POLICY*dialogue* BRIEF

A Multistakeholder Governance Agenda:
What Are the Opportunities?

On October 26–28, 2016, the Stanley Foundation gathered policymakers and experts from academia, government, international organizations, and civil society organizations at the Airlie Center in Warrenton, VA, for its 57th annual Strategy for Peace Conference. The conference featured autonomous round-tables focused on policy challenges in four key global issue areas: climate change, mass atrocity prevention, nuclear security, and global governance.

Executive Summary

In the last two decades, multistakeholder approaches have made a significant impact on global governance challenges. Participants agreed that they are now a permanent part of the landscape. Yet the proliferation of multistakeholder coalitions and initiatives has been paralleled by the growth in global public skepticism about the efficacy and legitimacy of cross-border governance of any kind.

Against this backdrop of uncertainty, participants in the roundtable "A Multistakeholder Governance Agenda: What Are the Opportunities?" explored emerging linkages in cooperative multistakeholder action among sectors such as human rights, Internet freedom, and climate change. The participants deliberated on whether multistakeholder initiatives are converging around certain venues and challenges, and to what extent they are part of the solution to the global crisis of institutional legitimacy. The roundtable concluded with an assessment of what lessons can be drawn and what models can be replicated.

Some of these ideas included:

- The need to develop a taxonomy for the different types of multistakeholder coalitions based on the purposes and goals they serve.

- The value of producing a series of case studies where multistakeholderism has been identified, as a way to look for patterns and transferrable techniques.

- The opportunity to develop and implement multisectorial multistakeholder accountability around the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (*http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/*).

- The need to find better ways to share and learn from existing rules and guidebooks on how to do multistakeholderism.

Assessing the Current State of Multistakeholderism

Decisions at the global level are increasingly being made by a plethora of networked actors who, based on their interest and knowledge, are often working in spaces that used to be reserved for sovereign nations. Multistakeholder approaches have changed the way states and nonstate actors think about organizing to deal with problems.

Even as an increasing number of global governance coalitions fit the multistakeholderism model, participants and observers alike still grapple with many unanswered questions about how, where, and what multistakeholderism is most effective. Although the approach continues to elicit opposition, it is here to stay: participants did not identify circumstances under which either nation-states could successfully roll back other actors' access to levers of power and decision-making structures, or under which circumstance those actors would choose to leave the field en masse (despite the perception of "forum fatigue," particularly in the private sector). The question at hand, then, is how to improve the ways stakeholders engage in these coalition efforts and build on existing partnerships in order to make them more democratic and inclusive, and ensure that the role they play in global governance is a positive one.

To answer that question, it is key to determine if there are areas and certain issues for which this approach is better suited, when it should be used, and the role it has to play in being a conduit for creating spaces for actors who otherwise would not have a say in issues that are pertinent to them. Other unresolved questions revolve around power, participation, and legitimacy, which are paramount to ensuring that multistakeholder action is an inclusive and democratic process and that it doesn't create a dividing line between "those who know best" and "those who don't know much."

It is still unclear if multistakeholder coalitions could be successful vehicles for addressing issues such as national and cybersecurity, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding in the way they have sometimes been in the human rights and climate contexts. Part of that question and challenge stems from what multistakeholderism and its relationship to governance is, and what it is not.

Different understandings of governance lead to contrasting assessments of the current and future state of multistakeholderism. While some definitions of global governance are set around the act of "regulating the global commons" in a broader way, other practitioners argue that all governance is negotiated, and thus global governance is, itself, multistakeholderism, where state and nonstate actors coalesce to solve problems. According to the latter interpretation, stakeholders, with varying interests, negotiate and influence outcomes.

A key distinction in multistakeholderism arises when thinking about the purpose that this approach aims to serve in terms of governance. While it can be a space to build up support for a movement, convening different stakeholders, expanding the message, and creating momentum for mobilization around an issue, it can also serve a postmobilization purpose by creating a space for governance at the implementation stage, once treaties have been signed, laws have been passed, and norms have been established. Evidently, these dividing lines are not so clear. Often, mobilization and governance take place at the same time, with the same actors playing different roles and with governance being enacted by nontraditional coalitions that can include states or not.

In terms of participation, for some, multistakeholderism is a model in which actors from all sectors (governmental, private, nongovernmental) come together to deliberate and act on an issue with the goal of jointly steering behavior around an issue. There are examples of multistakeholder coalitions that have come together where one or more of these crucial actors were absent. The international community has not agreed upon, via norms or more standard processes, what the "right" makeup of multistakeholder coalitions should be. This, in turn, presents a problem when assessing this model of coalition, since often there is disagreement over the legitimacy of these affiliations when certain stakeholders are absent. Determining what the makeup of a legitimate and inclusive coalition looks like is a crucial need moving forward.

