OF PARTNERSHIP(S), NON-STATE ACTORS AND MULTISTAKEHOLDERISM

Karolin Seitz | G2H2, Geneva | 17 May 2019
1. **Looking back**: The rise of 'multistakeholderism’

2. **Where are we now?** Forms and scope of the partnership approach in global governance

3. **Pro and Contra**: Opportunities, risks and side-effects

4. **What has to be done?** Perspectives and proposals
1st Phase (1945-ca. 1970): Cooperation and Support
2nd Phase (1970s-1980s): Confrontation and Distrust
3rd Phase (since 1990s): Partnerships

1 – The rise of 'multistakeholderism'

UN Photo/Michos Tzovaras
At the WHO

Gro Harlem Brundtland, WHO Director General:

“We must reach out to the private sector [...] The private sector has an important role to play both in technology development and the provision of services. We need open and constructive relations with the private sector [...] I invite industry to join in a dialogue on the key issues facing us.”

(WHA 1998)
Driving forces:

1 – The rise of ’multistakeholderism’
The UN between increasing tasks and decreasing support

- Hostility to multilateralism (Trump, Orbán,...)
- Declining of the UN regular budget
2 – Where are we now?

4,361 Partnerships for the SDGs
Dr Tedros, WHO Director General:

To truly fulfil our mandate, we must make our partnerships even deeper and stronger.
And we’re also engaging with the private sector, who will be crucial partners in achieving health for all. We have to believe in partnerships – that’s the only way (...).”
We must use whatever partnerships are open to us, in whatever way we can, to achieve our goal.”

(Opening of the WHA, 21 May 2018)
2 – Where are we now?

Multistakeholderism at the WHO

DG Proposal for World Health Forum (EB145/4, April 2019)
“informal meeting or forum to bring together Member States and non-State actors in official relations”
Resolution of the UN General Assembly (since 2001)

“Towards global partnerships”

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

(UN Dok. A/RES/70/234)
5 categories of multistakeholder partnerships

- Influencing political and public discourse ("advocacy")
- Adopting international norms, regulations and standards ("standard setting")
- Mobilizing private and public finances ("financing")
- Technical cooperation and service provision ("implementation")
- Coordinating state and non-state activities in a particular sector ("coordination")
Opportunities of multistakeholderism

- Filling the governance gap
- Filling the implementation gap
- Filling the financing gap
Risks of multistakeholderims and partnership narrative

1. Blurring distinction of different actors

Ignoring different interests, roles, responsibilities and power asymmetries
# Non-State Actors

## WHO Register of non-State actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Official name / Acronym</th>
<th>Period of collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Contre la Faim International</td>
<td>2019 - 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation</td>
<td>2016 - 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aga Khan Foundation</td>
<td>2019 - 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance for Health Promotion</td>
<td>2018 - 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer's Disease International</td>
<td>2017 - 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Society for Reproductive Medicine</td>
<td>2017 - 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amref Health Africa</td>
<td>2019 - 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación Internacional de Hidatidología / World Association of Echinococcosis</td>
<td>2017 - 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSITEB-BIORIF</td>
<td>2019 - 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Africaine des Centrales d’Achats de Médicaments Essentiels</td>
<td>2018 - 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</td>
<td>2017 - 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomberg Family Foundation, Inc.</td>
<td>2018 - 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas Internationalis</td>
<td>2018 - 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The * indicates that the Secretary-General actively seeks new collaborations.
Risks of multistakeholderims and partnership narrative

2. Specific risks for CSOs

- Participation overkill, loss of own agenda
- Superficial participation (*participainment*)
- Silencing of critical voices
- „Misrepresentation“
- Legitimation of multistakeholder-partnerships
Risks of multistakeholderims and partnership narrative

3. Growing influence of corporate interests

- Partnerships are a gateway for transnational corporations and rich "philanthropists" in global politics and undermine democratic decision-making
- They propagate short-term technological and market-based solutions at the expense of long-term structural developments
- They promote on voluntary approaches and sideline regulatory measures

Investments in expanding Universal Health Coverage over the next five years will result in **24.4 million lives saved.** In economic terms, each dollar invested will result in a **return of US$ 1.40.**
Risks of multistakeholderims and partnership narrative

4. They lead to a **fragmentation and weakening** of global governance

5. They can **jeopardize the reputation and credibility** of the UN as a "neutral broker"

6. They **lack transparency and accountability**

7. They do not bring the promised new and **additional funding** (with a few exceptions ...
What has to be done?

1. Further and better frameworks, rules and standards for partnerships

2. More transparency. Systematic disclosure of all private financial flows to the UN and all partnerships involving UN agencies.

3. More capacity in the secretariats of UN agencies to effectively monitor compliance with the rules.
4 – What has to be done?

What has to be done?

4. **Independent evaluations** of multistakeholder partnerships (alternatives, added value, costs, impact, fulfillment of commitments)

5. **Questioning the concept** itself and the "*economization*" of discourse (*human rights are not a business case*).

6. **Strengthening public policy and reclaiming regulatory role of the State and UN**: Substantially more **financial resources** for the UN system by public funding (*public funds for public goods*).
4 – What has to be done?

Support of the „Treaty Process“ on Business and Human Rights instead of further promoting self-regulation and voluntary commitments in multistakeholder partnerships
Further information

Download: www.globalpolicy.org
Contact: karolinseitz@globalpolicy.org