

RETHINKING THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE NETWORKED WORLD

An Agenda for Strengthening
the UN's Engagement through
Global Solution Networks

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The UN was established at the close of World War II. Since then the world has become increasingly complex, now requiring the UN to change critical aspects of its *modus operandi* in order to be more effective in responding to global challenges. In the past decades, powerful non-state actors—including an increasingly vast array of transnational networks consisting of NGOs, the private sector, foundations, academics and private citizens—have been participating in global problem solving.

This project explores the opportunities for deepening and widening the UN's problem-solving role through participation in and collaboration with Global Solution Networks. We examine the ways the UN has spawned, engaged with and participated in different types of GSNs. We identify ten specific partnerships that the UN is engaged in that provide illustrative insights as to how the UN relates to GSNs. And we propose an agenda for strengthening UN participation in, and engagement with, GSNs that could be critical to strengthening its effectiveness and legitimacy in the post 2015 period.



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The Idea in Brief

The United Nations celebrates its 70th anniversary in 2015. As an institution it has had its share of successes and failures, but few doubt that it has made an essential contribution to peace, prosperity and sustainable development around the world. However, there have been important changes since 1945 that are requiring the UN to change critical aspects of its *modus operandi* in order to be a more effective actor in responding to complex global challenges. In the past decades, powerful non-state actors have taken an important role in global problem solving, including an increasingly vast array of transnational networks consisting of NGOs, foundations, academics and private citizens. The private sector is emerging as an important pillar of society given the rise of market economies everywhere and the growing awareness of corporate leaders that business can't succeed in a world that's failing. And as the world fully embraces the digital age there is also a global communications platform that radically drops transaction and collaboration costs enabling non-state actors to self-organize and collaborate to address global problems. Tens of thousands of organizations and tens of millions of individuals are now collaborating on a daily basis in Global Solution Networks, and evidence suggests they are having a material impact on many global problems.

In 2015, the UN will adopt a new development framework focused on the achievement of a set of Sustainable Development Goals. Meeting these goals will require new ways of thinking and partnering. The UN stands at a crossroads. In charting the way forward, it is important for the UN to build on the deep and rich experience it has of working with these emerging non-state actors. Embracing new and inclusive forms of governance has a long tradition in the UN, both constitutionally and in practice. The successful September 23, 2014 Summit on Climate Change in New York illustrated the power of the UN to convene the private sector, civil society, with government and other stakeholders for collective action on an urgent international challenge. Now is the time for the UN to build on these foundations to strengthen its engagement in the complex and inclusive realm of networked governance models.

This project explores the opportunities for deepening and widening the UN's participation in and collaboration with Global Solution Networks. We examine in what ways the UN has spawned, engaged with, and participated in different types of GSNs. We identify ten specific partnerships that the UN is engaged in that provide illustrative insights as to how the UN relates to GSNs. The paper reflects on lessons from this experience, extrapolating how this rich experience can and should be harnessed to make vital contributions to the operations of the UN. We conclude by proposing an agenda for strengthening UN participation in and engagement with GSNs that could be critical to strengthening the effectiveness and legitimacy of the UN in the post-2015 period.



PART ONE

Introduction to Global Solution Networks (GSNs)

The presentation of the case studies and the ensuing analysis follows the framework set out in the GSN concept.¹ This provides a clear analytical lens through which to understand the UN's experience engaging with different types of multi-stakeholder partnership. GSNs have been defined both in terms of key characteristics and in terms of the different types of functions they perform.

The four characteristics are as follows:

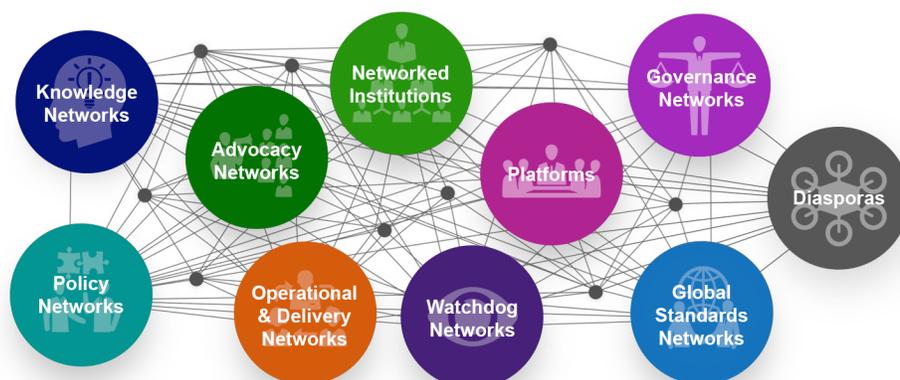
1. **Diverse Stakeholders.** There are participants from at least two of the four pillars of society (government or international institutions, corporations and business interests, the civil society and individual citizens).
2. **Beyond One Nation State.** The network should be global or at least multi-national, having participants from more than one country. There are to date few networks that are truly global and that operate on multiple levels—other than the Internet itself. But there is a growing number of problems that are truly global.
3. **Networking.** It must be a 21st century network in the sense that it harnesses some forms of digital communication tools and platforms to achieve its goals.
4. **Progressive Goals.** The network seeks to improve the state of the world through developing new policies or new solutions, influencing states and institutions or otherwise contributing to economic and social development, human rights, sustainability, democracy, global cooperation, building empowering platforms and global governance. One way of thinking about this is that these networks seek to create global public goods.

The ten types of GSNs are:

1. **Knowledge Networks** that develop new thinking, research, ideas and policies that can be helpful in solving global problems. Their emphasis is on the creation of new ideas, not their advocacy.



2. **Operational and Delivery Networks** actually deliver the change they seek, supplementing or even bypassing the efforts of traditional institutions.
3. **Policy Networks** create government policy even though they are not networks of government policy makers.
4. **Advocacy Networks** seek to change the agenda or policies of governments, corporations or other institutions.
5. **Watchdog Networks** scrutinize institutions to ensure they behave appropriately.
6. **Platforms** create the capability for other networks to organize.
7. **Global Standards Networks** are non-state based organizations that develop technical specifications and standards for virtually anything, including standards for the Internet itself.
8. **Governance Networks** have achieved or been granted the right and responsibility of non-institutional global governance.
9. **Networked Institutions** provide a wide range of capabilities even similar to state-based institutions but with a very different *modus-operandi*.
10. **Diaspora Networks** pursue problem solving through kinship and ethnicity connections.



“ *Most would agree that national interests and the capacity of states remain at the core of any viable or foreseeable international system today. But state power needs to work in different ways and it needs to work in partnership with a wide range of partners.* ”

The Global Context

Over the last decade, most of the major aspects of global governance have come under intensive scrutiny. This reflects the reality that over the last 10-15 years, the world has been undergoing a transformation of historical significance. The drivers of this transformation are well known.² They include a number of key elements:

- Major changes in the distribution of power between states, in particular reflecting the emergence of China, the BRIC's more generally, and a number of other rapidly growing middle income countries.
- An extraordinary expansion in the size of the global economy, growing from a global GDP of \$12 trillion in the early 1970s to \$25 trillion in 1990 to over \$70 trillion today.
- With this increase in overall size has come a far reaching expansion in the size and power of markets, leading in its turn to new and different types of relationships between states and markets.
- The changes in the relationship between states and markets have been fueled by the revolutionary developments in information technology and the power of that technology to impact people's lives.
- The rise of transnational networks of NGOs, foundations and individuals that self-organize to solve problems.
- The world is seeing the emergence of a class of global challenges that for the first time require a collective response in order for there to be any possibility of finding a solution. The need for a collective response encompasses not only a response that requires countries to agree on the allocation of responsibility between them, but it also requires the engagement of all sectors of society. An increasing number of today's challenges can no longer be solved by a handful of governments alone.
- The growing role of corporations has led to increased recognition of the interdependence of business and societal interests, placing a premium on multi-stakeholder solutions.

The sense that the world economy is going through a period of deep transformation is reflected both in the policy debates and the academic literature. These deep changes in the global economy have focused attention on the gaps and inadequacies in the approach to global governance today and in the future. Most would agree that national interests and the capacity of states remain at the core of any viable or foreseeable international system



“...the acceleration of globalization is having a transformative impact on the practice of global governance... creating greater interdependence between states and ...a transformation in the relationship of states to markets, the private sector and civil society. ”

today. But state power needs to work in different ways and it needs to work in partnership with a wide range of partners.

Against this background it is perhaps not surprising that the US National Intelligence Office in its study of Global Trends to 2025 states that, “We see the next 15-20 years as one of those great historical turning points where multiple factors are likely to play.”³ In the words, again, of the US National Intelligence Office: “Existing multilateral institutions—which are large and cumbersome and were designed for a different geopolitical order—will have difficulty adapting quickly to undertake new missions, accommodate changing memberships and augment resources.” The study concludes that “by 2025, nation states will no longer be the only—and often not the most important—actors on the world stage and the international system will have morphed to accommodate the new reality.”

New technology is a key driver in carving out new space which is empowering society at the expense of governments. The growth of virtual communities has led to new coalitions of the connected—what Eric Schmidt refers to as the growth of the “interconnected estate.”⁴ For Schmidt, technology is challenging traditional forms of governance. “Governments will have to build new alliances that reflect the rise in citizen power and the changing nature of the state.” These alliances will have to go far beyond government-to-government contacts to embrace civil society.

Gordon Conway, former President of the Rockefeller Foundation and Chief Scientific Adviser to the British Government, has captured the same dynamic in his report on the advance of science in today’s world.⁵ He describes how scientific innovation advances within the framework of what he calls science innovation systems. The most striking feature of these systems is that they are increasingly international in character and they are multi-stakeholder in composition. Science progresses through the interaction of governments, universities, company laboratories and entrepreneurs.

The World Economic Forum in its Global Redesign project concludes that what is needed is a new stakeholder paradigm of international governance. “The revolution that is required is our conception of the international system—in our understanding of the additional modes of cooperation and sources of capability available in a more interconnected and interdependent world.”⁶ “We can start,” the WEF’s report goes on, “by embedding our intergovernmental institutions and processes in wider processes and networks that permit...continuous interaction among all stakeholders and sources of expertise in global society in the search for better solutions.” The Redesign project stresses that governments will continue to play a central role in any evolving global architecture. But the creation of public value on global issues—be they related to security, human rights, development or climate—will no longer be the exclusive preserve of intergovernmental arrangements.

