

Fujitsu Goes Global with SDG Communities Rollout

Thought Leadership Article

Sarah-Jane Littleford, Head of Responsible Business: Global Delivery, at Fujitsu

*As head of Responsible Business for Fujitsu's Global Delivery business, Sarah-Jane leads its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Following a successful pilot, Fujitsu is rolling out the **SDG Communities** 絆 project to more than 17,000 employees worldwide, including employees at eight Global Delivery hubs.*

Fujitsu employees form communities, share knowledge and ideas focusing on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and bring a sense of responsible business into what they do every day. Employees pick one or more of the SDGs that they feel personally passionate about, join a virtual global community – an SDG Community – and start collaborating with colleagues across the world to contribute to a common cause.

It was an immensely proud moment for me when Fujitsu completed the rollout of the SDG Communities 絆 project across our eight Global Delivery hubs. I'm now one of more than 17,000 Fujitsu employees who is helping to make a positive change for people and society.

This initiative started as an idea just a few months ago and underlines just how committed Fujitsu is to deliver on the purpose of making the world more sustainable, working with and through employees to achieve that.

We created SDG Communities 絆 based on the Fujitsu purpose. This is something we introduced last year, to help our people and customers understand what we do and why we do it. Fujitsu's purpose is to make the world more sustainable by building trust in society through innovation. The introduction of SDG Communities 絆 makes this more tangible, more real, and shows people they can make a positive difference.

We incorporated the Japanese kanji characters for the word Kizuna, which means a bond or social connection and is usually used to refer to long-lasting, strong relationships. This not only highlights our Japanese heritage that is very important to Fujitsu, but also emphasizes what we are trying to achieve through this project – connection.

The UN SDGs set some massive goals – aiming to improve outcomes for people across the world. We use the SDGs to enable employees to bring

their whole selves to work and concentrate on the things they are passionate about. As a result, we believe that our people are healthier, happier, and more productive at work.

SDG Communities 絆 give projects a purpose, make them more tangible and more real for our employees. It's essential for each of our employees, no matter if they're a service desk agent or an engineer or someone from human resources, to feel they can personally make a positive difference to the world by being an employee of Fujitsu.

The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals

We do this by working through the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These are really big, ambitious goals that focus on improving outcomes for everyone across the world. They tackle huge topics like poverty, gender equality, and climate change. Within each SDG, these goals are broken down into much more achievable targets.

We have combined the SDGs and the Fujitsu purpose to enable our employees to bring their whole selves to work, including what they are passionate about outside of work. They can now think about and deliver on these while they're at work as well. We believe that will help deliver on Fujitsu's purpose and help our employees feel healthier, happier, and more productive at work.

The SDG Communities 絆 are global virtual communities centered around the specific topics of each SDG. When an employee joins one of our SDG Communities 絆, they're entering a ready-made community of people across the world who share very similar passions, ideals, and objectives. They also share their knowledge, and they learn from each other. They come together in very diverse communities to innovate and come up with exciting new potential. Employees can join one Community on Yammer, or they can join more than one. It depends on each employee's passions and preferences, so it's very much a self-led initiative. As head of Responsible Business, I've joined all 17.

One of the great things about SDG Communities 絆 is that people see goals like "no poverty" and wonder: how can I, as an individual, tackle global poverty? By bringing people together in these bigger groups, people gain a sense of moving forward as a bigger group, learning from each other, and breaking the problem down into smaller, more

manageable chunks. You must start somewhere, and an excellent example of this has been happening in our 'SDG 2 Zero Hunger' group in Portugal. Someone shared an initiative in Portugal where you can distribute fruit that's not been sold to people with low incomes. Many people jumped on that and have helped the program by sharing information on what's available locally to our Global Delivery locations in Lisbon and Braga.

