

Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships The Way Forward

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Definition of MSPs



2015 UN resolution “Towards global partnerships” (para. 2)

“voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits”

Definition of MSPs



Differentiate

- **UN-led MSPs** = UN-driven or UN on governing board or steering committee of partnership
- **MSPs without UN involvement** in the governance structure

Types

- not = the renewed global partnership for sustainable dev.
- not = private sector involvement/community-level PPPs
- MSPs vs. voluntary initiatives of any kind
- MSPs for knowledge-sharing, standard-setting, service-provision

Research findings



Effectiveness and legitimacy = controversial and, in fact, vary

- ✓ creating coalitions of the willing and win-win alliances through the pooling of complementary resources
- ✓ greater degree of flexibility, ability to move quickly, high level of innovation, building business cases for implementing SDGs, mobilize additional investment and resources
- ❖ many do not deliver (for different reasons), most are implemented in OECD countries rather than in LDCs
- ❖ ad-hoc nature, specific short-term quantifiable results instead of long-term transformative change or priority needs of countries, parallel structures

Research: *Success factors*



for multi-stakeholder partnerships:

- Have all relevant partners on board, also considering interlinkages and nexus issues across sectors
- Effective leadership and willingness of partners to invest time and relevant resources
- Adequate “best-fit” institutional design and internal governance: board and stakeholder council, decision-making process, on-going monitoring and evaluation, accountability mechanisms

Research: *Success factors*



for multi-stakeholder partnerships:

- Process management: clear vision and theory of change, inclusive goal-setting process, precise formulation of roles and responsibilities of partners, transparent communication, conflict mediation, institutionalized learning
- Independent and well-staffed secretariat that takes care of these tasks
- Funding and resource management (as a basis for all the above)

Research: *Success factors*



for partnerships' local project management:

- participatory bottom-up approach to develop local ownership and context-specific customized measures
 - continuous monitoring and change management
 - local capacity development for long-term impact, including identifying a business case for local partners
- Monitoring and accountability matter, but also work with other lessons learned regarding success conditions, provide opportunities for learning and knowledge sharing

2030 Agenda and the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

History of the UN's involvement
>> **lessons learned** and how to proceed?



2030 Agenda/SDGs again list partnerships
as means of implementation:

- **SDG 17**: MoI “complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships”
- **principles**: transformative, universal, integrated, leaving no one behind, inclusive ...
- **UN fit for purpose?**

Multi-stakeholder Partnerships - UN fit for purpose?



PARTNERSHIPS FOR SDGs

sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships

REGISTER YOUR INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Commit to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNITED NATIONS CENTRAL PLATFORM FOR THE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The way forward: What tasks for the UN system?

- “develop, for those partnerships in which [the UN system] participates, a **common and systemic approach**” (A/RES/70/224)
- provide **guidelines and rules (due diligence)** for all **UN-led** partnerships (and **implement**)
- **register** MSPs that want to contribute to implementing the 2030 Agenda and provide guidelines and rules for **registered** MSPs
- **support** for, **learning and knowledge sharing** among partnerships
- **reporting** -- **evaluate** and produce **synthesis report**
- **review** contributions to SDG implementation – which could inform further development of guidelines and rules

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Registration

- UNDESA could ask all UN agencies and programs involved in MSPs to provide the required information and *register* with the Partnerships for SDGs platform. The registry could be linked with information held by private sector focal points, sectoral or national platforms.
- Apply and check **SMART criteria** (commitments = specific, measureable, achievable, resource-based, with timelines)
- To keep entries up to date, use a **regular reporting mechanism**; non-reporting MSPs could be delisted or flagged accordingly.

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Guidelines, principles, and due diligence

Building on existing guidelines (e.g. Bali G. and Business G.) and new principles (2030 Agenda)

- discuss principles and guidelines for UN-led MSPs in the ECOSOC Partnership Forum,
- and decide in ECOSOC/GA on them *and* on a process of implementation, including providing sufficient capacities for the secretariat to do so.
- Further develop principles and guidelines for all MSPs in the Partnerships for SDGs online database.

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Coordinated support & follow-up by the UN Secretariat

- **GCO** could focus on building and maintaining cooperation with the private sector for implementing the ten principles
- **UNOP** could concentrate on bringing partners together and supporting through training and capacity building
- **Impartial third entity** could be tasked with integrity measures and impact assessments
- **Inter-agency committees** could help mainstream principles and guidelines throughout the UN system

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Reporting

- *Mandatory reporting* of UN-led MSPs to ECOSOC/HLPF/GA
- *Self-reporting* for all registered MSPs (on at least a biennial basis) through the submission of short reports to the online platform.
- Take note of existing *third-party reports* and commission them if deemed necessary in particular cases.
- Have UNDESA or an independent expert (panel) prepare a *synthesis report*
- *ECOSOC Partnership Forum* could discuss lessons learned and evaluate the effectiveness of established guidelines and policy frameworks. A report on the results could inform the HLPF.

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Learning and knowledge-sharing

- Facilitate an *annual meeting* with a specific focus on learning and knowledge-sharing
- Facilitate a *network of knowledge managers* in MSPs
- Facilitate support for building institutionalized learning mechanism *within* MSPs
- Build (cross-)sectoral *thematic platforms* for MSPs
- Build (multi-stakeholder) *national platforms* for MSPs
- Informal preparatory meetings or external platforms could help to create a “*safe space*” that allows for open exchange also on negative results and *learning from failure*.



Options for improving accountability and transparency

Reviewing

Resolution 67/290, July 2013, on HLPF:

(8) Decides that the forum, under the auspices of the ECOSOC, shall conduct **regular reviews**, starting in 2016, (...) and further decides that those reviews (...)

(c) Shall provide a **platform for partnerships** (...)

→ HLPF to review partnership contributions –
but **how to best prepare** this, building on existing structures, processes, and mandates?

Options for improving accountability and transparency

Reviewing

- *Partnerships for SDGs Platform/ECOSOC Partnership Forum*: Collect and discuss (synthesis) progress reports by/on MSPs (esp. with UN involvement) and produce summary report.
 - *ECOSOC FfD Forum* could review MSPs' contribution to financing.
 - *STI Forum* could review MSPs' contribution to science, technology, and innovation.
 - *Private, business, and civil society reporting*: Make use of independent reviews of MSPs and allow complementary input at side events and other meetings on the sidelines of the Partnership Forum/HLPF through shadow reports and all other types of participation that resolution 67/290 foresees for MGoS.
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Options for improving accountability and transparency

Reviewing

- *HLPF review of overall progress*: Discuss summary report and other input on MSPs' contributions, for example, during a dedicated multi-stakeholder session on MSPs; provide opportunities for further reviewing on the sidelines of the HLPF.
 - *HLPF thematic review*: Also discuss transnational and national MSPs that are relevant to the annual theme of HLPF and draw on input from functional commissions of ECOSOC, other intergovernmental bodies and forums, incl. specialized agencies.
 - *HLPF national reviews*: Member States could be invited to select relevant national MSPs for inclusion in their voluntary national reports and presentations.
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Integrated architecture and coherent process

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and multi-stakeholder partnerships at the UN