What these analyses have in common is that they point to the fact that the acceleration of globalization is having a transformative impact on the practice of global governance in two respects. It is of course creating greater



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interdependence between states and in that sense influencing the exercise of national sovereignty in practical terms. But beyond that, it has led to a transformation in the relationship of states to markets, the private sector and civil society, and that requires new forms of governance, both nationally and globally. The question is whether the United Nations is equipped to respond to this challenge.

The United Nations Context

For many commentators, and for many governments, the UN is an intergovernmental body whose authority and sphere of influence pertain to the relationship between states. The UN is the embodiment of nineteenth century Westphalian politics. It derives its legitimacy from the power of states and the sanctity of national sovereignty and it is and always will be ill adapted and constitutionally unable to adapt to a world of multiple new actors and transnational interests. The attempts by the UN to reach out beyond sovereign states is misplaced and ill advised. Giving space to new actors will undermine the principles on which the UN has been built. It will confuse long established demarcation lines and be subversive of global order.

Certainly respect for national sovereignty is a founding principle embedded in the Charter of the United Nations. But it is not the only principle laid out in the Charter. Within the Charter there is a high degree of ambiguity, regarding how the UN conducts its business and the structures of the UN itself.

Let us consider first the Charter. Ambiguity lies deep within its provisions. It is certainly true that Article II of the Charter makes unambiguous reference to the sanctity of sovereignty. But it is also true that the Charter is written in the name of “We the Peoples,” has ample references to universal principles and rights, provides for the secretariat as a principal organ of the organization and in Articles 97-101 provides for the independence of the Secretary General and the Organization. What is clear is that at different historical moments, varying interpretations have been given with respect to the tension built into the Charter between the UN as exclusively the instrument of its member states and as the bearer of broadly based human aspirations which may or may not be aligned to member state interests.

In short, there is nothing historically which prevents the UN from strengthening its capacity to support credible multi-stakeholder platforms aligned with recognized UN objectives. Quite to the contrary, the role of the UN in providing a platform for broad, inclusive partnerships is deeply embedded in the history of the UN.

At the origin of the UN system lies a broad commitment in the aftermath of the Second World War to building the foundations for a peace constructed block by block based on communities of interest.⁷ The vision underlying



the construction of what we know today as the UN system was a vision of a highly decentralized system organized around communities of interest whose sense of common challenges would bind them together in working to find common solutions. Agriculturalists, health specialists, scientists, educationalists, labor specialists—working in communities of their peers, they would find common solutions and form enduring partnerships. This was the basis for the range of organizations that today form the UN system.

In many cases, the structures of these organizations inherited associations of experts and communities of interest that reached back into the nineteenth century. This was the case, for example, in the fields of telecommunications, health and culture. The constitution of the International Organization (ILO), dating back to 1919, was itself a partnership—in this case between governments, employers and labor.⁸

The concept of rooting these communities of interest in civil society has found expression in a number of the organizational structures that were established. UNESCO's National Commissions are a case in point. UNICEF, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Women National Committees provide other examples. In a certain sense, these can all be understood as partnership facilities in their respective areas.

Similarly, many UN organizations include outreach and institutional arrangements for close partnering with scientific communities. UNESCO has deep links with scientific communities in its areas of work. The creation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in connection with the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), provides another good example. The deep links between the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) with food and health scientists provide other examples.

There is a group of UN organizations which are highly functional and technical in their orientation for which partnering with the leading private sector players in their field is essential for the implementation of their mandates. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Atomic Organization (IAEA), WMO and the International Telecommunications Organization (ITU) provide good examples. In the case of ITU for example, the process of liberalization and privatization that accelerated in the 1980s led to the privatization of many of the government managed operators in the telecommunications business. The creation of industry sector memberships was a way to ensure that ITU could continue to work with the technical partners that lay at the heart of their mandate.⁹ WMO, whose origins go back to 1873, was also affected by some of the privatization of meteorological services that took place in the 80s and 90s and that added a new dimension to WMO's relationship to the private sector.¹⁰ The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) provides a very different example because in this case private companies are a critical client of the service WIPO provides.

In their intellectual history of the UN, Richard Jolly, Tom Weiss and Louis Emmerji coined the phrase "the three UNs."¹¹ The first UN is the inter-



governmental UN. The second is the UN of the international civil service. And the third is the UN of civil society, the private sector, foundations, scientists, and many others. Each of these UNs is embedded in the Charter and has deep roots in the history and practice of the UN system.

The three UNs provides a useful framework within which to analyze the character of the UN's role in different types of multi-stakeholder partnership. In some cases, the UN provides a necessary link to the inter-governmental sphere. In other cases, it is the independence and neutrality of the international civil servant that generates the leadership that is needed. And in yet other cases, the UN might provide the space that enables the private sector and civil society to provide leadership that might otherwise not be possible.

This analytical framework is significant because discussions of the UN's role often make an assumption that the UN represents strictly the intergovernmental sphere. In practice, the UN straddles all three roles. This gives rise to considerable ambiguity, which in turn can be the cause of real constraints as well as major opportunities.

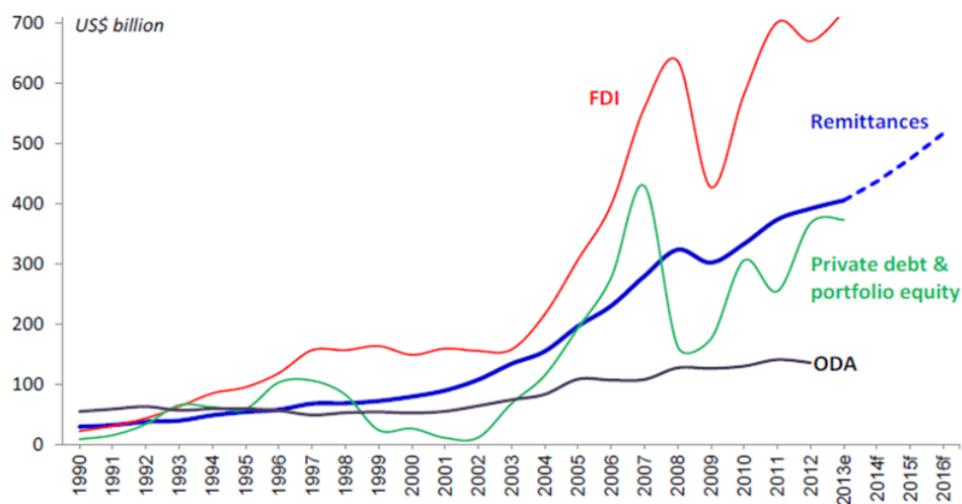
Globalization and the Partnership Imperative

During the course of the last decade, “partnership” has become an indispensable word in the vocabulary of the UN system's organizational strategies. It surfaces everywhere and is used in many different contexts to mean a multitude of different things. Most UN organizations today have a partnership bureau, a partnership senior advisor or a partnership focal point; and most UN organizations over the last couple of years either have completed or are currently engaging in discussions with their governing bodies on the adoption of partnership strategies.

The emergence of partnerships with non-state actors as a critical element of organizational strategy has been seen as a logical expression of globalization and the process of liberalization that has accompanied it. This is true in at least two respects. The expansion of private sector flows has dominated this period of historically unprecedented growth. Between 1990 and 2010, private sector flows into both middle income countries as well as low income countries have gone up twenty times over. This compares with an increase in official flows to all developing countries of around 2.5 times.¹² Whether in the field of health, food, technology or energy—the private sector, universities, civil society and media are critical partners to any successful pursuit of growth and development.



In the sphere of development cooperation, for more than a decade we have seen a commitment to the pursuit of development goals. This in turn requires a commitment to find the most effective way of reaching those goals and this, then, requires working with all partners who have the capacity to influence the achievement of that goal. The question of how public resources can leverage private resources takes center stage, because in many cases it is the private sector which has the resources and the ability to scale up, replicate and sustain at a level which public finances cannot match. Effective delivery remains important but it is no longer sufficient—reaching the goals requires the effective leveraging of public and private resources.



Sources: World Development Indicators and World Bank Development Prospects Group

Illustration of the repositioning of Official Development Assistance (ODA) that has taken place over the last 15 years.¹³ The graph illustrates the point of the relative decline of ODA compared to other flows.

The last two decades have also seen dramatic increases both in the number of civil society actors as well as in the financial resources at their disposal. Perhaps even more significant has been the widening and deepening character of civil society's role in development activities. For a long time, NGOs were seen largely through the prism of their operational activities. They were implementers of projects and programs and often had a contractual relationship with their donors. Over the last decades, they have taken on a much more significant role as advocates and agenda-setters. They have staked out more prominent roles in policy dialogue. Rapid developments in communications technology and social media have dramatically increased the voice of civil society actors worldwide. There has been a flourishing of the voices of southern NGOs in particular. And the deep local presence of civil society actors has given them unique access to knowledge that is highly valued by the international community.

The last several decades have also seen a significant increase in the number of foundations globally. A number of these foundations and their leaders have become influential on the global stage. For example, Bill Gates was

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invited to present a report on the future of development finance at the Cannes G20 summit in 2011,¹⁴ something perhaps unimaginable a decade earlier. Today a number of foundations, including Gates and the \$1 billion contribution made by Ted Turner, make major contributions to the UN system. A 1999 study conservatively forecasted wealth transfers of \$41 trillion in the US over the next 55 years, estimating that between \$6 trillion and \$25 trillion could go toward philanthropy.¹⁵

Against this background, there have been significant developments over the last decade in the way the UN has engaged with civil society and the private sector.