When we first proposed the idea, everyone loved it. Of course, we did see some caution when it came to how much paid time we would give to enable employees to focus on this, because of course, that all plays into our budgets. But we reached a resolution that strikes a fair balance between efficiency and contributing to society. We provide paid time for our Enablers within the SDG Communities | 絆. These are the people who take on a larger role as facilitators, and as evangelists.

Building up talent within our organization

For Fujitsu, this is also an investment. Besides paid time, we have created a set of digital identities for people to show their affiliation with their chosen Community on their internal profile picture and their badge. We've also developed a specific talent management scheme for our junior talent. We ask junior employees to become an Enabler, which gives them access to a specially designed learning pathway focusing on virtual team management, communications, and project management. That way, we help them build up talent related to the topic they are passionate about and develop as talent within our organization, which also means they're going to be a more valuable asset in the future.

The feedback we've received has been very positive. People tell us they've appreciated the opportunity to talk about the things they're passionate about and find out about the SDGs – not everyone was aware of them, so the SDG Communities | 絆 have created widespread awareness within Fujitsu of the focus on our purpose. People across our global business have appreciated the opportunity to connect with people they otherwise never would have spoken to in support of a common cause. Finding these shared connections across our global organization creates the sense of a community, of being a Fujitsu employee with a purpose, and being able to deliver on that purpose.

The SDG Communities | 絆 are by no means the first CSR-focused initiative in Fujitsu Global Delivery. Our overarching program is called Responsible Business, and it's active around the world. It focuses on the local communities in each area where we have a Global Delivery presence. We place a great deal of importance on community collaboration mainly through educational outreach, on our employees' wellbeing, on having inclusive and enabled workforce, and the environmental impact of our operations and our services.

SDG Communities | 絆 has shifted our CSR focus from local to global

The Responsible Business program is mature and focused on increasing positive outcomes. One huge impact from SDG Communities | 絆 is that it has shifted the focus from being very localized to a global perspective. In the past, our teams focused on what we could do in Poland or in the

Philippines, which is excellent for action-based approaches. But we were missing the global initiative. SDG Communities | 絆 is focused on learning and sharing, giving our people the chance to develop really interesting ideas by giving them the space for complete innovation, and dreaming up things they don't usually have room for in their day job. SDG Communities | 絆 offers us an opportunity for employees with entirely different backgrounds and completely different lives to come together and create something that we otherwise never would have expected.

I get asked a lot about what success looks like for Fujitsu in terms of key performance indicators. In terms of numbers, we aim for 30% participation from each of our Global Delivery locations. This is based on Malcolm Gladwell's 'Tipping Point' principle. On top of that, I want to see employees engaging with us and using the SDG Communities | 絆 to create a sense of organizational identity. This starts with things like using a digital identity in their email signatures, kicking off conversations with customers and partners.

I've signed up for all 17 Communities on Yammer. The one I've chosen to use as my digital identity is SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals". I think partnerships are crucial for achieving any of the other 16 SDGs. These are not something that any single actor can do on their own. They're too big. To reach them, we need to work together to bring people, Governments, non-governmental actors and industries together from right across the spectrum. The only way we'll make a long-term sustained difference is when we put our specific expertise together.

For example, if we could partner with the United Nations and the Greek government to find a way of maintaining a secure database of the health records of refugees who are currently on Greek islands, then it would be a great example of reaching SDG 17. It's also an inspiration in terms of how society could help refugees in the long term.

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Sarah-Jane Littleford is Head of Responsible Business at Fujitsu Global Delivery. In this role, she develops strategies that deliver on the Fujitsu Purpose: to make the world more sustainable by building trust in society through innovation. Sarah-Jane works with teams across eight worldwide locations where Fujitsu Global Delivery operates, covering 15,000 employees. The focus of the Responsible Business Program is collaborating with local community partners to have a positive impact on the environment and in society. Sarah-Jane has a DPhil in Geography & The Environment from the University of Oxford, where her research was supported by the Rhodes Scholarship.

