WE WILL BOOST PARTNERSHIPS

"Today's challenges require cooperation not only across borders but across the whole of society. We have to make the United Nations more inclusive and engage with all relevant stakeholders, including regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia and parliamentarians to ensure an effective response to our common challenges."

United Nations General Assembly, "UN75 Declaration", September 2020, A/RES/75/1.

"Democracy at the global level is both a human right in itself and a way to promote a sense of world citizenship. If we all participate in decision-making, we develop a sense of having a stake in the decisions."

Citizens for Global Solutions, USA, mixed ages and genders, managers and professionals.

UN75 DATA ON THIS COMMITMENT

UN75 dialogues

UN75 survey

Research snapshot

We organize the relevant UN75 data gathered across 2020 according to the UN75 Declaration's 12 commitments. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report "Shaping Our Future Together".

FROM THE UN75 DIALOGUES¹

WHERE WE ARE NOW

Dialogue participants observed a lack of effective partnerships in support of small and medium enterprises. Many participants from Central and Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa noted that small and medium enterprises in low- and middle-income countries, including youth-led start-ups, are often not adequately supported by governments and are facing severe challenges in accessing global markets. These entrepreneurs and innovators are not engaged by the UN to a sufficient extent.

Civil society participation in intergovernmental processes is perceived as lagging behind. Participants from across the world highlighted that a state-centric model of international cooperation, excessively restrictive criteria for access to intergovernmental processes, and lack of equitable access to technologies during COVID-19 have hindered civil society participation in negotiations and global discussions on sustainable development. For example, some participants observed that the UN and national governments are failing to engage adequately with the culture and arts sectors.

Even when civil society or other stakeholders are allowed to formally participate in international policy processes, participants highlighted the difficulties faced by representatives from lower human development countries. They discussed the cost of traveling to the UN or other international organization headquarters and visa restrictions as factors that hinder truly global participation, and create disadvantages and biased representation from stakeholders from higher human development countries.

Participants in numerous dialogues held in Northern America suggested that the culture and creative industries have lagged behind during COVID-19, despite their centrality to human well-being and the economy of many countries. Participants warned that lack of effective partnerships with the culture and arts sectors, exacerbated by the pandemic, may undermine these sectors' potential to support and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"Culture can help strengthen support for inter-civilizational dialogue and multilateralism, as the world faces the risk of ever greater divisions arising in the international community throughout this pandemic, with repercussions that may be felt for many years to come, including up to the UN's centenary in 2045."

UN Chamber Music Society of the UN Staff Recreation Council, USA, mixed ages, professions, genders.

---

1. This report contains a summary of the analysis of 1,141 UN75 dialogue summaries received from 94 countries between 2 January and 7 November 2020. The dialogue summaries were analyzed in partnership with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report "Shaping Our Future Together".

The importance of consultations with local communities is perceived as being neglected by governments. Several dialogues hosted by UN Country Offices with local community groups (in Papua New Guinea, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Venezuela, among others) highlighted a widespread perception that governments often do not know the concerns and issues of people living in rural communities.

"New forms of non-official cooperation are worth developing and hopefully will become the backbone force for creating a community with a shared future for mankind."

School of Public Affairs, Zhejiang University, China, mixed ages and genders, university faculty members.

WHERE WE WANT TO BE

Participants viewed multi-stakeholder partnerships as complementing the work of governments and international organizations. Participants from across the world would like to see multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, drive prosperity, mobilize investments and ensure better lives for all, complementing the efforts of governments and international organizations in achieving global agendas.

Participants encouraged greater engagement with local communities, civil society organizations and cultural sectors in the global sustainable development agenda. Most participants from low- and middle-income countries envisioned a future of greater inclusion of local communities living in rural areas, achieved through support provided to civil society organizations. Participants in several dialogues hosted in North America and Central and Southern Asia would like to see the engagement of the culture and arts sectors in support of global sustainability agendas being leveraged at all levels of governance.

