

The Geneva Partnership Forum

66 Boulevard Carl-Vogt – September 3, 2015

The first Geneva Partnership Forum brought together about 50 partnership practitioners and experts from a diverse set of companies, international organizations, NGOs, and academia, who all contributed to the vibrant discussions in the various plenary and workshop sessions

Context: Complex societal challenges (e.g., related to poverty, education, health, and climate change) call for dynamic and innovative solutions. By bringing together multiple stakeholders to combine their strengths, public-private partnerships (PPPs) and other new forms of boundary-spanning collaboration have the potential to offer solutions for today's and tomorrow's challenges. Brokering, governing, and scaling up a successful partnership can, however, be challenging. The first Geneva Partnership Forum sought to foster cross-sector learning on the process and content of successful partnerships.



Executive Summary:

As was noted by Ros Tennyson in her keynote, “Partnering: Probable Myths and Possible Truths”, successfully brokering and managing partnerships is both an art and a science, and a successful partnership requires both. The Geneva Partnership Forum was designed to encourage individuals from multinational corporations, international organizations, NGOs, and academia to think beyond their sectoral or thematic silos. The general focus of the Forum was on *how* partnerships can be more efficient in their resource use and effective in their delivery.

Below are a few themes that came up throughout the day:

- *New Skills and Tools:* Speakers and participants agreed that the journey of partnering, the learning that results, and the unexpected outcomes that emerge can exceed anticipated results. In some cases, it was acknowledged, this value can be difficult to capture through traditional approaches to measurement. It was also agreed that there are very specific collaborative skills and tools which enable partnerships to be successful, and that these tools are different than those used for internal project management.
- *Relationships are Key:* One of the themes that was woven throughout the day's conversations was that of transformative partnerships, which over time build the skills, knowledge and know-how that enable them to sustain themselves, have the ability to generate benefits for all participating partners while shifting the landscape of the issue being addressed. In order for transformative partnerships to be successful, participants agreed that strong relationships and communication are keys to success.
- *Blending “Hard” and “Soft” Skills:* In two parallel workshops participants discussed how to measure impact and how to use differences as an asset. Interestingly, both workshops ended up converging on the importance of hard and soft skills. When measuring impact, participants also discussed the importance of measuring the health of the partnership in addition to the project;

and when partners are starting a new partnership with many differences, trust may be an outcome rather than a starting point. In both cases, transparency and clear communication are enablers of success.

- *When you Engage Matters:* During the lunch break, participants engaged in an interactive learning activity in which they noted barriers and enablers to partnerships, and placed them on a chart related to when in the partnership they were most critical. According to this exercise, the success or failure of a partnership was largely attributed to the “strategy / building” phase. This was even true for issues related to the end of a partnership, which participants agreed should be explored up front and not left to be decided later in the partnership.

Overall, participants agreed that partnering is hard work, and the investment in understanding one’s partners cannot be underestimated. While one speaker pointed out that he might look at 50 possible partnerships in a year before choosing a single one to invest in, he highlighted that pickiness in partnering is often undervalued. Despite notes of caution, however, there was a high level of optimism in the room regarding the potential of partnerships alongside a realistic view on the challenges involved.



The day concluded with a group discussion around of the future of partnerships, including possible themes for future exploration and a call for more transformative partnerships that enable system change. Potential enablers that were highlighted included more flexibility in partnership models, clearer objective-setting and alignment, and a stronger focus on complementarity for greater impact.

Overall, the first Geneva Partnership Forum was deemed a success. The partnership space is a very dynamic one, and we want to ensure that we can be relevant to you. Please let us know how the Geneva Partnership Forum can help you partner better!

We look forward to welcoming you to a more engaging and more interactive event next year.