If all governance is negotiated, then not everyone gets to participate. Often, there is conflation between multistakeholderism and democratic global governance as interchangeable concepts. While some believe that multistakeholder coalitions should include and/or take into account the interests of all invested stakeholders, this does not always happen. The quality of multistakeholder action revolves around the organizing power of the stakeholders, and multistakeholderism still needs mechanisms in place to sort that out. The efficacy of multistakeholder coalitions is maximized when acknowledging that different actors have different roles to play throughout the process, from identifying the problem to implementing the solutions.

Finally, global governance is not inherently good, and multistakeholderism is not an absolute positive model. There are many state and nonstate actors who infringe upon democratic norms and whose actions are detrimental to efforts to promote democratic values. Actors who believe they have a right to influence decisions will informally participate in existing multistakeholder processes, or even set up their own

coalitions to challenge existing ones. In order to ensure that coalitions are seen as legitimate, in the consensus of the international community, conveners must pay attention to which stakeholders are in the room and what roles are assigned.

The Challenges of Trust, Legitimacy, Participation, and Implementation

Trust and Legitimacy

The rise of multistakeholder coalitions and initiatives has paralleled a long-term trend in diminished public trust in institutions of all kinds. Although public faith in government and private institutions has rebounded following the 2007–2008 Great Recession, what has emerged in its place is a trust gap, as elites now place much higher trust in governance of all kinds than the public worldwide. Generational attitudes and rising inequality play key roles. This tension is aggravated, in the face of global challenges, by the mismatch between those who want to help solve issues in global governance and the mechanisms that are in place to carry solutions forward and promote and facilitate their participation.

But there are reasons for optimism: the United Nations and global governance are seen positively worldwide. This is particularly true in societies where the public believes international institutions are helping the rest of the world. However, regions where the public perceives itself as acted upon by international institutions have a less positive view. These perspectives serve as an entry point for multistakeholderism but also present a challenge: Are multistakeholder initiatives perceived as promoting governance that is more effective, more legitimate, and/or more inclusive?

Multistakeholderism can be a force for good in highly elite environments and in those where broader publics play a key role. Examples of the former include the Internet governance community, where this coalition model is perceived to be embedded in the community's DNA—since the Internet itself emerged as a result of a network of tech, military, and other experts coming together. The People's Climate March in 2014 was a groundbreaking example of connecting different actors, from traditional policy circles as well as grassroots communities, who identified themselves as part of the fabric of social change and joined forces to enact change. When done right (in terms of funding, support, and timing), multistakeholderism can be a force for change when other approaches have stagnated.

Multistakeholder processes rely on mechanisms that help bring solutions to the floor; but just looking for different solutions is not enough: it is becoming increasingly clear that these processes cannot only be agreements between elites. This also means ensuring that stakeholders that claim to speak for those who have not made it to the table are perceived as legitimate spokespeople. Diminished public trust can be rebuilt through engagement and seriously addressing grievances, and finding mechanisms to empower those who believe they have been left out.

Participation and the Power of the Convener

While most can identify the rise in the international community's willingness to engage in multistakeholder processes around the world, these coalitions are not always well structured or even formalized and can happen in very haphazard ways. The stakeholders who participate in these coalitions and the stakeholders who decide on the criteria for eligibility for participation place enormous weight on the degree to which these partnerships will be perceived as legitimate. The roundtable identified several variables—who serves as convener, how inclusive

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the effort is—and offered hypotheses about their effects on outcomes.

Sometimes these coalitions thrive under the leadership of conveners who are invested in the outcome, but neutral conveners also have a role to play in successfully bringing together competing interests. If participants of the coalitions perceive each other as competing over the outcome of the coalitional effort, a neutral convener is probably ideal. But if actors already have a coherent vision and are working toward a mutual, established goal, an invested convener is best suited for the task of honoring all the voices and mobilizing participants.

Stakeholders often join coalitions and choose partners who, outside of a very controlled, issue-specific environment, would be perceived as unlikely allies. This interesting feature of multistakeholderism, while a fragile and difficult one to manage, can be crucial to keeping coalitions together. Challenging the concept of fixed sets of friends and enemies can foster more-innovative cooperation. In addition, coalitions with a broader range of voices are often perceived as more legitimate.