Participants urged that public consultation be considered as a norm of global governance, harnessing digital technology to ensure global representation. Participants in dialogues hailing from all regions emphasized that participation of civil society and NGOs in governance processes at both national and international levels should become the norm, especially through the establishment of permanent fora and digital consultation platforms.

A future of greater engagement of local authorities in global governance and SDG implementation was sought. Participants from across the world want to see greater cooperation between cities, departments, regions and central governments to achieve the SDGs, and a territorialization of the global goals at the local level.

"There are no active community groups to voice the concerns of people living in the rural areas and there are no community consultations or forums to inform governments. There is no data collection, therefore there are no statistics to properly inform the government on what to do to address local needs."

Food and Agricultural Organization, Papua New Guinea, ages 31-45, community groups, mixed genders.

Harnessing the role of academia and scientific diplomacy was viewed as an important goal. Participants in several dialogues hosted by students and academic institutions in Northern Africa and Eastern and Southern Asia envisioned a future of greater cultural and scientific exchanges with academic and educational institutions. These informal networks of actors can complement formal intergovernmental negotiations in supporting greater international cooperation and promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes.

HOW WE CAN GET THERE

Dialogue participants offered suggestions for the UN to be more inclusive of the diversity of actors in the 21st century, boosting partnerships with civil society, women, youth, vulnerable groups, businesses, the research community, cities and local authorities, regional organizations and other international organizations. They urged the UN and Member states to value public consultations and multi-stakeholder platforms, promote intersectoral collaboration and public private partnerships, a greater role for local communities and local authorities, and cooperation with and within the academic sector.

Civil society and other stakeholder inclusion and engagement

Formalizing the role of civil society in international monitoring and accountability processes. Students in South Africa and Switzerland asked governments (with the encouragement of the UN Secretary-General) to formalize avenues for greater involvement of civil society in monitoring and accountability processes at the international level. For example, independent groups of experts or general citizens could be involved in external monitoring systems that could provide for systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of international agreements, with respect to UN General Assembly resolutions, to the monitoring of progress in the achievement of the SDGs and other agreements administered by the UN.

In Ghana and Mongolia, participants urged UN Member States to adopt less restrictive policies for civil society participation in intergovernmental conferences and to ensure participation of civil society is globally representative.

Avenues to promote greater engagement of the culture and arts sectors. To promote greater engagement of the culture and arts sectors, the UN can:

- Create a UN Arts Envoy Office to help share the work of the UN within the arts community and encourage artists to promote greater knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Organize more communications campaigns that use culture, music, film and visual arts to reach people, for example by partnering strategically with documentary production companies to tell more detailed stories about the UN's work and impact.

Partnering with, and supporting, civil society organisations at the national level:

- Participants from across the world asked the UN to provide greater support to civil society organizations and community service groups that are mitigating the

impacts of COVID-19 and other crises, while often receiving very limited financial and technical assistance.

- Participants in the Philippines and Tajikistan called for open data policies and access to information legislation to increase transparency.

Public consultations and multi-stakeholder platforms

"The UN places such a heavy emphasis on working with Member States. However, it should put more work into developing stronger relationships with citizens from those countries [...] The UN should shift to become a platform to provide a voice for people who don't have a voice."

World University Service of Canada, University of Alberta Local Committee, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.

Expanding the role of international public consultations

To encourage greater awareness about the UN and support a more active role of citizens, civil society, women, youth, vulnerable groups, businesses, the research community, cities and local authorities, regional organizations and other international organizations in global governance and international policy processes, the Secretary-General and actors across the UN can:

- Promote ongoing dialogues and surveys (like the UN75 initiative), to gather views and proposals from all stakeholders and from all countries.

- Explore the creation of citizen advisory committees/panels that can provide regular inputs and feedback on the activities of the UN through their countries' ambassadors to the UN.

- Harness technology to maximize truly global participation (including geographic, sectoral and social representation), while minimizing the need to travel.

Participants globally invited governments to create platforms for civil society participation in national decision-making to ensure country actions are adapted to local needs.