Gilbert Probst, Co-Founder, Geneva PPP Research Center and Managing Director, World Economic Forum

Lea Stadler, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Geneva PPP Research Center

Randall Krantz, Founder and Principal, Constellate Global

Session Summaries

09:30-10:00 Keynote Address: “Partnering: Probable Myths and Possible Truths”

- Keynote address by *Ros Tennyson (Partnership Specialist, Founder / Development Director – Partnership Brokers Association)*



In delivering her keynote presentation, Ros Tennyson explained that she wanted to challenge conventional wisdom about partnerships. Starting with the subtitle of her presentation, “Probably Myths & Possible Truths”, she set out to challenge the truisms that many experienced practitioners have allowed themselves to believe. By doing so, her goal was to get participants to think differently about why and how they partner.

The word partnership is used to label many things these days, and a partnership can mean different things to different people. It may imply a business agreement, an exchange of funds, a transaction or a relationship, a distraction, a conundrum, or just the next way of getting things done. It was noted that for many people a partnership is primarily about resource mobilization, but a partnership could represent and grow to be something much richer.

Much discussion around partnerships focuses on the challenges. This is in part because our mental model of a partnership is very simple: two or more partners coming together to accomplish something that none could accomplish alone. The reality is that reality is very complex, and there are many factors that impact partnerships, which are not fleshed out in our mental models: alignment, common objectives, leadership, intermediaries, definitions of success, etc.

Sometimes, we need to understand the perspective from which people are speaking in order to place it the right context and use the information properly. Individuals in partnership plays at least 5 roles that inform the perspective from which they speak:

1. A representative of their organization or sector
2. An expert with particular skills, competencies and experience
3. A personality with feelings
4. Someone with a specific cultural background
5. Someone with a preferred work style

By understanding the voice with which a partner is engaging in a conversation, it becomes possible to empathically understand their perspective. Of course, it was pointed out, a first step is understand the source of one's own perspective. As Ros put it simply, "Know thyself".

In addition to knowing oneself, it is also important to know one's partnership. In exploring how a partnership might be a vehicle for transformation and innovation, it can be helpful to explore whether a partnership is conforming, reforming or transforming. These three words were explained, respectively, as repackaging business as usual, delivering alongside the mainstream, and challenging the mainstream.

As partnerships seek to explore the boundaries of transformation, this is where experience comes into play. The more we push partnerships to be transformative, the more we require support from partnership brokers. They can hold things steady and keep partners aligned while creating a safe space to experiment and push boundaries. A broker may be the essential ingredient in helping partnership to be innovative and capable of challenging and changing the rules. It was also noted that partnership brokers need not be neutral; transformative partnerships need a passionate, energized, change-maker who can energize partners and build alignment while mediating their differences and difficulties – something that takes professional skill.

The presentation concluded with an important question, "Where does one start?" Followed by a logical answer, "Start with where you are." Tennyson iterated that it is important to recognize that, "Partnerships are not a solution to every challenge. The first exploration is do we need to partner?" If you do partner and want to be transformative, then you must recognize that partnering is both an art and a science. While the concept of collaboration is simple, it takes a range of skills, patience, impatience, persistence, vision, rigor, and, above all, courage.

Note: The slides of the keynote address will be sent to the participants separately.

10:00-11:00 Plenary 1: “Partnership Update”

Guiding questions:

1. What are the latest innovations in different forms of boundary-spanning partnerships?
2. To what extent can we learn across different types?

Moderated by: Petra Kuenkel, Executive Director, Collective Leadership Institute

Panel Speakers:

- *Lionel Bodin, Global Programmes, Europe Lead, Accenture Development Partnerships;*
- *Juan Luis Coderque Galligo, Head of the Corporate Partnerships Unit, International Committee of the Red Cross;*
- *Dr. Timothy Geer, Director, Public Sector Partnerships, WWF International;*
- *Nicole Thonnard Voillat, Director Sustainability, BATA Brands SA*

Key Points

- (1) Partnership is appealing when it increases an organization’s capacity to deliver on its mission.
- (2) The journey of partnering, the learning that results, and the unexpected outcomes that emerge from the partnership have value that is on par with, and in some cases can exceed, the results that were originally anticipated.
- (3) Transformative partnerships tap an understanding of the system in which they operate and relationships with partners “on the ground.”



