

Guatemala holds its own Business and Human Rights Forum

The aim of the activity was to discuss the role of the Guatemalan government as catalyst for business' respect for human rights.

The forum was a joint initiative by the European Union, Advocacy for Business and Human Rights (ABHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the British Embassy. Participants included; Anabella Sibrián, International Platform against Impunity; Lucrecia Hernández Mack, elect Congresswoman; Claudia Lavinia Figueroa, Secretary General at the Ombudsman Office; and Connie de Paiz, President of the Guatemalan Association of Exporters.

The panel discussion was held between civil society, public and private sector; and was an opportunity to promote a safe space to have a constructive dialogue and compare the challenges that all sectors face when implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The discussion flowed from sharing concerns, risks and possible solutions, to moving from a passive state to a preventive and active state.

Discussions also focused on the importance between corporations and indigenous communities' relations, the role of each sector in preventing conflict, conflict resolution, and suggestions for the incumbent government on how the country can move forward.

The organizers expressed their commitment to the promotion of the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights; and dialogue, to protect and guarantee human rights recognized in the international law. This endorsement included the support of businesses and the different key actors involved in fostering prosperity in Guatemala.

Barbara Amono-Oceng, Deputy Head of Mission for the British Embassy to Guatemala, said:

We believe the UK's approach strikes an appropriate balance between encouraging strong corporate behaviour on human rights and avoiding an over-regulated approach, our aim is to encourage a race to the top and this is what we want to foster in Guatemala.

Stefano Gatto, European Union Ambassador to Guatemala, said:

There is no contradiction between well-understood human rights and the indispensable role of companies in promoting the economic development of a country. Dialogue is the fundamental tool that must prevail, with the aim of overcoming any obstacle with a view to the common good.

Odyssey Ltd

What started as a lightbulb moment in university transformed into a budding business for 23-year-old Dominic Bonaker, the CEO of Odyssey Ltd, an up-and-coming web design agency. After finishing his studies, Dominic launched his business in 2018 and has since spent the last 18 months transforming his business dreams into a reality.

Starting his young entrepreneurship journey

Dominic knew he wanted to be his own boss while studying for his Computer Software Engineering degree at Cardiff Metropolitan University. But his business journey did not quite take off as he expected. He soon realised that starting a business requires a bit more than just registering it with Companies House:

I set up my first company in my first year of university. I thought it just involved me saying 'Okay, I'm going start a company' and that was it and it was all sorted.

But that actually wasn't the case. There were certain requirements that I had to follow as a director of a company.

Launching a business can involve a lot of time and energy. As Dominic already had other commitments, he could not invest himself fully in the new venture. So, he decided to dissolve the company.

After a string of job interviews in his final year of study left him feeling underwhelmed about working for someone else, he decided to re-pursue the entrepreneurial career path. He launched his second company, Tech Tailors Ltd:

What began as Tech Tailors evolved into Odyssey Ltd. As the company gained momentum, it felt like it outgrew its original name, so I changed it with Companies House.

Odyssey was more of a fit because it means 'journey' and that's something we feel we do for clients – we take them on a journey from nowhere to a beautiful website.

Growing his business

Every business journey is different. In Dominic's case, he quickly realised

that it was up to him to go out and find the networks and support he needed to make his business a success:

When I started out, it was pretty much just me. I didn't know about any of the available help from other organisations. When it came down to it, I had to go online and Google to see what networking events were coming up and what support was out there, and there's so much available that you don't come across on a day-to-day basis.

That's one thing that helped to boost Odyssey – me putting myself out there, meeting new people, seeing what kind of help I could get and going from there.

[Interview with Dominic Bonaker, founder and CEO of Odyssey](#)

Key challenges

Starting a business can come with multiple hurdles to jump, from finding the right office base to understanding the legal requirements and responsibilities expected of you as a company director. But one of the challenges Dominic faced was finding the capital to get things going:

When you're a start-up, you may have a lot of expenditure and don't have a lot of money coming in, and that was one thing that we did struggle with – but it's all scalable. You've just got to remember that you start with one project but then you put that money back into the business and pay yourself as little as possible.