"We need to move away from the state-centric model of international governance towards a more citizen-oriented model."

Dialogue organized by UN Women, Cameroon, ages 31-45, mixed professions, mainly women.

Inter-sectoral collaboration and public-private partnerships

A leading role of the UN in establishing partnerships. Many dialogues want actors across the UN system to continue to establish partnerships with public and private sector actors, whenever this is necessary to complement the efforts of governments and international organizations or to increase corporate sustainability and accountability. For example:

- The UN can harnesses the contribution of philanthropic organizations and businesses towards increased research and development on sustainability problems, including in the context of COVID-19 vaccines.

- The contribution of start-ups, many of which are youth-led, should be leveraged through the organization of more contests and innovation-prizes.

In Mongolia, participants suggested that the UN could train local governments officials and civil servants to more effectively address challenges faced by farmers, artisans and small and medium enterprises in developing countries, including access to markets, information about supply chain and market requirements, enabling business environments, technology and marketing advice, and start-up financing.

Involvement of local communities and local authorities

Leveraging the role of local authorities and communities in solving sustainable development challenges. Participants asked the Secretary-General to formalize the role of cities in global governance, through a formal UN coalition of mayors, or through deepened collaboration with the United Cities and Local Government network and the Global Parliament of Mayors. In Europe, participants emphasized the role of local authorities in localizing Agenda 2030 for mapping local challenges and actions against the SDG framework.

Participants in several dialogues, including in Sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Central and Southern Asia, and Oceania, encouraged the UN and governments to support decentralized approaches to challenges and to work more closely with local level governments, provinces, districts,

and community-based groups. Participants in Central and Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa asked the UN to deliver local development projects and programs in more local languages and to pay greater attention to communities' norms, values, and cultural beliefs, out of respect for enhanced engagement and connection.

Participants in Northern Africa asked higher education institutions to engage more with local communities, for example by supporting bottom-up participatory research on poverty, livelihoods and skills to give resource-constrained households a voice.

Cooperation with, and within, the academic sector

Science diplomacy for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Participants from Northern Africa and Eastern and Southeastern Asia urged higher education institutions and the UN to establish closer links between the scientific community and decision-makers across countries, to find innovative solutions to global challenges, and to make use of the latest scientific and technological development. They also called for more opportunities for informal cooperation and scientific/cultural exchange within the academic sector.

For further recommendations from UN75 dialogues on engaging regional organizations in peacebuilding, and for engaging youth, women and girls, see Commitments three (Promote Peace and Prevent Conflicts), five (Place Women and Girls at the Centre) and eleven (Listen to and Work with Youth).

RESEARCH SNAPSHOT[2]

Academic publications

- Andonova, L. 2019 Governance Entrepreneurs: International Organizations and the Rise of Global Public-Private Partnerships.

- Andonova, L. 2018 "The power of the public purse: financing of global health partnerships and agenda setting for sustainability" Chinese Journal of Population Resources and Environment.

- Andonova, L., Assayag, M. & Piselli, D "Public-Private Partnerships" in Morin, J. & Orsini, A. (eds) 2020 Essential Concepts of Global Environmental Governance.

- Beisheim, M. & Nils, S. 2018 "Multistakeholder Partnerships for the SDGs: Actors' Views on UN Metagovernance" Global Governance.

- Bull, B. & McNeill, D. 2019 "From market multilateralism to governance by goal setting: SDGs and the changing role of partnerships in a new global order" Business and Politics.

- Duursma, A. 2017 "Partnering to Make Peace: The Effectiveness of Joint African and Non-African Mediation Efforts" International Peacekeeping.

- Horan, D. 2019 "A New Approach to Partnerships for SDG Transformations" Sustainability.

- MacDonald, A. et al. 2017 "Multi-stakeholder Partnerships (SDG #17) as a Means of Achieving Sustainable Communities and Cities (SDG #11)" in Filho, W. Handbook of Sustainability Science and Research.

- Mares, R. & Zhang, W. 2018 "工商业与人权的关键议题及其在新时代的意义——以联合国工商业与人权指导原则为中心" Journal of Southwest University of Political Science and Law.

