emery, examines how [Sustainable Development Goal 16](#) (peace, justice and solid institutions) is relevant to the private sector and analyses the link between peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The presentation of the report took place in Madrid on Thursday 14th and brought together representatives from the UN, the private sector, government, civil society and universities to discuss how companies can contribute to peace through justice and help achieve SDG 16 at the national and global levels.

Companies and SDG 16 is designed as a guide to good practices to help, on the one hand, the private sector to incorporate this important objective of sustainable development into its business planning and, on the other hand, so that public institutions and civil society are able to understand that without involving the private sector, it is difficult to achieve inclusive, just and peaceful societies. It also shows how an effective legal framework can help companies build up trust with public and civil society, and details the role of companies in creating conditions that would improve areas such as corporate social responsibility, governance, transparency and accountability.

One of the study's main conclusions is that the private sector tends to see SDG 16 as a competence of government actors, or as a concern related mainly to areas of conflict. In this sense, the report notes the need to identify specific areas of action so companies can engage in order to achieve SDG 16, from anti-corruption measures, to inclusive recruitment policies, via the strengthening of justice services and the rule of law.

Companies that support SDG 16 often focus on preventing corruption and eliminating corporate behaviour that may negatively influence peace. However, the report says that the private sector also has a responsibility to support and enable conditions that allow for inclusive decision-making, encourage open opposition to corruption and improve support for the rule of law.

The report reflects the contributions of the private sector leaders of the SDG Fund's Private Sector Advisory Group, which provide information on how companies are working to address complex issues of governance and accountability. Case studies of companies, including four

which are Spanish (Ebro Foods, Ferrovial, Fundación Microfinanzas BBVA and Fundación SERES), highlight the value of SDGs and demonstrate the importance of interventions to promote access to justice and the consolidation of peace.

To contribute to sustainable development, there must be a focus on conflict prevention, as well as addressing the root causes of conflict, guaranteeing the rule of law and supporting strong and responsible institutions. In this sense, the report includes the different activities that companies are carrying out to help achieve SDGs and promote peaceful societies in places like Cambodia, Colombia, Lebanon, Zambia, Uzbekistan, India and the United Kingdom.

Among the case studies included is the work carried out by the SDG Fund and its public and private partners in El Cauca, Colombia, one of the areas most affected by the armed conflict that the country has experienced. The [joint programme](#), in which companies of the Advisory Group participate, is integrating thousands of small producers in its supply chain to help create jobs and advance the reconciliation process. The preliminary results confirm that these public-private partnerships with the government and local communities have helped to significantly reduce all forms of violence and advance peaceful long-term solutions to conflicts.

"While the concepts of peace and justice are complex, this report deepens the analysis of the private sector's important role in the elimination of corruption and the promotion of the rule of law", said Paloma Duran, director of the SDG Fund. "It shows that companies play a vital role in promoting stability in the countries where they work, as well as in improving the conditions necessary to build more solid institutions and communities."

The SDG Fund is already working in 22 countries with a variety of stakeholders. Created in 2014, with an initial contribution from the Government of Spain, it is the first specifically private sector mechanism.

For more information and to read the report: www.sdgfund.org/es

To access the Report in English: <http://www.sdgfund.org/es/empresas-y-ODS16>

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