Any authentic multistakeholder coalition must accommodate the needs and skills of actors; as the coalitions evolve, so do the actors, their behaviors, and their levels of involvement.

But there are drawbacks for coalitions that strive to be as inclusive as possible. The most common challenge revolves around the number of stakeholders involved in the process. Too many clashing views can severely impact the coalition's ability to move its agenda in a timely manner—if at all—and further complicate the process of trust building among the actors. Competing visions and low levels of trust are serious threats to successful multistakeholder coalitions.

The evolution of coalitions over time also poses a challenge to inclusivity. It is common that as the coalition progresses, and the problem as well as its solutions become more defined, the pool of participants who possess the necessary sets of skills to tackle those will become smaller. Inclusivity does not have to mean involving stakeholders in every stage of the process but maximizing their contributions when possible and relevant. Degrees of participation will vary, with some actors being involved in every step while other actors play smaller roles.

Participation tends to vary between the local and global levels. Smaller stakeholders, though they may be the ones most affected and on the front line of enacting change, may lack opportunities or find engagement challenging at the global level. This challenges other actors to address the balance of power and consider the role and space available for local and nonelite actors. Good models do exist for providing consultative interactions with much larger numbers of stakeholders, or stakeholders whose skill sets match only one phase. Any authentic multistakeholder coalition must accommodate the needs and skills of actors; as the coalitions evolve, so do the actors, their behaviors, and their levels of involvement. The ability to leverage this dynamic is what makes the craftiest businesses, governments, and civil society organizations successful—and the inability to leverage this dynamic leads many coalitions to underachieve or fail.

The challenges of forum shopping, so-called forum fatigue, and competing forums are real. If the same issue is arising in different forums, that might mean its complexity demands a network of coalitions rather than a single one. But the existence of multiple forums can also mean that a particular forum has failed to meet all the needs of the stakeholders. This does not always spell disaster; outside coalitions can engage in meaningful ways with an "insider" coalition, usually when terms are explicit and at least some aspects of vision are shared. However, the prospect of forum shopping to improve relative advantage is also real and an aspect of power dynamics that partners must consider.

Implementation

The implementation stage raises the question, "Who is responsible for making this happen?" The efforts that go into changing the status quo are often different from those that ensure that change is sustainable. Implementation needs to be taken into consideration during the inception of a coalition because it is likely to require different approaches and different actors who will need to be brought into the process.

The challenge of implementation revolves around the need to strike a balance between effectiveness and legitimacy. This is a crucial stage of the multistakeholderism process that is often overlooked. Speedy action is required, and skillful stakeholders need to recognize windows of opportunity for action. Effective implementation faces the risks of not being inclusive, not taking into account all the needs of all stakeholders, and not securing accountability mechanisms to ensure that change is sustainable. At the inception of a coalition, successful and sustainable implementation can benefit from a situation analysis, which includes a mapping of stakeholders and the roles they prefer and are better suited to play, the type of conflict/issue around which the coalition was convened, and the different silos of power that exist among the stakeholders.

Different stakeholders have different degrees of influence and tools for exerting influence, depending on the type of coalition, the power balance, and the issue at hand. Successful implementation requires that the government, private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders know how to best play their roles to ensure that the change that has been achieved is sustainable.

For example, while nonstate actors might not be as successful as a government at moving an agenda focused on human rights, there are other areas, such as women's empowerment, development, and potentially peace and security, where there is a big opportunity for multistakeholderism consisting of the private sector and civil society organizations. Different forces can also work in tandem: grassroots and elite coalitions can play to their strengths, coordinate efforts, and find mechanisms to expand their power within their silos and ensure that successful implementation takes place.

The real work begins once the treaties are signed. Treaties are not the end; they need to be ratified and implemented. It's work that is less flashy, and the most overlooked. That's a role that governments have to play in maintaining achievements. Multistakeholderism should not become a substitute for governance and democracy; there are roles that are meant to be played solely by states, as bodies that have sets of responsibilities to its citizens.

A Typology for Multistakeholderism

Multistakeholderism can take place via formalized mechanisms with clear agendas. That includes UN agencies and other international bodies, as well as civil society organizations, businesses, and states, which are enabled with very specific tools to engage in conversation, disagreement, and resolution. On the other hand, these coalitions can come together in response to an ongoing and still-in-development phenomenon, which makes it difficult to formalize the process of multistakeholderism and determine the specific purpose of a coalition.