The UN and Civil Society

Many UN bodies have entered into arrangements with civil society that give them consultative status in their legislative bodies and in their programming processes. Article 71 of the Charter is unique in the provisions it makes for granting consultative status to non-governmental organizations. Occasionally, civil society has a formal part to play in the governance arrangements. Civil society has always played an important role in contributing to the UN's work, starting with the development of the human rights agenda in San Francisco. Civil Society has been instrumental in moving forward the agendas on sustainable development (Rio 1992), human rights (Vienna 1993), and gender (Beijing 1995). Over the last two decades in particular, the UN has reached out to a multitude of panels and commissions to analyze challenges and articulate solutions that appeared to be beyond the immediate grasp of intergovernmental negotiation. The introduction of the Arria Formula to allow for consultations by the Security Council with civil society actors is noteworthy.¹⁶

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development at its first meeting in 1992 recognized that development could not be achieved by governments alone and established nine major groups as the main channels through which groups of citizens could organize and contribute to policy and implementation of international efforts to achieve sustainable development. These groups were Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Non-governmental Organizations, Local Authorities, Workers and Trade Unions, Business and Industry, Scientific and Technological Community and Farmers.

For the United Nations, a critical point was reached with the issuance of the Secretary General's Millennium Report in 2000 and the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. The 2000 Millennium Report issued a strong call for embracing the concept of "We the Peoples" captured in the Charter's Preamble.¹⁷ The Secretary General then launched an extensive campaign with civil society around the newly coined Millennium Development Goals. In 2004 the Secretary General commissioned a High Level Plan led by the former Brazilian President, Enrique Cardoso, to explore ways of strengthening the



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UN's partnerships with civil society and that report was presented to the General Assembly.¹⁸

The Rio Outcome Document (2012), “The Future We Want,” put renewed emphasis on integrating major groups and stakeholders into all activities on future global sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This was followed by Resolution A/67/290 establishing the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development and its emphasis on the participation of major groups and stakeholders. Most recently, the Secretary General has launched an extensive consultative process to engage with civil society in the negotiations leading to the adoption of a Post 2015 Development Framework.¹⁹

The UN and the Private Sector

The 2000 Millennium Report and the Millennium Summit also marked an important breakthrough for the UN's approach to its relationship with the private sector. It made the case for developing new partnerships and was instrumental in the launching of the Global Compact. The Global Compact has become perhaps the most visible instrument that the UN has to reach out and engage the private sector in an active corporate social responsibility agenda.²⁰ The global and country level networks generated by the Global Compact, along with the multi-stakeholder global issue platforms it has incubated, represent today one of the core pillars of the UN's outreach to the private sector.²¹

The global conferences at Monterrey on financing for development²² and the Rio+10 conference at Johannesburg²³ both developed the theme of the importance of the private sector in securing growth and development. Many bilateral donor agencies at this time took a much more proactive role in including the private sector in their policy and programming work. Monterrey clearly affirmed the critical importance of private sector flows in development. Johannesburg was the first of the major global conferences that had as one of its major outcomes a list of public-private partnerships that the conference helped to facilitate.

In 2004 The Secretary General commissioned a major report entitled “Unleashing Entrepreneurship” which was co-chaired by Ernest Zedillo and Paul Martin.²⁴ The report for the first time positioned the UN as a strong advocate for the importance of entrepreneurship and the private sector not only for development generally but for the fight against poverty in particular. The establishment of the Commission resulted from pleas from a number of African Heads of State who felt the UN should play a more constructive role in creating space for countries to attract foreign investments and to develop their domestic private sectors.

Over the last ten years increased attention has been given to the concept of inclusive business models and the need to focus on partnerships with the private sector that engaged with their core businesses.²⁵ Along these



lines, at the United Nations MDG Summit in September 2010, some 10 donor agencies issued the “Bilateral Donors’ Statement in Support of Private Sector Partnerships for Development.” The declaration is noteworthy in stating that “rather than viewing the private sector merely as resource providers, we choose to recognize the private sector as equal partners around key development issues and will enter into partnerships with local and international companies of various sizes.”²⁶ This in turn has led to the focus today on the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

There is no doubt that the UN has engaged increasingly extensively over the last decade with building partnerships with civil society and the private sector. The question is how extensively? What is the scope and depth of these partnerships? To answer this question, we use the concept of Global Solution Networks to provide an analytical framework.

PART TWO

Global Solution Networks and the UN

The case studies represent a selection of multi-stakeholder partnerships that the UN is engaged in. First we take a deep dive into ten current initiatives. We then reflect on the UN's experience and lessons to be drawn. Table 1 provides the overall framework for this interpretation.

The initiatives selected represent a broad sample from three different perspectives. First, they cover a broad range of issue areas, including many of the key global challenges that the international community is grappling with today. Second, they cover seven of the ten GSN network typologies that have been proposed. To what extent they meet the criteria to be considered fully fledged GSNs is a matter we explore further below. They do represent a broad spectrum of different types of networks. With respect to the involvement of the UN system, the case studies cover the roles played by ten different UN agencies.

We focused on initiatives that were responding to challenges that required new ways of solving problems. The principle criteria for inclusion has been whether the case study raises interesting insights into the evolution of new types of governance arrangements. We set out looking specifically for initiatives that were at the cutting edge of the interface between governments and a multitude of other actors.





TABLE ONE: Overview of Ten Case Studies

Initiative	Issue	Type of GSN	Key UN Agencies
WIPO Green	Technology	Platform	WIPO
Business Call to Action	Inclusive Business	Advocacy	UNDP
Business and Human Rights	Business and Human Rights	Standards	Office of UN Human Rights
Pulse	Data	Watchdog	Office of SG
GOARN	Health	Watchdog	WHO
IPCC	Climate	Knowledge	UNEP/WMO
Micronutrient Initiative	Food	Delivery	UNICEF, WHO, WFP
SE4ALL	Energy	Networked Institution	Office of SG
Every Woman, Every Child	Gender / Children	Platform	Office of SG
HIV Action Plan	Health	Advocacy	UNAIDS

Case Study 1: WIPO Green²⁷

WIPO Green was launched as a pilot in 2012. The idea was to create a platform where investors and green technology providers or developers could connect, and, in doing so, facilitate the distribution and growth of green technologies. At the time, one of the problems in the still-evolving field of green technology was that there was no single arena in which both developers and potential users of green technology could search for matches for their respective needs. Investors didn't have a single source in which to find potential investments; green technology developers didn't have a reliable stage on which to advertise their products and gauge interest; and people, organizations and institutions which needed or wanted to make use of green technology didn't have access to a single, comprehensive overview of which technologies were available and best suited to their needs. WIPO Green was created in order to bridge some of these gaps, and after the initial trial period to gauge interest and tweak the operational model, it was formally launched as a functional platform on November 28, 2013.

To qualify as a "green technology" eligible for inclusion within the WIPO Green database, a technology must meet the requirements outlined in the Rio Declaration. Essentially, a green technology is one which uses fewer resources, produces less waste, or is otherwise less polluting than a technological equivalent.

After a challenging early period the promise of a set launch date in November 2013, and the presence of a growing number of important

partners, helped WIPO Green garner the traction it needed to push past its tipping point. Since then, increasing numbers of partners, technology providers and potential technology users have signed up, and the initiative has gained increased recognition. At the time of the launch, there were 25 partners and approximately 1000 registered technologies. The number of partners has since grown to 43, while WIPO Green is hopeful that there will be over 2000 technologies registered by the end of 2014.

As far as program governance is concerned, WIPO Green is still very much a WIPO-centered initiative (perhaps unsurprisingly, given its name). The Secretariat, which ensures the day-to-day functioning of the initiative, is entirely provided by WIPO.²⁸ The Secretariat is aided by an Advisory Board, which is consultative in nature and does not exercise influence over programs or budgets. The Board is comprised of both the Secretariat and WIPO Green Partners. There are currently over a dozen partners, ranging from academic institutions such as the Association of University Technology Managers, to technology providers and developers like EcoMachines Incubator Ltd., to international organizations such as the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development and other sector actors such as the Villgro Innovations Foundation and R20 Regions of Climate Action. All partners must sign the WIPO Green Charter, and although you don't have to be a green technology provider to become a partner, you must demonstrate that you can provide something of value to the initiative, whether that is expertise, consultative services, financing for developers, etc.

WIPO Green is funded primarily from the regular WIPO budget, although contributions to the initiative have also been made by the governments of Japan and Brazil. Because WIPO's budget is mostly generated by patent application fees, it is one of the most financially self-sufficient and independent agencies within the UN system.²⁹ As such, WIPO Green is also an extremely flexible and independent body, given that the funding it receives from WIPO is from a general "pot," which makes it impossible to determine whether such funding is from patent fees or member-state contributions. That being said, changes to the WIPO Green budget do need to be approved by WIPO member states, as do key program issues.

Moving forward, WIPO Green is looking to eventually become increasingly self-sustainable by generating income through transaction fees within the WIPO Green network or through alternative funding strategies. This would make the initiative less reliant on WIPO funding, and could pave the way for WIPO Green to break away entirely into an autonomous organization. However, it is currently far too early to tell when, or whether, this will happen. Indeed, intellectual property marketplaces that have served to match buyers and sellers of intellectual property have a poor record and it remains to be seen if WIPO Green will succeed where others have failed.

WIPO presents a number of interesting features. The stakeholders are diverse in terms of sectors, geography, industries and needs; the problem that WIPO Green aims to address is global in scope and pressing in nature; the initiative



The logo for Business Call to Action, featuring the words "BUSINESS CALL TO ACTION" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a dark blue rectangular background.

BUSINESS CALL TO ACTION

not only exploits, but is dependent upon, the digital revolution as an online platform; and its governance, though hosted by WIPO, is self-organized and independent of the WIPO governing body, despite the fact that it is still reliant on WIPO for funding.

Case Study 2: The Business Call to Action³⁰

Launched in 2008, the Business Call to Action is a global initiative that aims to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals by challenging companies to develop inclusive business models that offer the potential for both commercial success and development impact.

For BCtA, UNDP's definition for inclusive business is the most relevant and comprehensive for membership: "Inclusive business models include the poor on the demand side as clients and customers, and on the supply side as employees, producers and business owners at various points in the value chain. They build bridges between business and the poor for mutual benefit. The benefits from inclusive business models go beyond immediate profits and higher incomes. For business they include driving innovations, building markets and strengthening supply chains. And for the poor they include higher productivity, sustainable earnings and greater empowerment."³¹ BCtA's focus on the role of inclusive business models in driving social and economic development differentiates it from the many umbrella business networks that focus more broadly on corporate social responsibility.