Quotes

- “Think of partnering not partnership.” Lionel Bodin
- “Be pragmatic; measurement is not all.” Juan Luis Coderque Galligo
- “For a partnership, income is not an outcome.” Dr. Timothy Geer
- “Be bold.” Nicole Thonnard Voillat “Trust that business is not just about business but making a difference in the communities where they work.”

Synopsis

The moderator launched the first plenary session with a question to the panelists about their motivation to partner. A common theme for all panelists was the appeal of partnership to increase an organization’s capacity to deliver on its mission. Ms. Voillat noted that for BATA Brands, a family company with a presence in over 90 countries, making a difference to the communities in which they operate is a long-standing commitment. Dr. Geer (WWF) noted that while mobilizing resources is often an important motivation to partner, “income is not an outcome.” The goal of partnership is to mobilize resources for an organization’s mission, not merely for the organization itself. For the ICRC, Mr. Coderque acknowledged that partnership plays a role in resource mobilization, but even more importantly, in enhancing the organization’s “capacity to deliver,” to stay relevant, and to anticipate and adapt to changing circumstances. Mr. Bodin highlighted Accenture’s role in partnerships that help African countries capitalize on Coca-Cola’s supply-chain expertise to improve in drug delivery in their countries.

Panelists agreed that the journey of partnering, the learning involved, and the unexpected outcomes that emerge from a partnership often have value that is on par with, or in some cases exceed, the results originally anticipated. In some cases, it was acknowledged, this value can be difficult to capture through traditional approaches to measurement. It was also noted that partnership can change an organization’s perspective. Dr. Geer indicated that WWF International’s partnership with the African Development Bank presented an opportunity for the WWF to assist with de-risking infrastructure projects, many of which fail for social and environmental reasons. The WWF recognized that engaging around infrastructure in this new way could lead to outcomes consistent with their overall mission.

When asked to consider the elements that are central to “transformative partnerships” participants and panelists pointed to: 1) a clear view of how the partnership is linked to larger strategic goals (“the big picture”); 2) an understanding of the systems within which change must occur and what changes are necessary (including attention to an organization’s culture with respect to partnering); and 3) effective communication within the partnership and with external stakeholders. Cultivating relationships also appears to matter greatly. These relationships include both the organizational partners as well as individuals in the communities being served. For BATA, collaborating with local consumers in Malawi to recycle their “Sofia” shoes led to both local job creation and a more environmentally friendly shoe. Mr. Bodin pointed to the personal relationships between members of Coca-Cola’s supply ecosystem and individuals in the Ministry of Health that persisted after Accenture’s formal exit as important for the continued success of effective drug delivery.

Finally, thinking about the future of partnerships, panelists pointed to: the importance of valuing partnerships in ways not necessarily captured through traditional measurement; the centrality of co-ownership in effective partnership arrangements; the value of focusing on “partnering” (which is dynamic) as opposed to the partnership (more static); and the importance of trust, and specifically the trust that business has a real interest in making a difference where they work.

11:15-12:30 Workshops in Parallel

Workshop 1: “Design for Impact”

Guiding questions:

1. How are partnerships shifting from showcasing outputs to measuring outcomes?
2. What is the latest in change theory, monitoring, and evaluation of performance on the ground?
3. How can this be designed into a partnership from the outset?

Facilitated by: Hilary Nathan, Independent Partnership Specialist

- *Conversation starter: Nan Buzard, Executive Director at International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)*

Key Points

- Measurement is critical although the real value may come in something that is difficult to assess.
- Monitoring, evaluating, and assessments are often viewed as unpleasant, mandatory tasks. However, evaluation is more than simply developing a final report: It involves the application of a whole set of tools to reflect on a regular, ongoing basis to have a better awareness of what happens and why, and of how the partners can improve the input, the processes, structures, and outcomes of their partnership.

Synopsis

Workshop 1 started with thought-provoking insights by Nan Buzard (ICVA) highlighting that the art of partnership goes back to communication and how people interact. With respect to measuring impact, the crux is then whether the partners have clarified the kind of impact they strive for and how they are going to achieve it. Measuring impact before, during, and after the partnership is critical for continuous improvement – improvement as a partnership, as a partner organization, and as a partnership community as such.



