



# Geneva Social Observatory Activity Report

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Fourth Quarter  
December 2008

## Mission

The Geneva Social Observatory (GSO) was established in Geneva, Switzerland in 2004 as a non-profit association. The aim of the GSO is to provide a neutral setting for dialogue on pressing social issues, such as HIV/AIDS and social responsibility, diabetes and social responsibility, and corporate social responsibility and trade. In order to have substantive discussions on these issues, the GSO believes that multiple points of view should be consulted, which is why representatives from the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, academia, governments and international intergovernmental organizations are invited to take part in the GSO meetings and events.

## Activity Report

This activity report is developed on a quarterly basis for the Friends of the GSO, who support the Observatory through donations, sponsorship of specific projects, in-kind support, and/or participation in GSO events.

## Diabetes and Social Responsibility

### Programme Update

The Forum to Adopt and Implement a Workplace Strategy on Diabetes and Wellness was convened at the International Labour Organization in Geneva on 25 September 2008. The Forum concluded with the formal adoption of the workplace strategy document by participants with an outline of approaches to implement it with specific adaptations proposed for Africa and Asia. The GSO website carries a full [report](#) of the Forum along with [photographs](#), [presentations](#) and [supporting documents](#).

Following the Forum, the GSO has been busy developing project proposals for field projects in Eastern Europe and in sub-Saharan Africa. We have also been in contact with a number of potential supporters with a view to taking the Workplace Strategy into different settings. As a result MSD / Merck has offered an unrestricted grant in 2009 that would allow the GSO to undertake workshops in Eastern Europe. The countries being looked at are Poland, Turkey and the Russian Federation. It is proposed that the GSO identify partners in the three countries, cost out the logistics for the events and establish a timeline for the project.

Phase Three of the Programme represents a significant development in the GSO approach. During the last four years, efforts have been mainly focused on multistakeholder discussions in Geneva on global social issues including labour and trade and health (HIV/AIDS), to bring together stakeholders who have not been in contact before to explore gaps in policy in order to make recommendations for action. Now the GSO is beginning to take the next step to put recommendations into practice, a step that is being encouraged by the GSO Diabetes Planning Committee and by the GSO Management Committee.

Current documents related to the Programme can be found on the GSO website, [www.gsogeneva.ch](http://www.gsogeneva.ch). If you are interested in obtaining further information please send us a request by email at [contact@gsogeneva.ch](mailto:contact@gsogeneva.ch).

## **GSO Tracking and Reporting on Current Issues**

While the main focus in 2008 and into 2009 continues to be the Programme on Diabetes and Social Responsibility, the GSO is also monitoring developments in other areas, with the welcome help of our volunteer interns. These areas include developments in trade and labour standards, the global food crisis and growing water shortages in the context of the current economic downturn. We are planning to do short reports of meetings and other developments in these areas. Also on the GSO agenda are opportunities to promote public-private partnerships to help realize the Millennium Development Goals. In addition the GSO Committee is in the process of exploring how the GSO might contribute to the climate change debate, while recognizing that this issue takes us beyond the monitoring capacity of the GSO in covering the Geneva-based international organizations.

For more information about GSO projects and how to participate, or to contribute either financially and/or in-kind, please write to [contact@gsogeneva.ch](mailto:contact@gsogeneva.ch) or call the GSO secretariat at +41 22 734 9601.



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