With respect to the GSN taxonomy, BCtA functions as part advocacy network and part knowledge network and its value proposition to the private sector is based on these two key components.³² In this connection it:

- Drives Private Sector Commitments: BCtA serves as a best practices leadership platform and brand, offering visibility for member initiative commitments.
- Facilitates Impact Measurement and Knowledge Capture: BCtA offers assistance to member companies in their results reporting on economic, social and environmental impact.

A particular area in which BCtA is proposing to innovate is in helping companies to measure results. This will be done by putting an ongoing monitoring mobile tool in the hands of field staff with customized surveys that allow field staff to collect data from customers, workforces, etc. composed of the poor. This will create a feedback loop between companies and their customers that could mark a breakthrough in approaches to meeting the challenge of poverty by offering linkages to services, financing and peer-to-peer learning, and by mobilizing select country-level inclusive business efforts.



From the private sector, 85 member companies have made commitments to inclusive business initiatives in 44 low and middle-income countries. BCtA members are diverse and representative of all sectors and geographies. Members include leading multinationals such as CEMEX (Mexico), Coca Cola (US), DSM (Netherlands), First Rand Bank (South Africa), Ikea (Sweden), ITOCHU (Japan), Tata Consulting (India) and Vodaphone (UK), prominent national companies in developing countries such as Banco Itaú (Brazil), TTNET (Turkey) and headlining social enterprises such as Sproxil (US), Hapinoy (Philippines) and Aravind Eyecare (India).

The platform is supported by the Governments of Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and the US; UNDP; the United Nations Global Compact; the World Business Council on Sustainable Development; the International Chamber of Commerce; and the Clinton Global Initiative.

The financial donors sit on a Donor Steering Board which approves the project document and gives guidance on use of funds, financial reporting, and funding mobilization. The Programme Strategy Committee provides guidance on Strategy setting, work plan development and Performance monitoring/milestone tracking. UNDP will house the Secretariat and serve as its operational platform.

BCtA has a number of the ingredients for being a catalytic GSN. The alignment between mission and core business interests gives it a dynamic which can be driven and sustained by the membership. Its use of new technologies to explore innovative models of engaging with and getting feedback from the poor (its customers) has far reaching implications. BCtA has the potential to go to scale and become significant; or it can maintain itself as an interesting niche player.

Case Study 3: Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network³³

In 1998, Gro Harlem Brundtland became the new Director General of WHO determined to reposition WHO as the global leader and coordinator on issues related to infectious diseases.³⁴ Outbreaks of Ebola, cholera, plague and meningitis gave rise to a common concern for health worldwide, and strengthened national and global surveillance for prevention and control was called for. A network was required that would focus on maintaining global public health security by ensuring coordinated mechanisms for outbreak alert and response. Following a major conference that was convened in 2000 on global outbreak alert and response, she created GOARN to give WHO the instrument to perform this function.

The establishment of GOARN recognized that it's not feasible or desirable for any single institution to undertake the effort involved in health surveillance alone because events are far too numerous and geographically



distributed for any institution's resources to be able to respond adequately in a timely manner.

GOARN accesses technical and operational resources from scientific institutions in member states, medical and surveillance initiatives, regional technical networks, networks of laboratories, United Nations organizations (e.g., UNICEF, UNHCR), the Red Cross, and international humanitarian nongovernmental organizations (e.g. Médecins sans Frontières, International Rescue Committee, Merlin and Epicentre). Participation is open to technical institutions, networks and organizations that have the capacity to contribute to international outbreak alert and response. Overall, the network consists of a global alliance of 140 technical partner institutions and networks in 60 countries. It is supported by a steering committee, consisting of network partners and an operational support team based in WHO which runs a situation room twenty four hours a day.

In 2003, SARS emerged in the southern province of Guangdong. Within a very short period of time some 200 people were infected. News of the outbreak reached WHO through GOARN, prompting WHO to seek information from the Chinese government about the epidemic. Chinese authorities confirmed the outbreak of a disease but mis-identified it.

GOARN swung into action in February on the basis of a report from a WHO physician in Hanoi. That triggered GOARN to send investigative teams to Hanoi and Hong Kong, who issued their first report early March. The alert described a disease, but was unable to identify it, and instituted worldwide surveillance. A second alert a few days later listed the symptoms. The warnings to avoid travel to infected areas "were the most restrictive in the history of the organization."³⁵ GOARN created a virtual network among eleven laboratories in nine countries to hasten identification of the cause of the disease. SARS was identified in April. GOARN succeeded in pressing China's health authorities to cooperate. The severe criticisms issued by GOARN led to the resignation of the Chinese health minister and a radical turn around in the Chinese response. Within four months the epidemic had been contained. It had spread to 30 countries, infected more than 8000 people, killed 800 and cost the affected economies some \$40 billion. Critical to the success of the response was GOARN.

Since 2000, WHO and GOARN have responded to over 50 events worldwide, such as the SARS event, with over 400 experts providing field support to some 40 countries. Most recently the outbreak of Ebola points to the magnitude and complexity of the challenge of containing epidemics in today's world.

GOARN has many of the characteristics of a watchdog GSN, particularly following its increase in expert collaboration and virtual networking for international technical collaboration. Its function is to monitor deadly infectious disease outbreaks around the world. With its network approach and reliance on fast communications, GOARN identified SARS before any report from the Chinese government appeared. Within 24 hours it had put together an international investigative team under WHO auspices to





establish the facts and determine a course of action. The integrity of GOARN gave Brundtland the space to provide guidelines to member states that exceeded the formal authority that had been attributed to her in the existing International Health Regulations. Today, GOARN has assumed an important position in the governance architecture of global health.

Case Study 4: The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC)³⁶

The science of climate change first came to real prominence in the 1970s. The depletion of the ozone layer and the threat it represented was confirmed by the US National Academy of Science in 1976. The first world climate conference convened by WMO in 1979 expressed serious concern that human activities could alter climate and called for further study of the issue. In 1985, a joint conference called by WMO, UNEP and the international Council of Scientists concluded that growth in GHGs was likely to lead to increases in temperature. Finally, at WMO's tenth congress in 1987, the need for objective assessment was fully recognized and the following year WMO's Executive Council established the IPCC, a global knowledge network focused on assessing the risks posed by climate change. In short it had taken around a decade for states to recognize that they had to inform themselves scientifically and accurately with respect to the possibility of a major threat to the global community.

The first plenary session of the IPCC was held in 1988³⁷ and it established three working groups—the first to prepare the scientific assessments, the second to do environmental and socio-economic impact assessments of climate change, and the third to develop response strategies. Over a period of ten years, a series of assessments has been produced, each assessment progressively more unequivocal about the probability of human influence on climate. While the conclusions of the panel have been marked by various controversies, the main conclusions of the findings remain largely uncontested within the scientific community. In short, during the last decade the accumulation of scientific data has become the principle driver for the idea that the international community has a responsibility to exercise leadership in defining and implementing a set of global policies that will address this challenge.³⁸

In this process the independence of the scientific assessment process has been of critical importance. Invitations to participate in the panel and the working groups are extended to governments and other bodies. Experts may be invited to contribute in their own right. Governments may be informed in advance of invitations extended to experts and may nominate additional experts. Authors, contributors, reviewers and other experts are selected by the bureau of the working groups from a list of nominations received from governments and participating organizations. They can also be directly identified by the Bureau for their expertise. In the assessment writing process, all chapters undergo an open review process to ensure

consideration of all relevant scientific information from established journals with robust peer view processes. The first draft is subject to formal expert review where any expert can comment. The second draft undergoes a combined formal expert and government review. Governments have to approve the final draft.

As a scientific body, the commission reviews and assesses “the most recent scientific, technical and socio-economic information produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of climate change.” It does not, however, conduct any research or climate change data monitoring on its own. The IPCC depends on thousands of scientists from all over the world who contribute their findings on a voluntary basis.

In 1997, the IPCC was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize. The citation stated:

Through the scientific reports it has issued over the past two decades, the IPCC has created an ever-broader informed consensus about the connection between human activities and global warming. Thousands of scientists and officials from over one hundred countries have collaborated to achieve greater certainty as to the scale of the warming. Whereas in the 1980s global warming seemed to be merely an interesting hypothesis, the 1990s produced firmer evidence in its support. In the last few years, the connections have become even clearer and the consequences still more apparent.

The IPCC represents a hybrid form of governance that defies easy classification. The IPCC signifies a recognition of mutual reliance between the scientific community and governments. In launching the IPCC and creating a forum for reaching consensus between these two communities, governments recognized that the response to climate change required coalitions incorporating a broad range of stakeholders. The scientific community, for its part, recognized that the science of climate had to have a space where it could interact with and influence policy makers. Hence was born a hybrid, a negotiated text between science and states which represents a broad consensus on the state of the world's climate and the dangers it poses.

The fact that the IPCC reports are ultimately approved by governments may suggest the IPCC does not qualify as a GSN. But this may miss the broader point. In the process of negotiating text, governments cannot go so far as to break the scientific consensus embedded in the text that is being negotiated. By setting up the IPCC, states are recognizing that climate is a global challenge that requires the mobilization of a wide range of stakeholders well beyond their control.

An interesting question for the international community is whether climate discussions have reached a point where IPCC needs to consider more wide-ranging multi-stakeholder engagement. After all, today a much larger and diverse array of organizations possesses significant capabilities to collect, analyze and report on relevant data than existed in the late 1980s when the IPCC was established. The IPCC, in turn, would need to consider whether





it is equipped to move beyond confronting governments with science to engaging actively a much broader range of actors.

Case Study 5: UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights³⁹

In 2005, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) established a special mandate for an individual expert to identify and clarify existing standards and best practices for businesses and role of states in relation to the protection of human rights. John Ruggie (then Dean of the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University) was given this mandate in his personal capacity, representing none of the concerned stakeholders.

There is no ambiguity as to the intergovernmental origins of his mandate, nor to the ultimate intergovernmental destination of his recommendations, namely, the HRC. However everything, from the multi-stakeholder process Ruggie engaged in to the global standard network he established, speaks to a highly inclusive process of finding solutions to intractable problems.

John Ruggie facilitated the co-creation of the UN “Protect, Respect, Remedy” framework and its accompanying “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights” in a process that represented self-organization, meaningful engagement and multi-stakeholder action and interaction. The result produced public value through a global standards network, endorsed by a state-based institution, which has since been widely adopted by both state and non-state actors globally.

