

***Summary of Spotlight Session: Meaningful, effective and inclusive partnerships for gender equality.***

2 February 2022, 16:00-16:50 EST

**Background on the event (one paragraph)**

The Women's Major Group, the LGBTI Stakeholder Group, and Global Policy Forum hosted the Spotlight Session 6, "*Meaningful, effective and inclusive partnerships for gender equality.*" During the session, we looked into the ways we can learn from the failings of the current partnerships systems in place and recommendations and examples for what meaningful and inclusive partnerships for gender equality can look like, that consider power dynamics, are accountable, feminist, human rights-centered, and that can deliver to the ambitions of Agenda 2030. The session had 115 attendees and the speakers included:

- Rosa Lizarde, Feminist Task Force (Moderator)
- Amb. H.E. Ms. Alicia Buenrostro – Permanent Mission of Mexico to UN
- Andre Rivas – Familias Diversas of Argentina (AFDA)
- Cham Perez – Center for Women's Resources (CWR)
- Emilia Reyes – Equidad de Género

**Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)**

- While "partnerships" are being given increasing attention throughout the United Nations system and other intergovernmental fora, the definition of partnerships has been narrowing.
- Concerns over corporate capture: From the introduction of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to newer concepts such as "multistakeholderism" and "networked multilateralism", the private sector in particular has been gaining increased access to and influence in many policymaking spaces.
- Efforts to democratize these spaces and to be inclusive of all stakeholders appear to be leaving behind civil society, specifically the most marginalized organizations including feminist and grassroots women-led organizations, and movements from the Global South.
- Gender equality must recognize gender diversity, beyond the binary, and be inclusive of LGBTIQI+ people.
- The power imbalance and lack of accountability in the way partnerships are currently being approached needs to be replaced with a more accountable and equitable system that operates in the interests of people and the planet, rather than profit.

**Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)**

- Efforts to democratize spaces & to be inclusive of all stakeholders must specifically center civil society, especially those historically marginalized including grassroots

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women-led orgs & movements from the Global South, instead of emphasizing the private sector – networked multilateralism. This needs to include making space for women, girls and LGBTQI+ communities, with equal power on the decision-making tables.

- Intersectionality and the inclusion of the LGBTQI+ communities and organizations are essential to achieve gender equality.
- States need to ensure, in partnerships, that the stakeholders they collaborate with are accountable to their social and environmental impacts on the ground and should consider conflicts of interest prior to engaging potential partners.
- Member States and the UN must promote public ownership, rather than privatization, in development activities with greater consultation of grassroots civil society.
- Political support and commitment at the highest level are an essential component for successful partnerships.
- “Networked multilateralism” cannot and should not replace multilateralism, in the way it is formulated now, in this unbalanced distribution of power. We need to redistribute that power, with real accountability and transparency.
- Meaningful and effective partnerships are only possible through ensuring safety of human rights defenders, and resources to ensure they can continue their work. As such, partnerships should be underpinned by an understanding of the UN as the primary duty bearer internationally, and Member States as duty bearers first and foremost.