- Me'aziz, A. 2016 "تسوية النزاعات الأفريقية الأفريقي مع هيئة الأمم المتحدة في تعاون الاتحاد" El-Tawassol.

- Pattberg, P. et al. (eds) 2013 Public–Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development.

- Raymond, M. & DeNardis, L. 2015 "Multistakeholderism: anatomy of an inchoate global institution" International Theory.

- Reinsberg, B. & Westerwinter, O. 2019 "The global governance of international development: Documenting the rise of multi-stakeholder partnerships and identifying underlying theoretical explanations" Review of International Organizations.

- Thouez, C. 2020 "Cities as Emergent International Actors in the Field of Migration: Evidence from the Lead-Up and Adoption of the UN Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees" Global Governance.

Policy research & reports

- Beisheim, M. & Ellersiek, A. 2017 Partnerships for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Transformative, Inclusive and Accountable? , German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

- Business & Sustainable Development Commission 2017 Better Business, Better World.

- Cardinal, N., Romano, J. & Sweeney, E. 2020 SDG Accountability Handbook: A Practical Guide for Civil Society, Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network.

2. This research snapshot includes a selection of top cited publications identified in the broader UN75 research mapping of academic and policy research focused on multilateralism, the United Nations, and the UN's areas of work, covering the six official UN languages. The research mapping was conducted in collaboration with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report "Shaping Our Future Together".

- Forti, D. & Singh, P. 2019 Toward a More Effective UN-AU Partnership on Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management, International Peace Institute.
- Global Commission on the Economy and Climate 2015 Seizing the Global Opportunity: Partnerships for Better Growth and a Better Climate.
- Hartley, K. 2019 Global Goals, Global Cities: Achieving the SDGs through Collective Local Action, Chicago Council on Global Affairs.
- Huang, C. Global Business and Refugee Crises: A Framework for Sustainable Engagement, Center for Global Development (2017).
- Independent Commission on Multilateralism 2017 The New Primacy of Partnerships Between the UN, Regional Organizations, Civil Society, and the Private Sector.
- Leiva Roesch, J., Doebbel, S. & Rahmaty, M. 2017 A New Way of Doing Business: Partnering for Sustainable Development and Peace, SDGs Fund, Concordia & International Peace Institute.
- Li, S., Gray, E. & Dennis, M. 2020 A Time For Transformative Partnerships: How Multistakeholder Partnerships Can Accelerate the UN Sustainable Development Goals, World Resources Institute.
- Scholte, J. A. 2020 Multistakeholderism: Filling the Global Governance Gap?, Global Challenges Foundation.
- Stimson Center et al. 2020 Roadmap for the Future We Want & UN We Need: A Vision 20/20 for UN75 and Beyond.
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees & Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development 2018 Engaging with employers in the hiring of refugees: A 10-point multi-stakeholder action plan for employers, refugees, governments & civil society.

- UN Global Compact 2020 Uniting Business in the Decade of Action: Building on 20 Years of Progress.
- World Health Organization 2020 "Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator".
- 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator 2020 The SDG Partnership Guidebook: A practical guide to building high impact multi-stakeholder partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Commentaries & opinion pieces

- Gleckman, H. 2019 "They Call it Multistakeholderism. Where Does that Leave the UN?" PassBlue.
- Jerbi, S. 2017 "The UN can save itself by working effectively with outside partners" The Conversation.
- Moreira da Silva, J. & Modéer, U. 2019 "Here's how to strengthen development cooperation — and meet the SDGs" Devex.
- Pierce, A. 2018 "Why SDG 17 is the Most Important UN SDG?" sopact.

Data resources & tools

- Sommerer, T. & Tallberg, J. 2017 "Transnational Access to International Organizations 1950–2010: A New Data Set" International Studies Perspectives.
- Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform [UN].
- Westerwinter, O. 2019 "Transnational public-private governance initiatives in world politics: Introducing a new dataset" Review of International Organizations.