

Contributions won't be devalued by any inflation

Domestic business' social responsibility pays dividends, not inferior profit

By Olga Kruchenkova

Not long ago, the Belarusian Idea Fund conducted a study on the role of social responsibility in modern domestic business. The authors not only justified the need for socially responsible personnel but came to the encouraging conclusion that domestic enterprises and businesses already show admirable standards of social responsibility.

A striking example was evident at the country's largest shoe factory: Marko. Since its launch, it has supported good traditions of patronage, as Director Nikolay Martynov emphasises. He is a strong believer in businesses having a social conscience, interceding to improve the urban environment, to help fund local restoration projects or, even, stepping in to rescue a loss-making company. For ten years, he has been Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Velikie Lettsy family-type children's home. His company helps

those with disabilities, soldiers, urban schools, sports clubs, medical institutions, creative groups and the diocesan administration.

Thanks to Marko, two late-19th century buildings have been restored in the very heart of ancient Vitebsk, and the enterprise has helped fund the restoration of the Church of the Resurrection, the pride of the city centre; ten new bells have been funded by the CEO. Three years ago, Vitebsk received a living gift from Marko: a lion cub for Vitebsk Zoo, naturally, named Mark in honour of his sponsor. "I'm convinced that life gains meaning through us leaving a visible legacy," stresses Mr. Martynov. "Everything I do will stay in Vitebsk and I hope my countrymen will be proud of the Marko brand."

Similarly, it's impossible to imagine Novopolotsk without Naftan's support. Its Palace of Culture offers numerous courses, artists' performances and a health-care clinic. Over



San Marko enterprise not only produces high quality shoes but sponsors orphanages and sports schools

the past half century, the plant has built more than a hundred apartment buildings and several of the city's best known landmarks:

the Sadko Palace of Water Sports, Naftan sanatorium (with its three-star hotel), a greenhouse complex, Yakovtsy tourist base, Kometa

children's recreation camp and a clutch of kindergartens. Meanwhile, Naftan sponsors local hospitals and schools, cultural insti-

tutions, public organisations and children's homes, giving materials and equipment as well as direct donations of money.

Issue worth billions in business investments

By Yury Chernyakovich

Public and private partnerships could attract financial resources into economy

Discussions on state-business co-operation have been ongoing for more than a year, with the country promoting joint ventures as the ideal path to realising potential and conducting modernisation

Naturally, legislation is needed to guide such collaboration; despite adoption being forecast last year, no laws governing private/public partnerships have yet been passed. Vladimir Karygin, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Republican Confederation of Entrepreneurship, believes that legislation needs to be passed rapidly, to keep up with activity within the Common Economic Space.

Mr. Karygin notes, "It's no secret that the Russian authorities plan to realise joint projects with private businesses, mostly through the famous Skolkovo Innovation Centre. Back in 2008, the Public-Private Partnership Centre was founded in Kazakhstan, leading to a host of investments. It's vital that we also develop this area. According to my calculations, the



Business forum is excellent platform for discussing specific projects

state could attract billions of investments for joint projects by liaising with private businesses. I'm confident that there's huge potential in this sphere and we mustn't miss out."

Mr. Karygin is adamant that the Law on Public-Private Partnership must be clear in assuring private investors of the safety of their investments, including terms under which they can extract their funds. In fact, the adoption of such a law is necessary to join the World Trade Organisation, which also states that member nations must have partners to finance scientific developments. The passing of new legislation should help Bela-

russia attract domestic businesses and private capital into the development of science, the creation of infrastructure and the construction of large technological sites.

At a recent session of the Assembly of Business Circles of Belarus, Economy Minister Nikolay Snopkov noted that domestic manufacturers can only become competitive through the joining of state and business interests. Recently, the Government approved a range of measures to support small and medium-sized entrepreneurship over the coming three years. Of course, success relies on real life implementation.

BelAZ among leaders

Technopark for Belarusian machine-building goods launching in Mongolia

Mongolia currently purchases tractors produced by a range of companies, including those from China. However, Mongolian consumers aren't always satisfied with quality, inspiring the possibility of a joint technopark with Belarus. This would offer complete maintenance and servicing, ensuring that machinery stays in excellent condition.

Mongolia is keen to purchase small-sized tractors for farmers and other joint projects are being considered, as discussed at a recent meeting in Minsk, between Belarus' Industry Minister, Dmitry Katerinich, and Mongolia's Minister for Industry and Agriculture, Khaltmaa Battulga.

At present, the Belarusian Automobile Works (BelAZ) is the largest Belarusian supplier of goods to Mongolia, shipping 34 heavy-duty dump trucks last year, suiting for mining. BelAZ plans to set up a centre to sell and service dump trucks, joining forces with a Mongolian



BelAZ known in Mongolia

company in Ulan Bator by September 2013.

Belarusian enterprises are doing well on the Mongolian market; from 2011-2012, Minsk Tractor Works sold \$1.5m of tractors to Mongolia while Mogilevliftmash shipped around 30 elevators, worth almost \$400,000.

Mr. Battulga notes that Belarusian buses suit the Mongolian climate extremely well. Accordingly, he has invited BelavtoMAZ to take part in tenders to supply such passenger transport. Last year, Belarusian industrial enterprises exported \$24m of goods to Mongolia.