BUSINESS CALL TO ACTION
“This is about exploring and developing innovative business models that are economically viable and good for development. If we all take action we can make a difference.”

-Indra Nooyi, CEO, PepsiCo

“Good business is consistent with a sensible development approach for societies.”

-Tom Glocer, CEO, Thomson Reuters
Businesses are engines of growth and sustainable development. Whether through trade, manufacturing, investment or innovation, businesses can help to improve the lives of people by creating decent jobs and enhancing access to goods and services for the poor while generating profitable business opportunities for companies.
WHAT IS IT?
Launched in 2008, the Business Call to Action (BCtA) aims to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by challenging companies to develop inclusive business models that offer the potential for development impact along with commercial success.

Companies participating in the BCtA make commitments to adapt business models and apply core competencies in innovative ways that help to both improve the lives of poor people and contribute to business sustainability.

The BCtA’s credibility and value-added stem from its ability to: (i) recognize, validate and disseminate meaningful results, (ii) provide business development assistance and (iii) facilitate linkages between companies, donors and other key stakeholders. Having a viable business initiative widely promoted and even replicated can yield tremendous benefits for a company’s reputation and market value.

Over the next five years, BCtA company initiatives are expected to create thousands of jobs and benefit millions of poor people in all parts of the world. The initiatives will enable poor people to access information, finance and business expertise, and create new businesses and employment opportunities.
WHO IS INVOLVED?
Participants in the BCtA include both multinational and national companies committed to contributing to development solutions through their core business activities.

The BCtA is supported by international partners including:

- the United Nations Development Programme,
- the United Nations Global Compact,
- the British Government,
- the Australian Government,
- the Clinton Global Initiative,
- the International Business Leaders Forum.
WHY JOIN?
By joining the BCtA, companies benefit from access to:

A High-Visibility Leadership Platform

- Association with a global brand that represents leadership, impact and innovation, and which is supported by respected international organizations and governments.
- Opportunities to profile company initiatives through participation in high-level communication and media activities.
- Interaction with leaders from business, government and civil society.

A Community of Practice

- Access to international practitioners with expertise on how to integrate inclusive models into core business activities.
- Opportunities to share knowledge and good practice through learning activities and regional events.
- Validation and dissemination of the results of company initiatives in national, regional and international fora.

Support for Initiative Development

- Strategic assistance in identifying and developing BCtA company initiatives.
- Facilitation of operational linkages with key stakeholders from business, government and civil society.
- Advice on developing results measurement frameworks that capture development impacts.
**HOW TO JOIN?**

Companies are invited to submit initiatives that support the implementation of the MDGs while being a profitable and sustainable part of core business strategy. Company initiatives shall contribute to economic growth and poverty eradication in developing countries, and shall possess goals that are quantifiable in both business and development terms.

To submit an initiative, a company sends a template to the BCtA Secretariat (email: amanda.gardiner@undp.org) describing its intended initiative in terms of: location and type of activity; link to core business; targets; and expected business and development impacts. Initiatives are then reviewed and approved by BCtA representatives. Where appropriate, the Secretariat and partners may help a company to refine its submission before approval.

More information, including an initiative template, can be found at: [www.businesscalltoaction.org](http://www.businesscalltoaction.org).
CRITERIA FOR COMPANY INITIATIVES

BCtA company initiatives are:

1. **Able to generate economic and development benefits, such as:**
   - significant new employment opportunities in developing countries,
   - local supply chain and enterprise development,
   - innovations and/or technologies that support enterprise development or environmental management,
   - access to goods or services in previously underserved markets.

2. **Clearly linked to the company’s core business**
The initiative should be part of the core competencies of the company and sustainable within the business. It should not purely be a philanthropic or social investment activity. It should also not be a one-off activity, but should be scalable and replicable within a given market or across new markets.

3. **Incorporate a fresh approach to business for the company**
The initiative should enable the company to access and serve markets in ways not previously achieved. It can represent a pilot, an expansion or an acceleration of transformative business activities and operations. It should not be a long-standing, mainstream business activity of the company that is re-submitted to the BCtA without any added value. Initiatives that continue an established way of working without generating increased benefits to developing countries would not qualify under BCtA.

4. **Able to generate measurable results**
The initiative should have SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound) objectives. Companies will be requested to provide regular reports on the progress of their initiatives, including appropriate quantitative and qualitative data.
PARTNERS

“The BCtA is a landmark opportunity for global business leaders to come together to develop new and innovative ways to spread growth, prosperity and opportunity across the world.”

Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

“As we chart our course in this century, we are confronted with significant global challenges. BCtA recognizes that the private sector has a vital role to play in transforming these challenges into opportunities.”

Bill Clinton, Founder of the Clinton Global Initiative and Former President of the United States

“The BCtA is about harnessing the business sector’s dynamism to help developing countries realize their business potential. I urge companies to become involved in this initiative.”

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia
“The BCtA provides the platform for global business leaders to explore new market opportunities that will make ending poverty a part of their day-to-day activities.”

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator and Former Prime Minister of New Zealand

“Through the BCtA, we must bring attention and scale to practical business solutions that can greatly benefit both economies and societies.”

Georg Kell, Executive Director of the UN Global Compact

“I hope the BCtA encourages more companies to pioneer innovative new approaches to developing, distributing and selling products and services in developing countries.”

Adam Leach, CEO of the International Business Leaders Forum
“This Call to Action can get people to focus on practical and sustainable investments, building economic and social capacity in developing countries. That’s the value here.”
-Bill Gates, Chairman, Microsoft

“When consumers are given an opportunity to consume and participate, they will.”
-Arun Sarin, CEO, Vodafone