

# Private Sector Advisory Group

## Help us design the world's first truly open Global Beneficial Ownership Register

The business case for beneficial ownership transparency – knowing who you are doing business with – has been increasingly [articulated and supported by a range of companies and business leaders](#), including some companies that are leading by example on these issues, building trust and credibility in the process. The business case reflects a current challenge for business: the sheer difficulty of working out who they are doing business with in globalised supply chains.<sup>1</sup> As governments make commitments to collect and publish information on company ownership<sup>2</sup>, it is important that companies can access this information and compare across jurisdictions. The Global Beneficial Ownership Register will tackle this, by collecting and linking together beneficial ownership datasets and self-disclosed corporate data to enable companies and investors to more easily see who they are really doing business with. It will also provide an opportunity for companies to distinguish themselves as leaders in transparency and openness by disclosing their own ownership on the platform.

Business is a core user group for the register in two ways:

- **Data Users:** As more countries implement public registers of beneficial ownership information, business will be able to use the register to start due diligence processes by having access to information from multiple jurisdictions.
- **Data Providers:** In addition, companies can use the register to ensure that accurate information about their ownership is in the public domain, and to ensure that any suppliers they work with also disclose their ownership by putting it on the register. This also allows companies to benefit from the network effects of having other actors scrutinise the information submitted by their suppliers.

### WHAT >>

From October 2016–March 2017, the minimum viable product (pilot) of the Global Register will be developed. We invite you to join a **Private Sector Advisory Group** to help ensure that business needs are front and center in the development of the register. This group will:

- Provide input into business user needs to inform platform development;
- Test the platform as business users seeking information for due diligence;
- Test the platform as businesses submitting data or asking suppliers to submit data;
- Contribute to policy discussions on the design of the register (e.g. country pilots);
- Contribute to outreach and discussion with other private sector actors.

The group will meet around 3 times via phone and will participate in testing between meetings. See below for more information on the Global Register.

**CONTACT >>** To confirm your participation please contact May Miller-Dawkins, The B Team, [mmd@bteam.org](mailto:mmd@bteam.org)

<sup>1</sup> For example, see the case studies in Chancing It: How secret company ownership is a risk to investors. <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/reports/chancing-it/>.

<sup>2</sup> Over 100 countries have made commitments to collect this information in some form, with a leading group of countries committing to public registers.

## WHY A GLOBAL REGISTER? >>

The scale of global corruption and money laundering has been estimated to be somewhere between US\$1.6 trillion and US\$2 trillion<sup>3</sup>. According to World Bank research, 70% of grand corruption cases used anonymous companies to launder money.<sup>4</sup> In the wake of G20, G8, EU Anti-Money Laundering, Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, and London Anti-Corruption Summit commitments, more and more countries are announcing national registers of beneficial ownership, and more and more are making these public and open.

However, progress is still uneven, and there is a high risk that the registers will not achieve their full potential due to both gaps in public beneficial ownership information (due to some countries not making the data public), and due to beneficial ownership data being siloed – unlinked to other beneficial ownership and relevant data.

The Global Register proposes to respond to this challenge. This register would aggregate information from forthcoming statutory public open-data registers such as those proposed by the UK, France, the Netherlands, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, EITI countries, and others, together with data from other public registers, self-disclosed data by socially responsible companies, and data required as a condition of procurement by international financial institutions, national procurement bodies and private sector companies.

This register will also serve to create links with government data such as budgets, public contracts, and spending to enable a more open and accountable government. Public contracting is an important example for this link, in which bringing open contracting data and beneficial ownership information together will make clear who wins public contracts, for how much and whether those services were actually delivered. This can help reduce corruption in public procurement, increasing the openness and competitiveness of procurement markets, and helping to ensure the social license of companies that contribute significantly to public finances such as extractives companies.

For business, the Global Register has the potential to serve three purposes:

- **Position a company as a leader in transparency and build trust** by providing a place to globally disclose ownership information.
- **Reduce the complexity and costs of due diligence** by providing an increasingly useful cross-jurisdictional site to search for ownership information and compare listings across jurisdictions. This will not obviate the need for further due diligence, but it can reduce the costs. This will become increasingly true as more countries implement public, central registers that can be connected to the global register.
- **Strengthen supply chain due diligence** by requiring suppliers to disclose their ownership on the global register. This data can then be easily checked with relevant jurisdictions. Companies can also benefit from the network effect of other actors checking on the accuracy of disclosed ownership and highlighting potential risks.

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/ag/speeches/2014/ag-speech-140429.html> and <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/money-laundering/globalization.html>

<sup>4</sup> Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative Puppet Masters: how the corrupt use legal structures to hide stolen assets and what to do about it (2011)

## WHO IS DEVELOPING THE GLOBAL REGISTER? >>

This register is being developed by a consortium of organisations committed to beneficial ownership transparency:

- [OpenCorporates](#)
- [Transparency International](#)
- [Open Contracting Partnership](#)
- [The B Team](#)
- [World Wide Web Foundation](#)
- [Global Witness](#)
- [ONE](#)

The minimum viable product is being developed with funding from the UK Department for International Development.

The Register will be open access, hosted by OpenCorporates. Some mock ups appear below to give an indicative sense of how the register will look and function.

WHOCONTROLSIT Bringing transparency to company ownership

RESEARCH > Companies > United Kingdom

ABC Services Ltd

Incorporated in UK on 3 March 2009

is controlled via majority of shares by:

- Joe Wilson

is controlled via majority of voting rights by:

- Joe Wilson

REPORT A PROBLEM WITH THIS DATA

Partners: opencorporates, WORLD WIDE WEB FOUNDATION, Open Contracting Partnership, TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, THE B TEAM, global witness

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WHOCONTROLSIT Bringing transparency to company ownership

SEARCH RESULTS

ABC Service

348 results found

- ABC Service Ltda | United Kingdom, 10 May 2011 | Ultimately controlled by Peter Wilson
- ABC Service Inc. | Florida(US) 3 April 1995 | Ultimately controlled by Greg Clinton
- ABC Service SA | Luxembourg, 22 June 2010 | Not a transparent company
- ABC UK Service Solutions Ltda | United Kingdom, 10 May 2011 | Ultimately controlled by Jennie Pearson, George Harbert
- ABC Testing Services | France, 30 August 1996 | Ultimately controlled by Peter Pedersen
- LIBRE SERVICE ABC | Quebec(Canada), 4 November 1992 | Not a transparent company

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WHOCONTROLSIT Bringing transparency to company ownership

ADD INFORMATION

ABC Services Ltd., Incorporated in UK on 3 March 2009

How control is exercised (choose one)

Shareholding: Percentage of Shares

Voting Rights: Share Class

Nominee: Number of Shares

Trust: Notes

Directors

Other

INSTRUCTIONS

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SUBMIT

Partners: opencorporates, WORLD WIDE WEB FOUNDATION, Open Contracting Partnership, TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, THE B TEAM, global witness

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