In the 1990s, the subject of business and human rights came into sharp focus. A prominent example was the Nike scandal which saw images of poor working conditions, inhumane treatment and low pay for people working in factories, pinged across the globe, regardless of where these factories sat within Nike’s supply chain, or circle of control.

Ensuring good working conditions, responsible management practices and an eradication of human rights abuses was complex, especially where end-to-end compliance involved a growing network of global suppliers. A central element of the problem from the point of view of the corporation was that firms often operate in states where human rights may not be respected. Without direct intent, firms may be complicit in human rights violations. From the point of view of governments, the problem was having the resources available to enforce effective regulation in this space, and ensuring that a more robust regulatory environment would not impact levels of foreign direct investment.

An early attempt at standard setting led to failure. The UN Draft “Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights” asserted that business has “the

obligation to promote, secure the fulfillment of, respect, and protect human rights recognized in international as well as national law.” While this was supported by some in the INGO community, such as Amnesty International, it was largely rejected by business. Clearly, the balance between the interests of businesses, states and civil society was not struck. The interstate process led by the United Nations had, not surprisingly, understood the issue from the point of view of states rather than responding to the concerns of other global actors, not least, the private sector.

Ruggie took on the failures of that lesson to “help the global community create a governance hybrid: one that links governments’ international human rights obligations to voluntary (but increasingly ‘required’) actions by business.”⁴⁰ The UNGPs are voluntary recommendations to business, and have been strongly criticized for being so by stakeholders who wished to see a more heavy-handed approach from the UN. However, Ruggie was able to skillfully navigate the politics of different stakeholders with a notion that underpins and justifies his entire approach: the “responsibility to respect human rights is a global standard of expected conduct for all business enterprises wherever they operate.”

John Ruggie has said that his mandate under the UN Human Rights Council, was “at first not to do very much.” Kofi Annan, the then Secretary General of the United Nations, created a mandate for Ruggie to identify prevailing standards that apply to business and human rights. “It was such a controversial area...that to try to get a person from one of the major stakeholder groups to lead the process wouldn’t have worked.”⁴¹ Ruggie’s reputation and independence made him an obvious choice.

Ruggie says he reached out to all the major stakeholder bodies, understanding that the engagement of the business community from the start was key to success of the process. “Typically they are not [given voice] in human rights related issues. They are usually the target and it is states and activists in the room doing the negotiation.”

Ruggie was given mandates in three distinct phases.⁴² The first, from 2005-2007, was the “identify and clarify” phase. At the end of two years, the Council commended his work during this phase and asked him to make specific recommendations. He made these the following year in his Protect, Respect and Remedy framework. The Council endorsed this framework and requested that he operationalize the principles. This he did by presenting the Guiding Principles to the HRC in 2011. This marked the end of his mandate and a working expert group was established to follow up on the work.

A defining moment in this process was when Ruggie presented the Guidelines to the HRC in 2011.⁴³ The Algerian Ambassador argued that the government could not endorse a normative text that governments had not negotiated among themselves. Ruggie gave an emphatic response. The Guidelines were endorsed. In effect, a global standards network had given birth to a set of norms that reached a broad consensus among multiple stakeholders in a way that an inter-governmental process would never have achieved.





SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL

In addition to being endorsed by the Human Rights Council, key elements of the Guiding Principles have also been internalized by many major international and national standard setting bodies, by business enterprises themselves, and by civil society organizations. It has been estimated that some 300 multinational firms are endorsing the principles and have human rights policy statements.

Ruggie had explored legal instruments that could hold companies to account. However, the message back from governments was that agreeing on hard law options would be too complex an exercise for the limit of his five-year mandate.

“Look how long we have been at Kyoto, and we still do not have an agreed instrument. When issues are very complex, when interests are highly divergent, when you are aiming for universal coverage...it is difficult to imagine that you are going to get a comprehensive legally binding instrument anytime soon.” The question for Ruggie and his team instead became, “Can you set in motion steps that cumulatively reduce the incidence of corporate-related human rights harm, and eventually build up enough of a basis for specific legal instruments to be negotiated, in order to fill gaps?”⁴⁴

At the end of the day, what do these Guiding Principles represent? It is worth quoting at length from Ruggie’s own summary:

*The Guiding Principles constitute a normative platform and high level policy prescriptions for strengthening the protection of human rights against corporate-related harm. They provide a foundation for expanding the international human rights regime to encompass not only countries and individuals but also companies. In doing so, they embrace the moral value and intrinsic power of the idea of human rights, but also recognize that in the context of the global economy, human rights can be realized in relation to business only by leveraging the multiple governance systems that shape the conduct of multinational corporations: public, civil, and corporate. Maximizing their combined leverage, however, requires a common platform from which reinforcing effects and cumulative change can be generated. The Guiding Principles provide that common platform.*⁴⁵

Case Study 6: Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All)⁴⁶

Access to sustainable energy lies at the core of the world’s development challenges. Presently, nearly one in five people lacks access to electricity. More than twice that number, almost three billion people, rely on unsustainable and unhealthy energy sources like wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste for cooking and heating. Among other things, lack of access



to sustainable energy in turn limits the capacity for companies to grow and create jobs, for children to study after dark, and for clinics to store life-saving vaccines and medicines.

Providing access to sustainable energy, however, requires a truly networked approach that leverages skills and contributions from across sectors. To play a leadership role in the energy space, the United Nations acknowledged that it needed a “new business model, one where governments, businesses, investors, and civil society gather to solve global problems.” The Sustainable Energy for All initiative—a leading incarnation of this new business model and a nascent example of a truly networked institution—represents a new cooperative path to encourage the energy transformation that the world requires.⁴⁷

The UN's focus on the significance of energy lagged well behind its broad commitment to sustainable development. It was only in the wake of the Johannesburg Summit 2002 that the UN system organized itself into “UN Energy,” an interagency coordination mechanism in which some 20+ UN entities with energy mandates participated.⁴⁸

It was not until a decade later that the Secretary General launched the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) initiative. The UN General Assembly declared 2012 the Year of Sustainable Energy for All.⁴⁹ The initiative has three goals to be met by 2030: ensuring universal access to modern energy, doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global final energy mix. Achieving these goals will require a concerted global push with investment in sustainable energy scaled up several fold. The role of SE4ALL is to set clear global objectives, to convene a network of leaders from across sectors, to mobilize and coordinate private sector investments, and to monitor progress toward achieving sustainable energy access goals.

At the Rio+20 conference in June 2012, governments took note of SE4All as an initiative of the SG. In addition, major partners of SE4All came together to publicly show their support for the initiative. On 21 June, the SG announced more than 100 commitments on sustainable energy made by governments, private sector corporations, small and medium-scale enterprises, financial institutions, donors and development banks, non-governmental organizations, artists, academia and individuals.

The Structure of SE4All is comprised of an Advisory Board, an Executive Committee and a Global Management Team headed by Kandeh Yumkella, who relinquished his post as the Director General of UNIDO in May 2013 to lead SE4All as the initiative's CEO. The Board is chaired jointly by the UN Secretary General and the President of the World Bank. Membership is composed of some forty representatives of the public and the private sectors. The Executive Committee is chaired by Chad Holliday, CEO of Bank of America, and is composed of ten members of the Board. Its primary role is to exercise oversight over the CEO.





In addition to setting objectives, convening stakeholders and eliciting private sector commitments, SE4ALL is committed to putting in place a credible measurement system to track the initiative's progress. The measurement system consists of two tracks:⁵⁰

At the global level, a global tracking framework will be assembled and consolidated to assess the reach of energy access, the share of renewables, and the rate of improvement of energy efficiency. At the level of individual commitments, commitment-makers are responsible for establishing milestones to keep track of their progress. Commitment reporting and aggregation will also reflect progress on the initiative's three objectives, but from the "bottom up."

With broad responsibilities and a multitude of social and private sector actors, SE4ALL represents a networked institution at the interface of the intergovernmental sphere. For the UN, a central tension that it needs to manage is to ensure sufficient accountability to the intergovernmental machinery to ensure a license to operate without impinging on the integrity of the network as multi-stakeholder in its core. SE4ALL is entering a critical phase. Discussions are ongoing with respect to the future institutional arrangements. A variety of options are being considered that range from SE4ALL becoming independent to the formalization of a hybrid governance model that keeps SE4ALL connected to the UN. The path chosen could have important ramifications for the way the UN manages its relationships within multi-stakeholder fora.

Case Study 7: The United Nations Global Pulse Initiative⁵¹

Set up in 2009 as an innovation arm in the office of the UN Secretary General, the Global Pulse team, headquartered in New York, has spent the past four years pioneering data-driven models of development. While a number of solution networks and non-profits are using Internet technology and open data for humanitarian ends, Global Pulse has set its sights on re-engineering traditional development projects in areas such as transportation, water supplies, health care and food distribution.

One of the key problems with major institutional development efforts today, according to Global Pulse, is that development strategies are often built using unreliable and outdated data. In fact, hundreds of millions of dollars of development assistance pour into poverty alleviation programs, health interventions, educational initiatives and much else on the basis of evidence provided through statistical surveys. Such surveys provide valuable information. But they have many limitations as well. For example, surveys cannot identify trends in real-time or over a short period of time. Because surveys capture data at a single point in time, it is difficult to measure changes in the population unless two or more surveys are done at different

points in time. Such repetition is often expensive and time-consuming, making frequent periodic surveys impractical. The field costs in remote, rural communities, in particular, are significant. And, as a result, surveys measuring the health and wellbeing of isolated populations are typically carried out annually or even less frequently than that.

Annual snapshots are inadequate in a world where the factors that determine health and wellbeing in vulnerable populations are constantly changing and subject to unpredictable external shocks. For example, such episodic reporting is incapable of responding in a timely fashion to the information needs of emergency responders in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Nor can episodic reporting provide early warning of an impending health crisis when the presence of certain risk factors, if measured, could otherwise have alerted health officials to the problem.

Of course, the global financial crisis also provided a stark reminder of the inability of traditional data-gathering methods to identify major systemic threats in a timely manner. It was the very fact that the financial crisis came as such a surprise to the international community that spurred the Secretary General to launch the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) as a special initiative, which later became the UN Global Pulse.

