



## SDGs Learning, Training and Practice 2023

### Informal Summary Template

#### ***Summary of the SDGs Learning Session: Session 8: Enabling effective multi-stakeholder partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals***

13 July 2023, 3:00 – 5:00 PM EDT

*In person*

#### **Background Information**

SDG Learning, Training and Practice session 8: [\*Enabling effective multi-stakeholder partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals\*](#) held on 13 July 2023 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York was organized as part of the [Partnership Campaign for the SDGs](#), a joint project by The 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator (an initiative by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and The Partnering Initiative), Partnerships2030 (a project commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and implemented by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) and the Global Forum on SDG Advisory Bodies.

By prioritizing and nurturing the various factors of successful multi-stakeholder partnerships we can foster transformative change that is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). If we are to raise the game and become systematic in delivering far more, and far more effective partnerships to deliver towards the SDGs and beyond, we need to put in place a targeted effort to build the enabling accelerators for widespread, systematic partnering. These include inclusive mechanisms for multi-stakeholder partnerships and engagement, institutional and individual professional partnering capabilities, partnerships utilizing best partnering practice in their development, effective monitoring and evaluation approaches in place, supportive policy and financing to drive incentives and create a pro-partnering enabling environment.

This training event focused on 1) partnering capabilities for the individual, 2) institutional capability to partner, and 3) partnership platforms. Through group activity, expert lecture and real-world examples the training provided participants with valuable insights and practical tools to effectively address the SDGs through successful multi-stakeholder partnerships.

#### **Main Partners**

- The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSDG, UN DESA)

- The Partnering Initiative (TPI)
- Partnerships2030

### **Short summary of session and key topics discussed:**

**Minu Hemmati, Advisor, GIZ, Partnerships2030**, opened the session with an emphasis on the need for more, and more effective, multi-stakeholder partnerships for the SDGs. She made the case that all sectors need to come together, pool resources and collaborate to implement change and lessons learned, including what makes partnerships work.

**Tania Vorwerk, Dep. Director General Global Health, Resilience, Equality of Opportunity, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**, provided the welcoming remarks for the session, again underscoring the importance of SDG 17 in achieving all SDGs. She provided examples of successful multi-stakeholder partnerships working towards the SDGs such as the [InsuResilience Global Partnership / Global Shield Against Climate Risks](#), working towards comprehensive and active climate risk management and [Partnerships2030](#), promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development. Tania Vorwerk set out that participants of this session will get an introduction of how to run partnerships effectively with the opportunity to gain valuable insights and practical tools to use and share with their own networks and goals.

**Darian Stibbe, Executive Director, The Partnering Initiative**, began the training portion of the session by introducing the importance of fundamental individual partnering skills, with the caveat that individual abilities have no impact if organizations are not fit for partnering. Individuals within organizations may have the best intentions and preparations for partnering but are often unable to move beyond bureaucracy, regulations and limitations within their organizations.

Darian led an activity in groups of 3 in which participants had to design a partnership to increase healthy eating in a community. Participants shared their partnership plans and predicted challenges. The activity showed participants how to use a stakeholder map to determine partners and the various levels an issue can be addressed at.

He provided a brief introductory training on professional partnering skills for the individual. This training included the building blocks of partnerships such as the fundamentals; partner relationship; structure and set up; and management and leadership. Darian also presented the individual skills needed for a successful partnership: mindset of collaboration; understanding of sectors; human relationship skills; and technical partnering knowledge. He implored that there is a need to professionalize partnering.

Next, the training focused on how to make organizations fit for partnering as most organizations are not currently set up to partner. The participants scored their own organizations partnering ability in terms of leadership and strategy; systems and processes; staff skills and support; partnering culture; and networks and relationships. Participants' organizations had an average score of 3.6 out of 5, a higher score than is usually reported. The participants identified the

biggest challenges their organizations face in partnering as competition for funding; hostility towards civil society organizations; equity in partnerships; inclusion and trust between sectors.

Minu Hemmati led a brief introduction to partnership platforms as a way to bring stakeholders together to initiate and support multi-stakeholder partnerships. She introduced the UNDESA / TPI typology of stakeholder engagement platforms, with each level increasing the engagement, commitment and trust required of each partner: 1) dialogue, 2) knowledge exchange, 3) reporting and standard setting, and 4) transformative partnerships.

**Reynald Maeda, Executive Director, United Nations Tanzania**, shared his experience developing the Tanzania Sustainable Development Platform, a hybrid of dialogue, knowledge sharing and reporting platforms. Begun in 2016, the Platform focuses on creating a space for civil society to form partnerships, share knowledge, network and account for the contribution to SDG implementation. The platform serves as a convening place between all stakeholders working towards sustainable development, and many partners volunteer their time to share data, including for shadow VNR reporting.

Minu Hemmati shared the Partnerships2030 definition of a multi-stakeholder partnership as a partnership that includes stakeholders from at least three different sectors working together as equals through an organized long-term engagement in order to contribute to the common good. She presented Partnership2030's work spanning information sharing, training, and advisory services. Participants were asked consider what is required in a platform and what support is needed to create transformative change in their own countries.

**Ola Goransson, Sustainable Development Officer, Outreach and Partnerships Branch, DSDG, UN DESA** closed the session underscoring that successful multi-stakeholder partnerships take time, dedicated work and mindset to be sustainable and effective. He identified the [2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator](#) as a useful initiative to increase partnering capabilities at the individual, organization and national level.

### **Key recommendations for action**

This session highlighted the need to professionalize partnering. At the individual level, **individuals need to increase their own capacities to partner** by learning the skills needed to be part of and/or lead successful partnerships. **Organizations need to restructure to be fit for partnering** by offering partnership training, altering the environment for partnering, allocating time and resources for partnerships and adjusting policies and regulations to promote partnering. Lastly, **nations should set up national partnership platforms** to create space and opportunity for more and more effective multi-stakeholder partnerships.

For more information and resources, please visit the 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator webpage here: <https://partnershipaccelerator.org>

Materials from the training can be found in the *SDG Partnership Guidebook* published by UN DESA and TPI: <https://sdgs.un.org/publications/sdg-partnership-guidebook-24566>