Addressing the question of how to shift from showcasing outputs to measuring outcomes, the participants agreed that in addition to tangible partnership outcomes, the real value of partnering might often involve outcomes that are hard to measure, for example, the narratives it creates. Second, measuring impact requires acknowledging different timescales. For example, proxies are needed when impacts will occur far in the future and beyond the partnership’s implementation work. In this regard, indicator systems provide value. However, the cost of such indicator systems should be taking into account and be balanced by taking a more pragmatic view. Finally, the participants agreed on the value

of intermediate outcomes to keep momentum and to check whether important milestone towards the indented impact have been achieved.

With respect to the latest change theory, monitoring, and evaluation on the ground, participants outlined the value of building on successful examples when designing and using monitoring, evaluating, and assessments tools. In challenging times, focus on the baseline question “Why are we in a partnership and what do we want out of it?” helps as an anchor point. Likewise, constant communication and transparency appeared as key ingredients: You are not credible if you are not talking about the challenges. Further best practices discussed involved (1) distinguishing between results monitoring and process monitoring, (2) integrating after-action-reviews as a regular process component, (3) defining quality indicators around the partnering process (e.g., shared ownership), (4) creating a collective review culture, (5) adding outsider feedback/response tools as initiation to a conversation and learning process, and (6) carefully handling the involvement of 3rd party monitoring (who, when, and how).

Workshop 2: “Unity in Diversity”

Guiding questions:

1. What does it take to build genuine commitment despite different sector interests?
2. How can the partners establish a common language among stakeholders despite different backgrounds?

Facilitated by: Rainer Gude, Chargé de Mission and UN representative at Initiatives of Change

- *Conversation starter: Ros Tennyson (Partnership Specialist, Founder / Development Director – Partnership Brokers Association)*

Key Points

- (1) When talking about building trust and establishing a common language, we have a tendency to ignore the many partnerships in which the partner composition was not a fully voluntary act.
- (2) Trust is nurtured by mutual respect, by knowing what the other has to contribute, by speaking a simple and clear language, and by developing shared achievements through pilot projects.

Synopsis

Workshop 2 started with provocative thoughts by Ros Tennyson, questioning, for example, whether trust is a precondition for a partnership or whether it is rather the outcome of the partnership itself. While some actors have the luxury to work with trusted partners, other partner compositions are less voluntary in the sense that there might be no alternative partner to fill the resource gap. Partnering then means accepting and building on the diversity involved.



The subsequent group discussions elaborated on common practices in dealing with diversity. These included in particular the ability to listen, to adopt precise and simple language, and to show respect. Pilot projects in which the partners start with a less complex project may help establish a common language and allow to take a step back when necessary. While power differences among partners might always be present, respect for mutual resource contributions is critical, as is transparency and the leverage of a shared objective. Moreover, the partners may build on an external facilitator to handle tensions related to power.

The discussion concluded with outlining the factors that enable genuine commitment despite different sector interests. They involve (1) mutual benefit (all along the partnership life cycle, not just at the beginning), deep respect for the others, and authority to build and negotiate the partnership, (2) collaboration agreement to back discussions, and (3) investment of time and effort to learn each other's language and assumptions.

13:45-15:00 Workshops in Parallel

Workshop 3: "Governance & Accountability"

Guiding questions:

1. How formal or rigid do partnership governance structures need to be?
2. What are the best practices in terms of governance structures and shared discretion for effective partnerships?

Facilitated by: Kate Halff, Executive Secretary at Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)

- *Conversation starter (1): Ivana Milovanovic, Coordinator, World Health Organization*
- *Conversation starter (2): Mark Halle, Vice-President, Strategy & Executive Director, IISD-Europe*

Key Points

- (1) Partnerships are meant to address a dysfunction in the system – however, we must also take into account the transaction costs involved and the skills it needs to manage these endeavors.
- (2) Important challenges related to governance and accountability involve the design of suitable decision-making processes, the management of coordination and administrative tasks, and interest alignment when it comes to external communication.