Collaborating with NGOs, scholars and governments through labs in New York, Jakarta and Kampala, the Global Pulse Initiative aims to help overcome these limitations by pioneering new methods to collect and analyze big data. Indeed, much of the infrastructure for collecting the data (the most costly aspect of field research) is embedded in the personal technologies and tools that individuals are already using, whether mobile phones or communication platforms like Twitter. As a result, citizens become largely passive participants in data collection without having to alter their normal routines. Such passive research techniques integrate seamlessly into everyday life, such that the data reflects the actual needs and behaviors of communities, rather than the rationalized needs and behaviors that they express to survey researchers. Even a trip on a bus or simple walk down the street can generate meaningful data.

Recent Global Pulse projects have included analysis of internet searches to detect outbreaks of disease such as the flu or cholera, tracking online food prices to follow price spikes and food shortages at the earliest stages, and using publicly shared information on social networks such as Twitter to identify emerging issues and monitor how people feel about job prospects, health and their future. Such “digital smoke signals of distress” usually come months before official statistics—and in many developing countries today, there are no reliable statistics. In one example, the UN Global Pulse team found that surges in online mentions of rice prices accurately captured price increases several months before official reports. The upshot is that data-driven insights such as these could allow UN projects and policies to move faster, adapt to changing circumstances and be more effective, helping to lift more communities out of poverty and even save lives.





The Global Pulse Initiative is the result of strong leadership and the courage to think differently within the UN. As a watchdog network, it embodies all of the key characteristics of a global solution network. Bringing together experts and decision makers from academia, as well as NGOs and governments, the Global Pulse Initiative facilitates an inter-sectoral approach that enables different parties play to their strengths. The directors of the Global Pulse Initiative ultimately make key decisions, but none of the work conducted would be possible without the involvement of diverse stakeholders. With work underway in locations as widespread as Haiti, Indonesia, Uganda, Uruguay, Romania and Ghana, the Global Pulse Initiative also maintains a global perspective, sharing practices and lessons learned across nations. Its goals are highly progressive, leading to more effective crisis assistance and tangible improvements in people's lives. Finally, with its dispersed network and its focus on extracting insights from digital data, the Global Pulse initiative would clearly not be possible without the Internet.

Global Pulse initiatives are conducted as learning projects, both for the Global Pulse team and for the local partners, who will gradually learn to use highly sophisticated big data tools independently. Projects follow a predetermined project cycle initiated by the Global Pulse team after an initial request of collaboration by a local UN office. A process to determine whether the use of Big Data is feasible ensues—the necessary “ingredients” for a project to commence are a clearly defined problem, a basic local understanding of data science, and ready-access to data and technology. Decisions to engage in projects are made by the directors of the Global Pulse Initiative, based on an assessment of impact size and chance of success.

Owing to the obvious importance of the cause, as well as the clear support provided by the Secretary General, UN donors are largely supportive, making it possible to sustain the momentum created in the pilot process. Today, the Global Pulse Initiative is fully developed and aims to continue to provide its data-driven watchdog services with its current team. Initial plans of expanding beyond New York, Jakarta and Kampala have been put on hold, so as to maintain a “lightweight” initiative with maximum maneuverability.

Case Study 8: The MicroNutrient Initiative⁵²

Over the last two decades, attention has become more focused on the critical importance of micro-nutrients in health. A number of inter-related multi-stakeholder partnerships have evolved, including in particular the MicroNutrient initiative (MI), the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), the Flour Fortification Initiative (FFI) and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN). The first of these, which we consider here, was the MicroNutrient Initiative.

The Micronutrient Initiative is a non-profit organization which aims to help governments, food producers, international agencies and other partner institutions provide essential micronutrients to those who need them. In particular, the Initiative focuses on Vitamin A, zinc, iron, iodine and iodized salt, and folic acid. The Micronutrient Initiative works in a variety of ways

and in a number of capacities in order to increase the availability, and use, of micronutrients in developing countries; they provide technical and financial assistance, help with procurement and monitoring, advocate for micronutrient programs, and educate relevant bodies about the importance of micronutrients to overall health.

In 1990, the Governments of Canada and Mali co-hosted the World Summit for Children in New York.⁵³ World leaders, governments and international representatives committed to improving the lives of children around the globe by addressing issues of education, child protection, equality and health. As a result of this summit, the Government of Canada pledged to increase the use of vitamin A around the world. To do so, they established the Micronutrient Initiative.

The Micronutrient Initiative, established in 1992, was originally focused solely on the provision of vitamin A to the world's most vulnerable children. The Initiative began as a division within the Canadian Government's International Development Research Center, and later evolved into an independent organization supported by the Canadian International Development Agency. As the Initiative grew, it began to expand beyond a focus on vitamin A to address other nutritional deficiencies. Over the years, it broadened its operational scope to include the provision of iodine, iron, zinc, folic acid and oral rehydration salts. Since its inception, the Initiative has scaled up to reach over 400 million people every year, including children and other populations particularly vulnerable to malnutrition. In an examination of economic solutions to ten of the world's biggest challenges, the 2008 Copenhagen Consensus concluded that combatting malnutrition in undernourished children, specifically providing vitamin A and zinc, provides the most beneficial return on investment.

In aiming to support existing public-health systems in developing countries, the Micronutrient Initiative often relies on help from partner agencies and organizations, including Unicef, WFP and WHO within the UN system. With UNICEF, the Micronutrient Initiative aims to deliver vitamin A to those who need it in countries around the world. National governments anticipate how many capsules of vitamin A they need for a certain period of time, and place their orders through UNICEF. The Micronutrient Initiative then coordinates with manufacturers to procure the required capsules, which are subsequently donated through an in-kind assistance program, and then distributed to the countries in need. The Initiative also coordinates with the World Food Program, to advise and support them in making sure that the food they deliver meets the requirements of the beneficiaries.

The Micronutrient Initiative has worked closely with GAIN, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition. Both organizations are members of the Home Fortification Technical Advisory Group, a group which aims to improve the fortification of locally sourced foods eaten in the home.⁵⁴ They have worked together on a number of international projects related to malnutrition, often in complementary advising or funding capacities.



Additionally, the Micronutrient Initiative is involved in Scaling Up Nutrition, a partnership that aims to tackle malnutrition through national channels by convening multiple actors from multiple sectors to provide funds, expertise and resources.⁵⁵ An interesting feature of the SUN initiative is the way it has organized itself into five networks—countries, civil society, business, donors and international organizations. Each network has its own systems of governance and accountability. The networks receive overarching strategic direction by the SUN Lead Group, which is made up of leaders from each of the five networks. The SUN Secretariat is partially funded by the Micronutrient Initiative, which is indicative of an extremely high level of involvement.

Beyond those partnerships involving international agencies and organizations, the Micronutrient Initiative has also embarked on a number of projects involving private sector companies. As previously mentioned, private companies occasionally take the form of supplier, as in the UNICEF example. Alternatively, private companies have also provided expertise; Royal DSM, a multinational health, science and materials company, works with the World Food Program to improve the nutritional quality of the WFP's "food basket" by developing micronutrient powders and fortified rice. The Micronutrient Initiative is an advisor to this partnership.⁵⁶ Similar to this example was a multi-actor partnership involving Teck, a Canadian mining company, BASF, a multi-national chemical company, and the Micronutrient Initiative. In 2012, Teck and BASF created a partnership to reduce zinc deficiency through micronutrient food solutions. Teck provided much of the funding, BASF developed the zinc solutions, and the Micronutrient Initiative provided the expertise to get the zinc to where it needed to go.⁵⁷

The Micronutrient Initiative is run by an Executive Management Committee and governed by a Board of Directors, which is composed of a collection of individuals from organizations, businesses and agencies throughout the world.

The Micronutrient Initiative's stakeholders are diverse, and include partners from governments, NGOs, UN agencies and private sector companies. The problem the initiative addresses is global in scope, as malnutrition continues to affect millions of vulnerable people every year. The governance of the Initiative is self-organized, with an independent Committee and Board of Directors. The Micronutrient Initiative resists definitive categorization, although it is perhaps most similar to an operational and delivery network or networked institution.





Case Study 9: The HIV AIDS Global Plan for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission by 2015 and Keeping Mothers Alive⁵⁸

The Global Plan aims to eliminate new cases of HIV infection among children by 2015, as well as keep their mothers alive. The progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS has not been equal around the world. While in high-income countries cases of mother to child transmission have virtually disappeared, the problem remains in low- and middle-income countries.⁵⁹ The Global Plan focuses on the 22 countries representing 90% of the burden.

To achieve its aim, the Global Plan has two main goals:

- Reduce the number of new HIV infections among children by 90%.
- Reduce the number of AIDS-related maternal deaths by 50%.

To date there has been a doubling of the number of pregnant women living with HIV receiving effective regimens. There has also been a 24% decline in new HIV infections among newborns.

The Global Plan was launched in June 2011 at the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS.⁶⁰ Its mandate includes four key areas or workstreams: (1) support for country-led implementation of the Global Plan, (2) resource mobilization, (3) communications and high-level advocacy, and (4) monitoring accountability.

The idea for the Global Plan originated with the UN and nation states, but the organizers understood the need to involve diverse partners. UNAIDS convened a meeting of development partners which was co-chaired by UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibe and United States Global AIDS Coordinator Ambassador Eric Goosby. The initiative was spearheaded by UNAIDS and the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The Plan brings together over 70 governments, private sector companies, civil society organisations, networks of people living with HIV, international and regional organizations and foundations.

To galvanize private sector engagement in support of the Global Plan, a Business Leadership Council was launched in Davos in 2012. Council members are a select group of leaders who represent media, finance, telecommunications, health, technology and retail who are committed to bringing business acumen and resources to the challenge. The Council is focusing on policy shifts, advocacy and financing, and on scaling up support in several priority countries. Current members include McKinsey & Company, Apria Healthcare Group and NBCUniversal.



The Global Plan is governed by a Global Steering Group that includes representation from the key constituencies including high-burden countries, donors, program implementers, women living with HIV, civil society organizations, foundations, corporations and the United Nations.⁶¹ After the United States and UNAIDS initially co-chaired the group, the role of chair has rotated among the members.

