San José, Costa Rica, November 26, 2012. The launching event was held in San José, Costa Rica in coordination with Paniamor (local representation of Save the Children) and the Association of Entrepreneurs for Development (local representation of Global Compact). Entrepreneurs, government institutions, NGOs, international organizations and youth participated in a discussion and joint reflection on the expected role of the private sector when it comes to the promotion of child and youth rights.

Mrs. Tanya Chapuisat, UNICEF Representative, Mr. Manuel Grynspan, President Board of Directors Global Compact Costa Rica, Mrs. Milena Grillo, Paniamor Director and Mr. Arturo Condo, INCAE Business School Rector opened the event reiterating the importance of the private sector as a key stakeholder when it comes to the promotion and protection of children and youth rights.

Prior to the event, youth were given the possibility of expressing their opinion on the matter and the results of this consultation were presented by the youth themselves at the event. A total of 95 of youths participated in the process, 61% from schools and the remaining 39% coming from civil organizations. As part of the process a video was made to provide suggestions to the private sector. Proposals include such statements as:

- No to child labor.
- Companies advertising should be responsible.
- Companies need to relate to the communities in which they work, with the people who live here, who know what is happening.
- We want companies to take into account our view to improve and for all people to have the same rights.
- We can provide: a lot of energy, commitment, new ideas, knowledge, fellowship, support and effort, cooperation, hard work, enthusiasm, willingness, energy.

The video of the consultation can be seen at the following link:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j724xXOws-k
by Dr. Miguel Gutiérrez, Director of State of the Nation Program made a presentation on “Children, Youth and the State of the Nation.” This was then followed by a presentation on the 1st Principle by Dr. Arturo Condo, Dean of INCAE Business School.

Following the presentations, all present (which included representatives from the banking, tourism, telecommunications, advertising, mass media and retail sectors) were lead through a discussion on the 9 remaining Principles on the below three questions:

1. What could currently be done to accomplish the particular business principle?
2. Should the require technical support be provided, what could be done to meet this business principle?
3. What could be done to accomplish this business principle if there were a legal framework or national policy in place?

The discussion also included a weighting of the importance of all the principles based on two criteria: urgency of action and the capacity of the private sector to respond to it.

There was general agreement on the fact that there are responsibilities and actions that can be undertaken by the private sector, each within their particular areas of specialization. Also there is need for technical assistance in order to build capacity on issues related to children’s rights. Corporate sector participants recognized that there is a legal framework related to the issue of children’s rights but sometimes is not clear on how it should be implemented and that there needs to be further enforcement.

Generally, participants expressed interest in following up on the issue of Children Rights and Business Principles with actions such as receiving information, seeking technical assistance, learning about good practices. As part of following up, a second event is planned for March 2013, to keep the dialogue alive and advocate for the implementation of the principles.
Mr Miguel Gutierrez during his conference “Child, Youths and the State of the Nation”

Youths presenting the results of the consultation process previously developed: María de la Paz Brenes, Darío Gómez, Melissa Vargas and Karina Logan.

Mrs Yuriko Yasukawa – Resident Coordinator of United Nations System and Mr Miguel Gutiérrez participated on the discussion group on principle 7, along with representatives of the retail, tourism and communications sectors.
Discussion group of principle 7: Marcela Angulo, Repretel, Daniel Villafranca – Facilitator, Andrea Aguilar – EPA Hardware Store (retail chain), Goretti Danobettia – Telefónica (telecommunications), Elsa Bonilla – Península Papagayo (Tourism) and Miguel Gutiérrez – State of the Nation Program.

Discussion group of principle 4. Among others Steven Chinchilla – Hotel Barcelo San Jose Palacio (Tourism), Miguel Tello – Stratchan Foundation, Mauren Monte – Banco de Costa Rica (Banking), Lidia Araya – Mercado de Valores (Trade) and Silvia Lara – Facilitator (second from right to left)

NGOS representatives from World Vision, Museo de los Niños (Children Museum), Fundación Rescatando Vidas (Rescuing Lives Foundation, and Cosecodeni acting as observers and also discussing general issues on the Business Principles.