That's exactly what I've done for the past year. You reinvest in the business.

Advice for budding young entrepreneurs

After spending time reinvesting funds earned into his business, the business started to grow. Not only has he become a successful young entrepreneur, but he's also taken up opportunities to encourage other aspiring business owners to take the plunge and start a business through his public speaking.

Although he wants to pass on as many learnings as he can to other young business owners, his top piece of advice remains simple:

My advice for any budding entrepreneur that's trying to get their foot into something is go out there and try something new. See what you can do and make happen, because you'll learn so much about yourself and so much about industry anyway. Just go out there and try it.

British High Commission Kigali: call for proposals to raise awareness of Commonwealth campaign

Rwanda will be hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Kigali next June yet currently awareness of the Commonwealth in Rwanda is low, as both an institution and its modern-day foci. The British High Commission is seeking an experienced consultant to design and implement a campaign to raise awareness of the Commonwealth in Rwanda and of UK-Rwanda links on Commonwealth priority areas.

Timeframe

The position is for five months, starting on 11 November 2019 and ending on 31 March 2020.

Objectives

The goal is to develop positive perceptions of the Commonwealth and its values in Rwanda, the newest member of the Commonwealth which joined in 2003, and UK-Rwanda links which align to Commonwealth priority areas. Part of this will involve promoting the English language through quality educational materials for schools.

You will focus on raising awareness amongst young people in Rwanda, with two specific demographics: secondary school students, and university students and young professionals. An important outcome from this will be to raise public understanding of the importance of issues such as climate change and human rights, and inflect positive behavioural change on these topics.

In terms of content, you will focus on raising awareness of the Commonwealth as an institution, its values around human rights and democracy and its areas of focus including the environment, trade, democracy, climate change and youth. You will bring out UK-Rwanda links on these topics, aligning also to UK priorities and the themes of CHOGM in Rwanda which are: governance and the rule of law, ICT and innovation, youth, the environment and trade and investment.

Your challenge will be to create a compelling story that has relevance to the Rwandan target audiences.

Responsibilities

1. Responsible for preparing a budget for each sub-section of activity

2. Responsible for developing and implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms: a baseline study on awareness of the Commonwealth and the UK-Rwanda relationship and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the campaign as a whole
3. Responsible for building relationships with key stakeholders including the Rwandan Foreign, Youth and Education Ministries as well as Rwanda Education Board, British Council, Commonwealth Secretariat and UK Government colleagues to deliver the programme with full participation from GoR, UK Government and Commonwealth secretariat colleagues
4. Responsible for ensuring a clear programme of events and its implementation, including budget, design, staffing, logistics and monitoring, as well as problem solving and innovating where necessary
5. Responsible for designing and implementing a successful communications campaign that makes use of the main social media platforms and local influencers, and media monitoring to track coverage of the campaign. Responsible for bringing to life the objectives through case studies and a suite of assets (for social media, photographic, video and written) to do so
6. Responsible for ensuring that the target audiences take action as a result of the campaign

Description of tasks

This project will require a hands-on approach and give you significant autonomy in how you achieve the outcomes. There will be two main pillars of the campaign, split between the two audiences. For both, you will need to:

- establish a baseline amongst the target audiences on awareness of the Commonwealth and the UK-Rwanda relationship, which will be part of measuring success at the end of the campaign
- develop a clear monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the campaign
- develop a clear and comprehensive communications plan, which you will deliver through all High Commission communications platforms (Facebook, twitter, Instagram, website) as well as with local and international media
- design a clear programme of events, fully integrated with the communications plan

- develop captivating photo and video content and stories linked to the priority topics (a professional photo/videographer will be separately engaged to support this). This will involve showcasing existing UK projects (whether UK Government funded, or done by UK individuals or UK organisations) and deliver these through the communications and outreach plans

For the secondary school students, you will need to:

- develop a schools pack in English and Kinyarwanda aimed at secondary school students, working with Rwanda Education Board and the Commonwealth Secretariat
- train and enthuse teachers from the selected schools on how to use the schools pack
- develop follow-up plans for the schools using the schools pack, including a final competition in Kigali

For the university students and young professionals (18-30 years old is the target demographic) you will need to:

- develop an outreach plan for the target audience, including using social media influencers, on Twitter and Instagram; and public event(s) with broad appeal in Kigali such as concerts, street fairs etc

Aligned to this, a social media campaign to:

- get the target audience talking about the Commonwealth, the relevance it can have to their aspirations personally, professionally and for Rwanda
- galvanise the target audience to be changemakers on Commonwealth agenda items, particularly around climate change and greener living.