The Global Plan has a number of the characteristics of a GSN. The self-organized governing structure of the Global Plan is in some respects its core characteristic. The Global Plan has brought together diverse stakeholders to create the plan as well as be part of the Global Steering Group. HIV/AIDS is definitely a global problem. While the Global Plan itself does not exploit the digital revolution, many of its partners are harnessing social media and technology to raise awareness and advocate for change.

Case Study 10: Every Woman, Every Child⁶²

Every Woman, Every Child (EWEC) appropriately identifies itself as a movement rather than an organization. EWEC was launched by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in September 2010 at the United Nations Millennium Development Goals Summit. The goal of EWEC is to save the lives of 16 million women and children by 2015.

It is a global movement that mobilizes international and national action by governments, multilaterals, the private sector and civil society to address the major health challenges facing women and children around the world.⁶³ While the rate of maternal mortality worldwide dropped by almost 50% between 1990 and 2013, approximately 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth each day. EWEC has not only brought greater attention to this important issue, but has also brought together a diverse set of actors to tackle the problem.

EWEC is an umbrella effort to coordinate and spark actions in maternal and child health. It focuses on having partners from all sectors make commitments that are translated into action, which is monitored by an independent group of experts. EWEC consists of a number of elements.

The global strategy focuses on increased and sustainable investment for country-led plans, integrated delivery of health services and life-saving interventions, innovations in financing and improved monitoring and evaluation. The strategy mobilizes commitments that diverse actors undertake to advance maternal health. These are posted on an online platform. Thus far over 300 organizations have made commitments to EWEC.⁶⁴

Another important component relates to monitoring. One of the first outputs of EWEC was the establishment of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women and Children's health. The Commission presented ten recommendations to the Secretary General focusing on accountability

mechanisms. A critical recommendation was the setting up of the Independent Expert Review Group (IERG) on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health. It monitors progress on the resources committed and the results promised. The IERG produces annual reports to the Secretary General. The group is comprised of nine members and is co-chaired by Richard Horton, Editor of Lancet, and Joy Phumaphi, Executive Secretary of the Africa Leaders Malaria Alliance. A number of UN agencies are supporting EWEC, in particular by providing secretariats to the various initiatives. Prominent among them are UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA.

Another key feature of EWEC is its emphasis on a broad range of partners coming together and its belief that everyone, from UN agencies to the private sector, has an important role to play. A central focus of EWEC has been to develop innovative partnerships with the private sector. In 2011, the UN Global Compact and EWEC engagement team based at the UN foundation launched a task force with the aim of creating a guide for companies to identify barriers to private sector engagement and propose solutions that demonstrate the potential of industry collaboration in support of EWEC's agenda.

EWEC represents a highly decentralized network model with very light governance structures. While there is no formal board or steering committee, a small secretariat within the office of the Secretary General spearheads the work to advance EWEC and to ensure continued support for the strategy at the highest levels. Major partner meetings are organized as needed and hosted by existing platforms and networks that are operating in this space. 2015 marks the last year of the global strategy. It will be a critical year for the future of the initiative. Central to the discussions will be whether it continues essentially as a highly decentralized and membership driven movement or whether it takes on the characteristics of a more structured network.



Reflections on the UN's Experience

The following table rates the ten different case studies presented above in terms of the four characteristics deemed necessary to be regarded as a GSN.

TABLE TWO: The Four Characteristics of GSNs				
	Characteristic			
	Progressive Goals	Beyond One Nation State	Networking	Diverse Stakeholders
WIPO Green	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√
Business Call to Action	√√√	√√√	√√	√√
Business and Human Rights	√√√	√√√	√√	√√√
Pulse	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√
GOARN	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√
IPCC	√√√	√√√	√	√√
Micronutrient Initiative	√√√	√√√	√√	√√√
SE4ALL	√√√	√√√	√	√√√
Every Woman, Every Child	√√√	√√√	√	√√√
HIV Action Plan	√√√	√√√	√	√√√

Broadly, each of the initiatives is strongly identified with a progressive goal, each has a scope which is global in nature, and each brings together a large multi-stakeholder community. With regard to harnessing digital communication tools and platforms to achieve their goals, they all use some of these tools, but only in a few cases is the use of the Internet a primary driver of the initiative. A closer look at each of these characteristics across the range of the initiatives points to a number of interesting observations.

A critical feature which is common to all of these initiatives is that each of them is a response to the demands imposed by a rapidly changing world; each is an assertion that finding solutions to pressing challenges requires doing business in new ways. Over the last two decades, the rate of change and the size and scale of the challenges faced require innovative ways of leveraging solutions. This is the big story behind the case studies: it is about finding new solutions to the demand for energy, the threats of climate and



global epidemics, the need for inclusive business models, and the need to transfer technology, among many others. New solutions require being global in nature, harnessing multi-stakeholder participation, and can be greatly strengthened through the power of the Internet.

In all cases the initiatives are global in nature. This is to be expected since this paper is concerned with the UN's relationship to GSNs.

Most of the initiatives presented encompass broad multi-stakeholder coalitions including governments, UN agencies, the private sector and civil society. In some cases, the outreach to new stakeholder has specific dimensions. The case of IPCC is at its core a partnership between governments and scientists. The case of WIPO Green is about bringing together the demand for certain technologies with a unique source of suppliers. Pulse is about turning the tracking of data generated by millions of individuals to produce a public good (knowledge). Much more complicated is an assessment of the types of governance arrangements that have developed to provide leadership and accountability to these initiatives. We consider some of these issues below.

Finally with regard to the initiatives using the power of the Net, they all use the Net in the broad sense that they benefit from the Net to disseminate their messages and to share knowledge. This is non-trivial in its scope; because it is in the nature of multi-stakeholder partnerships to be far flung and disparate, it would in fact be hard to imagine some of these initiatives getting as far they have without the benefit of the Net. In the deeper sense of the Net being a real driver of the new solutions they are developing, GOARN, Pulse and WIPO Green would probably fall within this category. In each of these cases, the Net is a fundamental part of the new solution that is being offered.

The following table identifies the types of governance arrangements associated with each of the initiatives.



TABLE THREE: Four Dimensions of Governance				
	Role of Government			
	Government Driving Seat	Hybrid	Membership Driven	UN Driver
WIPO Green	✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Business Call to Action			✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Business and Human Rights	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Pulse	✓		✓✓	✓✓✓
GOARN	✓		✓✓	✓✓✓
IPCC	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Micronutrient Initiative	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	
SE4ALL	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Every Woman, Every Child	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
HIV Action Plan	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓

Four different types of governance arrangements have been identified. The first is where governments are clearly in the driver's seat. This implies that they not only have some role in the process but that they really drive the content and substance of the initiative. We do not believe that any of the ten case studies falls within this category, and indeed deliberately none were selected. There is no question that in a number of the case studies, governments have played a significant role but the significant point is the extent to which the UN has become engaged in multi-stakeholder partnerships in which government is one of multiple partners.

The second type of governance arrangement we characterize as hybrid governance. This pertains to situations where a number of partners exercise the functions of governance together. Often this leads to ambiguity and some blurring of accountability lines.

IPCC is an extraordinary example of an initiative which is an exercise in a partnership between the world of science and the world of politics. Arguably, the findings of scientists working on the IPCC should not be distorted by politics. On the other hand, there is lots of science around and very little political will. So arguably, the IPCC is unique as a meeting place for science and politics. The science risks getting diluted, but the political impact of a report that has been driven by scientists and approved by governments has been demonstrably significant.



Ruggie's work on the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights represents another successful blurring of roles and responsibilities. His work was formally mandated by governments and subsequently approved by governments. But at no time was the substance driven by governments. Government endorsement was essential to the legitimacy of the initiative just as the independence of Ruggie from all parties, and the inclusion of all parties in the process, was a precondition of its credibility and success.

The third type of governance identified is membership driven. We have identified WIPO Green and the Business Call to Action as membership-driven initiatives. This is because ultimately these are completely voluntary initiatives whose success depends on whether the "clients" of the initiative find it of interest to participate or not. Among others, SE4All and EWEC have also been identified as partially membership-driven. This is because the core of these initiatives is loosely-put-together coalitions and the actual drivers of the agenda are all the partners who are engaging on the agenda.

The UN is a significant driver in quite a large number of the initiatives. In some cases, the UN can pursue initiatives without issues of governance rising to the fore. BCtA, WIPO Green and Pulse are examples. Another interesting case is GOARN where WHO is the driver in establishing a network whose purpose is to be a watchdog over potential global health threats out of concern that governments may not be effectively discharging their responsibilities. We take a closer look at the profile of the UN in these initiatives below.

What seems quite evident is that the UN is reaching a fork in the road with regard to its approach to newly emerging forms of governance. The UN itself is seized with the need to address the consequences of emerging hybrid forms of governance and to put into place strong integrity measures. The UN Global Compact is playing an important role in this regard.⁶⁵

On the one hand, experience is demonstrating the need for new, hybrid governance models. On the other hand, state sovereignty remains sacrosanct. If the UN advances down the first path, it is severely reprimanded by member states. If it runs down the second path it risks irrelevance to effective problem solving. And so the UN has mastered the art of working with enough ambiguity and imagination that it creates some space within which to operate around the edges of a dominantly inter-governmental system. It can be inspiring, but it is invariably messy and carries significant long term costs.

The following table provides an overview of the profile of the UN's engagement in the case studies.



TABLE FOUR: Profile of UN Engagement					
	Role of UN				
	Convener Facilitator Catalyst	Substantive Leadership	Monitoring/ Holding Accountable	Secretariat Support	Management Implementation
WIPO Green	√√√	√		√√√	
Business Call to Action	√√√	√	√√	√√√	
Business and Human Rights	√√√	√√√	√√	√	
Pulse	√√√	√	√√√	√√√	
GOARN	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√	
IPCC	√√√	√√√		√√√	
Micronutrient Initiative	√√√	√			√
SE4ALL	√√√	√	√√	√√	
Every Woman Every Child	√√√	√√	√√	√√	
HIV Action Plan	√√√	√√√	√√	√√	√

The matrix suggests that common to all the initiatives is a role for the UN system in convening and facilitating. This comes as no surprise. The UN continues to have a unique role of providing space and legitimacy for partnership initiatives. A major challenge for the UN becomes how to nurture this function. It cannot be taken for granted and increasingly there are competitors. An inability of the UN to come to grips with the challenges it faces on governance issues could in due course impact its credibility as a convener and facilitator.