Synopsis

Workshop 3 started with critical insights presented by Mark Halle (IISD Europe) and Ivana Milovanovic (WHO): Partnerships are made of players with very different strengths and abilities - some are leaders while others bring specialized input. At the same time, when taking a broader perspective, partner organizations often compete with one another (e.g., for funding, clients, networks, and profiles). These patterns have to be acknowledged when addressing questions such as: How are decisions made in partnerships – by consensus? How are issues addressed when they arise? Who is committed to bring what? What level of the organizations is engaged? Moreover, what are the criteria for admission and dismissal of members? As partnerships evolve, initial partners may become irrelevant or even toxic in the process - just as it may make sense to bring new ones in. In this context the idea of "sunsetting

partnerships” was raised: They go out of business at a certain, predefined date unless specifically revalidated.

Deepening the discussion on the challenges involved in accountability, the participants agreed that it has not only a legal dimension within the boundaries of the partnership, but also a moral one, especially when it comes to being accountable towards the beneficiaries. To this end, transparency is essential, yet has to be designed into the partnership. Moving to the question of how to balance the requests for stability and flexibility in the governance structure, the discussion outlined that partners should not fall into the trap of keeping the partnership largely informal. Informality is often a source of misunderstandings and irresponsibility. In turn, it is more helpful to promote the flexible adaptation of regulations and structures as the partnership grows and develops. The participants underscored that whatever changes are made, it remains important to be clear on who makes decisions on what and to whom it is reported ultimately.

Subsequently, the discussion turned towards best practices for designing suitable governance structures and for ensuring shared discretion for effective partnerships. Key ideas and suggestions included:

- (1) governance by peer social/formal pressure (especially if many stakeholders are involved),
- (2) governance by co-created formal structures,
- (3) governance by adoption of one partner’s governance arrangements,
- (4) the use of multiple governance arrangements for different purposes within one partnership, and
- (5) governance by role modeling (new way of operating).

In closing the discussion, the participants highlighted that there is no “one-size-fits-all” governance model for partnerships. It has to be tailored to the partnership’s purpose, the partners’ characteristics, and the partnership environment.

Workshop 4: “Case Study: Corporate Partnering”

This session focuses on the corporate partner’s perspective and will allow participants to strip down real life example of corporate partnership to its bare essentials and explore what worked and what didn’t.

Facilitated by: Paola Geremicca, Fundraising and Communications Director, Better Cotton Initiative

- *Conversation starter (1): Linda Freiner, Flood Resilience Program Manager, Zurich Insurance Group*
- *Conversation starter (2): Bineta Mbacké, Public Affairs Manager (Partnerships), Nestlé*

Key Points

- (1) Corporate partnership is growing in response to the complexity of the global landscape.
- (2) Corporate partnerships work when they create shared value - but challenges must be addressed to facilitate this outcome.
- (3) Partnerships are more likely to “work” when the shared activity is related to the core



business of each partner. Alignment of interests is central to effective partnerships.

Synopsis

Participants agreed that shared value can be created through successful corporate partnerships. At the same time, however, they recognized that neither partnering nor successful outcomes are a foregone conclusion. In her introductory remarks Ms. Bineta Mbacké of Nestlé noted that partnering is hard work, and that while corporate partners have much to bring to the table, there is also a need to be humble, acknowledge unknowns, and create an environment of trust in which partners can work together constructively. Follow-on small group discussion highlighted these and other issues when considering challenges and good practices.

With respect to challenges, it was noted that while there are good examples of how corporate partnerships make a positive impact, there are also areas in which corporate engagement has been slow. Unlocking investment for off-grid energy access - essential for rural areas but is not necessarily profitable - has been challenging, for example. In other instances NGOs may be reluctant to engage where “shared value” appears to involve corporate pursuit of profits. Valuation by NGOs of what they bring to the partnership arrangement, balancing the need for short-term performance with long-term objectives, and overcoming mistrust were also noted as hurdles for successful partnerships.