Reports to

Head of Political Section, British High Commission Kigali Working hours: estimated 20 hours per week.

How to apply

Please send your costed proposal to Bhavik Shah bhavik.shah@fco.gov.uk with 'Commonwealth Campaign' in the subject line. In addition to the overall proposal and cost, you should complete the excel budget template below for the activities and events you propose. Bids required by midnight 4 November.

If you have queries, please email Bhavik Shah bhavik.shah@fco.gov.uk.

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[Pushing for real implementation of women in the peace and security agenda](#)

Thank you very much, Mr President.

The UK was pleased to vote in favour of the resolution that South Africa proposed today and we are very grateful for your efforts to secure Council consensus on this resolution and the efforts of your mission.

We welcome the resolution's focus on implementation. Implementation is the United Kingdom's main priority on Women, Peace and Security as we look forward to the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325 next year. We believe that this resolution represents the final push that the Council needs to provide on implementation. From the United Kingdom's perspective, our focus should now be on delivering on the ambition of the full existing framework of Women Peace and Security resolutions, and not producing more texts.

Turning to the text itself, we endorse its confirmation of this Council's call for full – and I stress that word “full” – implementation of SCR 1325 and its encouragement of increased engagement by Member States and UN agencies, as well as increased support for civil society.

Mr President, the emphasis on full implementation – and again I stress “full” – is vital. The implementation gap is visible right the way across the Women, Peace and Security agenda; we have not seen sufficient progress in ensuring women's meaningful participation, or in increasing the number of women in peacekeeping, nor in building an effective response to conflict-related sexual violence.

In all cases, Mr President, this needs to include sexual and reproductive health services. I know that not all member states agree with this but from the perspective of the United Kingdom, SRHR and their services are a vital part of public services for women in all countries and a vital part of ensuring that women can play a truly equal role in the building of their

countries.

We welcome the resolution's support for the creation of safe and enabling environments for civil society, as well as the importance of funding, which we consider essential for organisations and individuals to carry out their work, free of interference and free from fear.

However, I have to say, Mr President that the United Kingdom was disappointed that the Council did not seize the opportunity for a resolution more ambitious in scope.

Firstly, we believe that the resolution would have broken new ground if it had included explicit language on women human rights defenders and their protection and their security. The work of women human rights defenders is essential to the functioning of democracy and the maintenance and achievement of peace.

Secondly, we regret it wasn't possible to include broader recognition of civil society's role in implementation. We talk a lot about implementation in meetings and events in New York, but civil society – especially women at the grassroots level – are responsible for making this Council's resolution a reality on the ground. They are the ones on the front lines, and they need increased recognition and support in order to effect greater and more effective change.

Thank you, Mr President.

ECNI Commissioner Extensions

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Rt. Hon Julian Smith MP has extended the appointments of four members of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

The terms of office of Eileen Chan-Hu, Duane Farrell, Helen Ferguson and Jarlath Kearney have been extended for a three month period ending on 28 February 2020.

Notes to Editors:

The extensions are part of a long term strategy announced in 2018 by the then Secretary of State to introduce a more staggered approach to future appointments and improve business continuity. A competition is underway to recruit a number of new Commissioners who will take up office from 1 March 2020.

Biographies of Appointees

Biographies can be found at:

<https://www.equalityni.org/HeaderLinks/About-Us/Our-structure>

Terms of Appointment

The positions are part-time. The position of Commissioner attracts an annual remuneration of £5,000. These positions are non-pensionable.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories within the last five years to be made public. Eileen Chan-Hu stood at the local council elections in 2014 as a NI21 candidate and Jarlath Kearney is a former Sinn Fein party member and Special Advisor.