Lead Partner – IDIS
The seminar was directed to corporate executives and professionals, from areas of marketing, communication, corporate affairs and community relations; executives and fund raising professionals from non profit organisations and social entrepreneurs. As the main guest speaker at their conference, one of my focus areas was “The importance of the Global Partner Network to help deliver action on the ground and address the Global Challenges we face”. With around 200 attendees (70% were representatives from companies, corporate foundations and institutes, and 30% were representatives from Civil Society organizations) the seminar was a very informative event for the Corporate and Civil Society organizations.

GPN Partners Fringe Meeting London – Feb 14, 2008
With representation from over 15 Partner organizations that comprise the Partner Advisory Group, the conference turned out to be a successful and much needed event to start taking the network to the next level. All partners agreed on the great potential in developing the network further in terms of their own commitments and practical engagement. In terms of future opportunities, the following points were considered important: Learning, Sharing, Partnerships, Thought Leadership, Coalescing around an issue/agenda/geography, and Financial Sustainability. Some of the topics discussed during the meeting included: the GPN history, purpose, and future ambition (including mission & vision statements); GPN existing situation; Partnership requisites and agreements; Corporate Sponsors; Constitution and Governance; Web and Brand development; Roles and Responsibilities; etc. The meeting was convened by BITC.

GPN Networking Dialogue Mexico – Feb 26, 2008
Lead Partner – CEMEFI
With representation from about 40 companies (national) and people from the media, this meeting was a successful network meeting. The dialogue during the meeting focused more on how we could engage and encourage medium – small companies to incorporate Corporate Citizenship (CC) within their operations and how we could share best practices from countries which have a more developed approach in dealing with CC. My presentation was followed by a good Q&A session and there was good participation from the corporate representative present. The focus was on how businesses had to understand that CC was not about philanthropy but had to be linked with the business to make it sustainable. I also had a prime time live radio interview on their main station the following day.

Seeing is Believing (SIB) Bangalore, India – Apr 17-19, 2008 (Event)
Lead Partners – Partners in Change, Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and Indian Institute of Management (Bangalore)
The SIB programme is designed as a fact-finding opportunity for board level and senior business leaders, interested in finding out how community issues impact on their core business activities. A total of ten business delegates five from the UK and five from India participated in the event, including Tata Consultancy Services.

The SIB visit in Bangalore highlighted projects and examples of ways in which businesses have already made a difference, offering an insight into the mutual benefits for both the businesses and the communities. Rather than focusing on short term support for the projects that delegates visit, the SIB aims to provide an introduction to the issues and possible solutions.
India provides tremendous opportunity for business but recent media have also shown the possible risks of being seen as an irresponsible business. The SIB gives business an opportunity to:

- Gain insights into sustainable outsourcing and off-shoring.
- Share experience with Indian and UK companies
- Understand business benefits of effective partnerships in India
- Gain insights into socio-cultural and community aspects of doing business in India.
- Share experience on employability, recruitment, retention and talent development

The focus of the event was to understand how businesses can make an impact on the issues facing the community and people at the lower end of the supply chain. The aim of the programme was to ensure that corporate social responsibility is recognised as an integral part of successful business behaviour, and remains so with the next generation of business leaders.

The programme offered the opportunity for senior business leaders to experience key social issues first hand such as disability, children and women affected with HIV/AIDS and education for the underprivileged children, as well as offering a snap-shot of a range of programmes and initiatives with which businesses can engage with.

The SIB in Bangalore was also an opportunity for business delegates to encounter first hand the cultural and social context in which businesses operate and how the understanding of the business social context can be leveraged to enhance sustainability of the businesses and its supply chain.

**GPN Networking Dialogue Vietnam – July 8, 2008**

**Lead Partners – Global Standards and Business Office for Sustainable Development**

This was led by Lord Michael Hastings, International Director of Corporate Citizenship at KPMG and had representation from National/International Businesses, NGOs, Charities, Academics and the national media, the meeting in Vietnam was a ground breaking event for all those present. The discussion had a very positive focus on University Education for the future business health of Vietnam and then proceeded quite deeply into how to protect the culture of Vietnam as its economy booms and young grads rush towards corporate/business jobs. All the NGOs shared the feeling that the social fabric in Vietnam is creaking and families are suffering. The group had committed to reconvening and focusing on the issues that had to tackle and possibly formulate a solid action plan.

**GPN Networking Dialogue Moscow – July 18, 2008**

**Lead Partner – The Russian Partnership (IBLF)**

This was led by Lord Michael Hastings and myself. The meeting had good representation from the Governmental Organisations, National Corporate Sector, MNCs, NGOs and academic institutions. Being an issue focused discussion the aim of this meeting was to exchange views on the current state of Corporate Responsibility in Russia. During the meeting, leading representatives of companies, NGOs and governmental organisations discussed the extent to which responsible business practices have taken hold in Russia, and how business can make a significant contribution to some of the most critical social issues facing Russia today. Apart from the prevalent sceptical attitude towards CSR type issues in Russia, the group accepted and agreed that this was very likely to change in the near future, and they showed a lot of interest in the developments of CSR related initiatives in other countries.

**GPN Networking Dialogue Tokyo – Sept 12, 2008**

**Lead Partner – IEC**

This was led by Lord Michael Hastings and myself. The meeting had representation from one of our other Corporate Sponsors – Masahiko Kaji, President, Tata Consultancy Services Japan. Other participants included - Akira Kiyota, Chairman, Daiwa Securities Group Inc.; Makoto Fujii, CEO, IEC; Cavaliere Prof. Marco Nakamura, IEC; Tomoyuki Yamanaka, Director Communications and Citizenship, KPMG AZSA & Co; and Hidemi Tomita, CSR Director, SONY. We were hosted by the Chairman of Daiwa Securities who had gracefully accepted to use his offices for the meeting. The level of active engagement into Social and Environmental issues came across as a pleasant surprise. The meeting was mainly focused on the CSR in Japan, and we also had some discussions around
Daiwa Securities experiences from their initiatives. Everyone attending was very interested in the GPN and what we do and were also very supportive of our future plans.

**GPN Networking Dialogue Vancouver – Oct 22, 2008**

**Lead Partner – Canadian Business for Social Responsibility (CBSR)**

This dialogue session mainly focused around - the collaboration of CBSR with the GPN and BiTC; the CSR trends, challenges and best practices within Canada; CBSR’s ‘Seeing is Believing (SIB)’ programme, and it’s potential in comparison to the International SIBs. The CBSR Leadership were very complimentary about BiTC and their partnership with the GPN. They also plan on franchising some of the ‘Business Action on Homlessness’ programmes rolled out by BiTC for implementation in Canada. It was a good opportunity for us to introduce them to the KPMG leadership in Canada, to engage in more initiatives in collaboration with KPMG in the future.

**Seeing is Believing (SIB) Chennai, India – Nov 26-28, 2008 (Future Event)**

**Lead Partner – Business and Community Foundation**

The SIB which is currently being planned for in Chennai will run in a similar format as the one conducted in Bangalore. However, this SIB will focus on ‘Ethical Sourcing and Responsible Supply Chain’. I am delighted that the event will be led by Mr Ramadorai, the Global CEO of Tata Consultancy Services and, I am sure will prove to be another successful event to be rolled out by the GPN partners.