In thinking about good practices, the alignment of core interests emerged as a central theme. Participants noted that partnerships are more likely to “work” when the shared activity is related to the core business of each partner. Early on, participants heard from Ms. Linda Freiner about the experience of Zurich Insurance, which has moved toward a model of active engagement with partners. Specifically, as part of its flood resilience program, in addition to the key contributions of its partners, Zurich puts its own risk reduction expertise at the service of projects in the field. In small group discussions, participants also pointed to the value of investing time and effort in cultivating the partnership at an early stage, clarifying and managing expectations, developing trust and mutual respect, and recognizing when to exit (as well as when to enter) partnerships.

Participants noted that corporate partnership is growing in response to the complexity of the global landscape. Discussion regarding the future included mention of inclusive business models, the need to engage all stakeholders, and the potential for wider alliances around big picture change agendas, within which one might find different partnerships. Dialogue reflected optimism regarding the potential of partnerships and a realistic view on the challenges involved.

15:30-16:15 Plenary 2: “Completing the Partnership Cycle: Winding Down or Scaling Up?”

Guiding questions:

1. How can the life cycle of a partnership be planned for the greatest impact over a fixed time period?
2. When is the right time to phase out a partnership?
3. What are best practices and when is it appropriate to scale up change to the next level?

Moderated by: Nicholas Davis, Head of Society and Innovation, World Economic Forum

Panel Speakers:

- (1) Paola Geremicca, Fundraising and Communications Director, Better Cotton Initiative;
- (2) Patrick Gordon, Senior Advisor, Technology Partnerships, UN OCHA;
- (3) Marti van Liere, Director, Nutritious Foods for Children and Mothers, GAIN
- (4) Alex Wong, Head of Global Challenge Partnerships, Member of the Executive Committee, World Economic Forum;

Key Points

- (1) Early and intensive investment in cultivating the relationship among partners and planning for success pays off over time.
- (2) Cultivating trust is vital. This takes continuous investment and continuous communication within partnerships.
- (3) Failure can be viewed from different angles. In some cases the partnership itself may not fail, but poor management of the relationship can result in lost opportunities to leverage the partnership effectively.
- (4) In some instance exiting a partnership leads to dissolution of shared activities; in other instances exiting is a transition stage, leading to an evolution of the partnership arrangement. Sufficient time, planning, and resources contribute to success in the latter case.

Quotes

- “Align the speed along the journey: Never walk too far ahead of your partner, never walk too far behind.” Paola Geremicca
- “Shared value is about ‘what do you / do we get out of it.’ Shared values is about the values that motivate you / motivate us. Sometimes [shared values] exist and sometimes you need to build them.” Patrick Gordon
- “Co-creation is key.” Marti van Liere “It requires continuous investment, continuous communication: Trust comes by foot but leaves on a horse.”
- “Never underestimate the time required for transition.” Alex Wong

Synopsis

The afternoon plenary session began with a look at successes and failures in partnering. In thinking about successful partnership arrangements, a common theme was the importance of investing sufficient time at the outset to cultivate a productive relationship. Mr. Patrick Gordon of UN OCHA highlighted the value of early relationship building to improve the likelihood of success over the life of the partnership. This includes developing multiple relationships within a partner organization to mitigate the risks associated with (what can be high) staff turnover. Moreover, he noted that he may evaluate a numerous potential partnerships in order to identify the handful (or even one) to develop. Ms. Geremicca noted the importance of pacing the relationship and ensuring that neither partner finds herself too far ahead or behind the other. Ms. van Liere underscored that trust is vital, and that cultivating it takes continuous investment and continuous communication within partnerships. She also pointed to the value of defining and monitoring milestones (particularly “low hanging fruit”) that can move the partnership forward. In speaking about the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) engagement in the Jordan Education Initiative, Mr. Alex Wong identified three early contributors to success: setting clear

expectations regarding the WEF’s role from the outset, engaging a champion early on (in this case the Jordanian royal family), and early planning for a transition to facilitate the WEF’s exit.