Equally striking is that in no cases does the UN have a strong overall role in program management and implementation. There are some exceptions to this, limited in scope, for example UNICEF's and WFP's roles in the Micronutrient initiative. The exceptions prove the rule because they are limited to very specific areas of intervention. The finding that the UN has a key role as catalyst and a more restricted role as implementer has significant implications. It suggests that in a spectrum of GSN-type arrangements, there is an important sequencing dimension. The UN's role can be key at the beginning. In implementation it might be one of many partners. Over time it might well hand over certain roles. In over half the case studies, discussions are currently taking place exploring the possibility of becoming independent initiatives.



“Solutions to today's challenges cannot be found with yesterday's instruments. The UN needs to be a leader in finding new ways of solving problems; otherwise, its relevance will decline.”

With respect to substantive leadership, it is clearly evident in three cases—those of Ruggie in Business and Human Rights, the output of IPCC and WHO's leadership in GOARN. In other cases, substantive leadership has been exercised by other players.

The role played by the Office of the Secretary General stands out in the data provided in Table 1 on page 12. Three of the initiatives are housed in the office of the Secretary General, namely EWEC, SE4All and Pulse. In the first two cases, these are umbrella initiatives that are attempts to convene and mobilize the energy of major stakeholders, but that do not envisage actual management out of the SG's office. On the other hand, Pulse is more of a technical response mechanism that has a clear operational profile. This raises the question of the strategy behind the location of different initiatives within the UN and ultimately of the strategy being pursued regarding the institutionalization of this agenda.

The UN over time may play predominantly a monitoring role and distance itself from operational responsibilities. Many observers believe that the function of monitoring and holding the partners accountable is a critical role for the UN. It plays on the UN's perceived legitimacy. It would also be a logical corollary of a relatively minor profile in the management and implementation of programs which could give rise to conflict of interest issues. A number of the initiatives have taken important steps to strengthen monitoring, including measurement systems and accountability frameworks (eg., BCtA, SE4All, EWEC).

A final area of UN activity is in the provision of secretariats to a number of these initiatives. The role of secretariat can incorporate the monitoring functions mentioned above. The effective running of secretariats is an important function since it often impacts directly on the performance and credibility of the GSN.

It is important to analyze for each case the relationship of funding arrangements to overall governance. Often donor governments will dominate that aspect of governance which relates to accountability for funds. On the one hand, this might have a deep influence on the type of governance that is being exercised, on the other hand it might remain limited in its scope and the existence of a donor steering committee may not materially impact on the core mission and values of the initiative. A good example of this is the role of the steering committee in the case of BCtA. In short, the significance of the funding arrangements needs to be reviewed and assessed case by case.

A review of these case studies suggests that the UN can exercise maximum leverage when it is at the interface of the intergovernmental with the non-state. The intergovernmental provides a license to operate while the non-state provides the resources, knowledge and technology that are required. The importance of this interface is specifically of relevance to meeting global challenges. These challenges can neither be met by governments alone nor by ignoring them. The concepts of orchestrator and norm entrepreneur have been developed to define different aspects



of working at the interface. What is important in a UN context is that the challenge is to fully use and expand the space that is provided for in the Charter itself. Expanding the space is a reaffirmation of the Charter. The integrity of global networks has proven itself over and over again to be a foundation for the exercise of leadership in the UN.

The United Nations and GSNs: An Agenda for Action

The acceleration of globalization over the last two decades has had an impact of historic proportion on the functioning of the global economy. The digital revolution and the power of digital communications have transformed the landscape relating to the instruments available to the international community to find solutions to global challenges.

The UN system remains fundamentally inter-governmental with respect to its governance. However, globalization has made working through partnerships and networks fundamental to its relevance and effectiveness. Today's global challenges require new working methods. Solutions to today's challenges cannot be found with yesterday's instruments. The UN needs to be a leader in finding new ways of solving problems; otherwise, its relevance will decline.

The case studies presented in this report share one thing in common. They all originate out of a quest for new solutions because old solutions were not working. How do you meet the extraordinary global energy challenge without engaging the primary producers as well as the major consumers of energy? How do you eliminate poverty without working with the engines of growth? How do you fight global disease without collaborating with both the inventors as well as the producers of vaccines and drugs and the end users? How do you ensure healthy diets without engaging food producers and consumers?

As the UN reaches out to work with new partners, it needs to tell a bold story about how the UN will play its part in ensuring that the 21st century will bring with it exciting new solutions. Working through networks, enabled by the power of technology, is a critical part of this story. It is important to emphasize that the role of government and the integrity of networks must be seen as mutually supportive principles, not as alternatives.

Currently the UN is constrained from telling this story. The pressure to avoid damaging political debates favors an approach that prefers managed ambiguity to a strong narrative. This is highly understandable; however over time, the domination of tactics over strategy carries a heavy price. Its consequence is that the UN is seen as behind the curve from the outside. This is eroding the much-coveted convening and facilitation role of the UN. For



the UN to provide leadership in this agenda, far more clarity is needed than is currently the case. We do not need clarity that takes the ambiguity out of the Charter. We need clarity that will enable the UN to be an effective partner and networker.

It is important that the UN recognize that this is not about raising resources for the UN, but about positioning itself with networks as the best way to find effective solutions. There is concern about the hazards of reputational risk. The greatest risk to the UN in the coming decade in the coming decade is of creeping marginalization in a large part of its development work. The risk of irrelevance as a result of not working with partners whose inclusion is fundamental to finding solutions is far greater than reputational risk through association.

If the UN chooses to tell this story, it has many reasons to be optimistic. First is its history. The deep roots that many parts of the system have in a wide array of constituencies places the UN system in a very good position to be able to function as a convener and to exercise that leverage. The establishment of partnerships rooted in constituencies that have long associated with different agencies in the system in fact represents a return to some of the most deeply held values of the founders of the system. At the same time, the UN needs to be selective about the value added it can bring to different networks. As Michael Porter has said, strategic leadership is about choosing what not to do.⁶⁶

Second is the UN's experience. The wide range of GSN-type arrangements that the UN is currently engaging with is tangible evidence of a willingness and recognition of the need to find new approaches to meeting today's challenges. The 10 cases presented in this paper provide an empirical base for affirming the UN's experience with networks in creating public value.

Third, 2015 is a year of unique opportunity. This story needs to be part of the wider narrative around the debates and negotiations taking place on the post-2015 development framework. Seeing this opportunity, World Vision has proposed that the post-2015 framework include that "a global, multi-stakeholder issue platform is in place for each of the new post-2015 goals, to convene diverse stakeholders and to support alignment with (and link to) national-level platforms."⁶⁷ The spirit of this proposal appears to command considerable support. It builds on the dialogue that has taken place in the meetings of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals. The High Level Panel Report on the Post 2015 Development Agenda suggests that "the concept of goal or sector specific global partnerships should be a central part of the new development agenda."⁶⁸



The UN needs to take this opportunity to think strategically. Against this background, we propose the following simple five point Action Plan:

- The Secretary General to convene a High Level Expert Group on Multi-stakeholder Partnerships. The purpose of the Expert Group is to review the evidence and propose a clear path forward, benefiting from experience with difference governance models and ensuring credible integrity measures.
- The Secretary General to commission an independent annual assessment of a core group of multi-stakeholder partnerships. This would include the introduction of rigorous measurement and an assessment of the UN's role.
- A serious strategic capability to lead this agenda within the UN is needed, building on the outcomes of the current discussion on the Secretary General's proposal for a partnership facility and embracing the experience of the Global Compact.
- The UN needs to strengthen its strategic capacity to ride on the wave of the digital revolution and big data. This has been recognized in the statement emanating from the May 2014 meeting of the UN's Chief Executive Board meeting under the chairmanship of the Secretary General. The UN again needs to become a leading voice in affirming the value of evidence-based policy making.
- Renewed emphasis needs to be put by the UN system as a whole on the establishment of accountability frameworks that will command consensus.



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- ⁵⁸ This case study is based on a draft paper prepared by Betsy Engebretson. It has benefitted from discussions by the author with Jan Beagle.
- ⁵⁹ http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/20110609_jc2137_global-plan-elimination-hiv-children_en.pdf pg. 6
- ⁶⁰ <http://www.unaids.org/believeitdoit/the-global-plan.html>
- ⁶¹ <http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/>



unaidspublication/2011/20110609_jc2137_global-plan-elimination-hiv-children_en.pdf pg. 33

- ⁶² This case study is based on a draft paper prepared by Betsy Engebretson. It has benefitted from a discussion between the author and Taona Kuo.
- ⁶³ The case study draws heavily on the EWEC website: www.everywomaneverychild.org
- ⁶⁴ website: www.everywomaneverychild.org
- ⁶⁵ See the provisions in General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/234.
- ⁶⁶ Michael Porter, "What is Strategy?" *Harvard Business Review*, 1996 Reprint 96608 Nov-Dec.
- ⁶⁷ World Vision, The Post 2015 Agenda, Discussion Paper, May 2014 p16.
- ⁶⁸ High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda 2013 p36. See also Sonja Patscheke et al, Stanford Social Innovation Review, "Shaping Global Partnerships for a Post 2015 World," February 2014.



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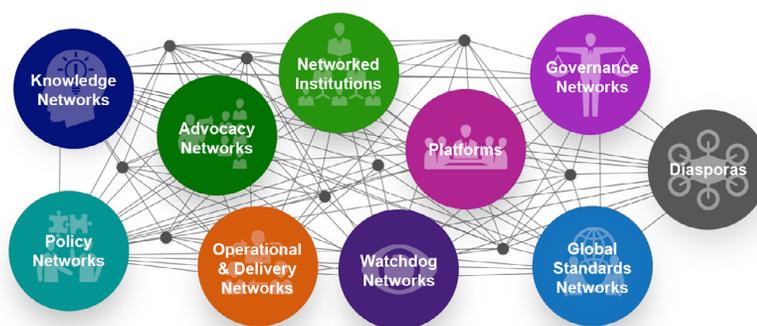
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