Global Action Network for Transparency in the Supply Chain (GANTSCh) Program

An Introduction

GRI initiated the first phase of the Global Action Network for Transparency in the Supply Chain (GANTSCh) Program in 2009. The Program builds capacity among companies in supply chains to measure and report their sustainability performance. The GANTSCh Program supports small and medium enterprises, but is not limited to this group. Now expanded in scope, the Program also builds sustainability reporting capacity for members of business and industry associations – helping to improve economic and sustainability performance in local and sectoral business groups.

In recent years leading companies have developed codes of ethics and implemented top-down supply chain programs to manage sustainability risks and optimize supplier performance. Despite some successes achieved by these programs, many companies have learned that top-down Supply Chain Management (SCM) approaches have limited potential for achieving sustainable supply chains.

To complement top-down initiatives, large companies are increasingly looking for tools that support a more collaborative bottom-up approach with suppliers, in order to:

- Build capacity
- Foster commitment to sustainability
- Improve performance and risk management
- Improve the flow of reliable sustainability information from supplier to buyer

Sustainability reporting has emerged as an important tool within an overall SCM strategy. The GANTSCh Program was created in response to interest from multinationals seeking to apply sustainability reporting in their SCM strategy, and build collaborative relationships between buyers and suppliers around the reporting process.

Suppliers can proactively communicate their efforts, performance, and goals through a GRI sustainability report, enabling continuous improvement and closer engagement with buyers. Companies in business or industry associations can improve their sustainability performance, fostering a more stable and profitable climate for local and sectoral business groups.
Objectives of the GANTSCh Program

The Program develops reporting capacity within groups of first-time reporting companies, fostering responsible management and transparency regarding economic, environmental, social and governance impacts.

The GANTSCh Program achieves this by enabling participating companies to:
- Recognize the global and local sustainability context
- Identify how sustainability factors impact their business and vice versa
- Build a business case for sustainability management and reporting
- Measure sustainability performance
- Use reporting as a catalyst for internal change
- Recognize how and why to report externally on sustainability performance

For multinationals, the GANTSCh Program allows buyer and supplier to collaborate closely and establish a shared understanding of sustainability management and reporting. This shared understanding, and the embedding of stakeholder engagement throughout the process, stimulates dialogue about each party’s strengths, challenges and needs.

Developing a GANTSCh Project

GRI’s capacity building projects are built on two components, with a total duration of approximately 12 months. These components introduce sustainability reporting to the first-time reporters - including its role in sustainability management - and guide them through the reporting process. They also provide an opportunity for GRI’s collaborating partner – multinational, business or industry association – to work with its suppliers or members to develop a common understanding of reporting, and how it can be used in their supply chain relationships. The two components are:

1. GRI Certified SME Training for first-time reporters
   GRI ensures that all participating suppliers receive 16 hours Certified Training that covers GRI’s five-phase reporting methodology. The training introduces sustainability reporting and walks the participants through the process of preparing a report. Representatives from the initiating multinational are welcome to attend this training. The Certified Training is designed around GRI’s Let’s Report learning publication, which suppliers use throughout the program to guide them towards a basic GRI Level C Report.
2. **Coaching and support**

Following the GRI Certified Training, coaching and support is provided by local sustainability consultants. Participants are offered a number of workshops and a final meeting that coincide with the timing of preparing a sustainability report. The workshops occur between the five phases of GRI’s training methodology, closing the previous phase and kick-starting the next (see diagram below). Each phase requires suppliers to complete and document certain tasks, like identifying and engaging their stakeholders. Over the course of the project, participants incrementally produce their GRI Level C report.

Each supplier is supported with a concluding meeting to finalize the report. The sequence of workshops enables participants to share experiences, learn from each other, and build a common understanding of sustainability and reporting in the supply chain context.

In addition to workshops, participants receive telephone and email support throughout the 12 month period. The timeline below details the coaching process.

![GRI's five-phase reporting process timeline](image)

The Program is built upon the following GRI-developed material:

- G3.1 Guidelines
- A practical “how to” handbook for first-time reporters
- Basic Level C reporting template
- GRI Certified Training Material for first-time reporters

This material is distributed to all participating suppliers and used for the duration of the project. For the coaching support component, GRI provides the sustainability consultants with workshop lesson plans and content.
Participating in the GANTSCh Program

The GANTSCh Program is perfect for large multinationals with complex supply chains and a strong commitment to establishing sustainable supply chain practice. The program also benefits companies in business and industry associations, meeting member needs for sustainability management and transparency. All participating organizations should understand the important role sustainability reporting plays in sustainable development, and be committed to pushing this agenda.

The benefits. By participating in the Program, large multinationals can:

- Improve long-term relationships and better understand supplier needs and processes
- Identify risks or performance gaps at supplier level
- Learn from other large organizations and experts about approaches to sustainable supply chain management
- Complement top-down auditing strategies with collaborative bottom-up capacity building strategies

Business and industry associations can:

- Improve the sustainability performance of member companies
- Respond effectively to member needs for sustainability management and transparency
- Help improve job creation, stability and economic performance in local or sectoral groups of companies

All participants in the GANTSCh Program:

- Gain logo recognition on the main GANTSCh homepage, and visibility through other communications channels like research publications and online newsletters
- Gain networking opportunities by attending GANTSCH Program events, for example during the GRI Conference and at the GANTSCh annual network meeting

Participating in the GANTSCh Program allows your organization to play a central role in a global network of organizations committed to sustainable supply chains, collaboration, and sustainability reporting. The Global Action Network is a forum where your organization can share its efforts and initiatives in sustainable supply chain management, and sustainability in general. The forum promotes knowledge transfer between industries, regions, and large and small companies. By associating with GRI through sponsorship and participation in the GANTSCh Program, your organization demonstrates to stakeholders that its long-term sustainability strategy is backed up by action, investing in our common vision of a sustainable global economy.

Join GRI in the Global Action Network: smeandsupplychain@globalreporting.org