Panelists viewed failures from different angles. They pointed to partnerships hampered by inertia, inattention to operational issues, weak co-creation, and missed opportunities. Ms. Geremicca described a case where inertia initially kept partners together despite an absence of common objectives and an unproductive working relationship. Ultimately, the partnership was dissolved. Another example highlighted the damage to trust that can result when one partner does not “deliver” on its commitment (due in this case to overlooked operational issues). Ms. van Liere described a case where public commitment to partnership proved premature. A lack of co-creation meant that stakeholder buy-in and substantive commitments lagged behind political enthusiasm. Thus, despite a public commitment to partnership, only small pilot projects were eventually launched. Mr. Gordon noted that a partnership itself may not necessarily fail, but poor management of the relationship can result in lost opportunities to leverage the partnership effectively.

The plenary session also included discussion of when and how to exit a partnership. In some cases, exit referred to the dissolution of the partnership. This was the case for the partnership discussed by Ms. Geremicca above and also a case presented by an audience member, in which a decision not to renew a partnership resulted from the conclusion that parties were no longer aligned in their approach. In another case, exit corresponded with an evolution of the partnership. This was the case for the World Economic Forum, which planned its exit from the Jordan Education Initiative from the outset. Both planning and financing for a transition period were crucial to a “successful exit” and to the evolution of the Initiative. Finally, Mr. Wong noted that, because transformative partnerships often exist to fill a gap the international cooperative architecture, exiting such partnerships may require creating a new structure if what exists in the landscape is not fit for purpose.

16:15-17:00 Mapping Exercise: “The Future of Partnerships”

Facilitated by:

- *Dr. Lea Stadler, Geneva PPP Research Center and*
- *Randall Krantz, Founder, Constellate Global*

This session built on an integration exercise in which the participants had to note emerging ideas regarding the key challenges and success factors of partnerships applying to the individual, organizational, and partnership levels along the different partnership life cycle stages. Key traps related to:

- (1) considering partnerships as an outcome not as a tool,
- (2) focusing on the “science” side of partnering at the detriment of the human side, and
- (3) lack of alignment of organizational missions and subsequent lack of organizational buy-in as well as the lack of collaborative capacity at the individual level.



Among the success factors, the importance of respect, transparency, communication, and commitment of time and energy was repeatedly noted. Likewise, the need to keep focus while opening up to new opportunities, and a constant awareness of what you want the partnership to achieve and why you partner were considered essential.

Additionally, the exercise asked about the future of partnerships. Emerging themes here related to the call for transformative partnerships that enable system change. Starting points towards enhancing partnerships' transformative capacity related to

- (1) the design of more flexible partnerships models where partners come in for a specific cause under a larger partnership umbrella,
- (2) objective-driven, time bound but renewable partnership structures at the project level, and
- (3) partnerships that acknowledge the partners' complementarity and turn the focus from within the partnership boundaries to the partnership's impact on the ground.

On this basis, the discussion revealed critical topics that call for more in-depth analysis, particularly during the next Geneva Partnership Forum:

(1) **Dealing with unhealthy, imperfect, or highly disruptive partnerships:** How do we push "not-so-real-partnerships" into more aspirational ones? How have people learnt to improve their coordination and communication practices to revive dormant partnerships or to navigate disruptive partnerships? When facing disruptive partnerships: How do we get the potential partners with limited capacity into the partnership? How do we collaborate with NGOs that are challenging norms and partner organizations?

(2) **Evaluation, measurement, and capacity building for partnering:** How can we make sure that partnerships are impact-focused? How can we help other partner organizations build internal partnering capacity? Moreover: "Follow the money" – How do financing arrangement affect partnership dynamics and what kind of new funding structures are emerging?

(3) **Partnerships' contribution to system change:** How do partnerships enable, or sometimes rather prevent, system change? When should partnership managers consider scaling up and when rather not? What are the traps in scaling-up tested solutions? And finally, how do we move towards a more integrated partnership landscape (e.g., design systemic partnership umbrella structures with more flexible partnership projects below)? How to address the inherent challenges, such as dealing with competition and tensions between global efficiency and local adaptation and ownership?

We look forward to continuing the
discussion!

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Management, St Gallen).



List of Participants

	Organization	Name	Title
1	Accenture Development Partnerships	Lionel Bodin	Global Programmes; Europe Lead
2	Bata Brands SA	Nicole Voillat	Director Sustainability
3	Better Cotton Initiative	Paola Geremicca	Fundraising and Communications Director
4	BioForce International	Julie Thuriere	Responsable Département Accompagnement
5	BioForce International	Rory Downham	Learning and Development Director
6	BioForce International	Catherine Voilland	Responsable des Pôles de Compétences
7	Collective Leadership Institute	Petra Kuenkel	Executive Director
8	FSG Social Impact	Sonja Patscheke	Director
9	GAIN	Marti van Liere	Director, Nutritious Foods for Children and Mothers
10	GAIN	Beatrice Montesi	Executive Director's Office
11	Geneva PPP Research Centre	Dr. Lee Mizell	Independent Consultant
12	Global Footprint Network	Sebastian Winkler	Vice President, Program & Outreach
13	ICRC	Juan Luis Coderque Galligo	Head of Corporate Partnerships Unit
14	ICRC	Alice Maillot	Project Manager, Corporate Partnerships Unit
15	ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies)	Nan Buzard	CEO
16	IFRC	Julienne Corboz	Senior Research Officer
17	IISD	Mark Halle	European Representative
18	Impact Hub Geneva	Felix Stähli	Co-Founder
19	Independent	Dr. Barb Wigley	Humanitarian Consultant
20	Independent	Hilary Nathan	Legal & Partnership Specialist
21	Independent	François Bardinet	Program Manager and Sustainable Development Expert
22	Initiatives of Change	Rainer Gude	Chargé de Mission
23	IUCN	Giuditta Andreaus	Private Philanthropy
24	Nestlé	Bineta Mbacké	Public Affairs Manager (Partnerships)
25	P&G	Vanessa Catherine	Community Center Project leader/ Responsible Business Developer
26	Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN in Geneva	Petra Demarin	Associate Director, International Development Initiatives

27	P-HAP (International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection)	Markus Forsberg	Membership and Communications Coordinator
28	P-HAP	Caterina Luciani	Programme Coordinator
29	Practical Action	Barnaby Peacocke	Director of Programme Development
30	SIG Solar Plants	Christelle Anthoine Bourgeois	Project Manager - Solar Plants - New Renewable Energy
31	Sight & Life	Kesso van Zutphen	Consultant
32	Steering Committee of Humanitarian Response (SCHR)	Kate Half	Executive Secretary
33	Sustainable You	Sophie Wisbrun Overakker	Chief Sustainable Marketing Officer
34	The Graduate Institute Geneva	Prof. Liliana Andonova	Professor
35	The Partnership Brokers Association	Ros Tennyson	Founder and development Director
36	UNHCR	Shalini Mehan	Livelihood Consultant
37	UNHCR	Merry Bryne	Livelihood Consultant
38	UNOCHA	Patrick Gordon	Senior Technology Advisor, Chair WGET Forum
39	Virgine Unite	Lara Birkes	Manager
40	Vodafone	Christele Delbe	Head of Sustainability for Enterprise
41	WHO	Ivana Milovanovic	Country Cooperation and Collaboration with the UN System
42	World Economic Forum	Alex Wong	Head of Global Challenge Partnerships, Member of the Executive Committee
43	World Economic Forum	Nicholas Davis	Senior Director, Head of Society & Innovation
44	World Economic Forum	Florian Reber	Manager, Tropical Forest Alliance
45	World Vision International	Marisa Vojta	Manager, Resource Mobilization and Strategic Partnerships
46	WWF	Dr. Timothy Geer	Director, Public Sector Partnerships
47	WWF	Jennifer Meunier	Account Manager
48	Zurich Insurance	Linda Freiner	Flood Resilience Program Manager

Organizing Team

	Organization	Name	Title
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4	University of Geneva; Geneva PPP Research Center	Ozgu Karakulak	PhD Student; Research & Teaching Assistant
5	University of Geneva	Amira Benali	PhD Student; Research & Teaching Assistant
6	University of Geneva	Walid Shibib	PhD Student; Research & Teaching Assistant
7	University of Geneva	Alessio Devito	Masters Student