Multistakeholder initiatives have grown around problem solving, but problem solving can mean different things if a coalition's purpose is to mobilize and not govern. A more useful approach might be to think about mobilization and governance as two ends of the same spectrum, instead of putting them in two separate boxes. That way, strategies for creating traction for a movement and sustaining and implementing decisions can be thought of in a more holistic way, and not in silos.

Multistakeholderism efforts, at their inception, can be void of government involvement, but they need to end with governance. This means that success depends on state involvement that can take place at any appropriate stage.

Because of the numerous considerations that go into thinking about and defining multistakeholderism, a clearer typology for the different kinds of coalitions can be helpful in identifying opportunities for cooperation. Understanding the different types of coalitions and the different purposes they serve is crucial to ensuring that multistakeholder action is positive and maximized.

The first, and broadest, differentiation is between coalitions that have identified a problem for which solutions exist but need implementation, and those problems for which solutions are unknown. Distinguishing between the effort of groping for solutions and advocating for known solutions plays a major role at the inception of these coalitions, and doing so ensures that the best strategies for mobilizing and governing are put into place.

While certain multistakeholder coalitions are objective and possess a detailed agenda, others are less guided and concrete. But, again, that difference is not always clear. Undoubtedly, multistakeholder coalitions will often be hard to categorize, but there are certain distinctions that can serve as guidelines when doing so. They include:

1. **Market mechanisms:** What are the incentives for all actors, especially those creating obstacles?

2. **Metrics:** How is the coalition measuring progress? How can it determine what its timeline looks like?

3. **Overlapping mission:** Do the different actors want to achieve the same goal, even if their motives differ?

4. **Motives:** Are there actors with pernicious motives? If so, how does the coalition address that?

A few nonexhaustive examples of multistakeholderism categories include:

- Problem solving: exploration of issues, and determining best course of action.

- Advocacy.

- Policy development.

- Consensus building.

For each of these, the strategies around convening and facilitating will differ. The key is in understanding multistakeholderism as a vehicle to explore ideas and solutions, to negotiate, and to form coalitions. While some stakeholders are committed to this approach in a normative way, others approach it as a tool to work with nonstate actors to achieve goals.

Also helpful is identifying where the centers of power rest in every coalition, depending on the type of authority they have. Governments and states are not always the most powerful actors, in the same way that the United Nations is not always perceived as the default, legitimate, and most effective convening body. Often, smaller groups, civil society organizations, and other regional organizations foreshadow the path for the coalition to follow.

A Case Study of Multistakeholder Coalitions: The 2014 People's Climate March

The best way to understand and replicate multistakeholderism is through a deep dive into case studies of other multistakeholder coalitions that have been identified. Determining whether each multistakeholder coalition in global governance is unique is crucial to understanding the dynamics of these processes: how they come together, mobilize, and seize opportunities.

Discussion around the 2014 People's Climate March, the thinking behind the coalition, and how elites and grassroots movements came together at a unique and pivotal moment to successfully enact change was one of the most interesting and productive moments of the roundtable. This example shows that preparation, negotiation, funding, and innovation are crucial components of coalitions that work.

The march was the culmination of successful mobilization of grassroots communities, with the international governance and institutional support of the United Nations, which played the roles of the convener and legitimizer. The United Nations became the forum for states and private sector representatives to come together. The coalition was successful in that it was able to draw the engagement of actors who otherwise would have not been involved. From the grassroots perspective, this was a unique moment to show dissatisfaction and a vehicle to optimize what it could get from the private sector. Both sides were aware that it was a moment ripe for maximization of wants and needs, and they took advantage of that.

This multistakeholder coalition was also able to identify the right moment to push forward. The coalition made the 2014 march a culmination of efforts that had long been in the making. The march took place against the backdrop of the failed Copenhagen agenda, which made it even more important for the 2014 UN Climate Summit and People's Climate March to be successful.

In terms of support and buy-in, on the UN side the partnership had the support of the secretary-general, who served as an impartial force to steer the efforts. On the grassroots side, the coalition was seen as a timely opportunity for voices to join the conversation under a forum that was perceived as legitimate by a gamut of stakeholders, with the buy-in of the private sector. It was clear to them that this was a unique moment that needed to be seized.

Support from other key actors, such as President Barack Obama and his efforts to bring the issue of climate change to the forefront of his policy agenda, as well as China's involvement and its readiness to be a partner, were crucial in ensuring the coalition was perceived as legitimate and effective. Equally important were the support and mobilization of faith-based groups, including evangelical Christians and Muslims, and individuals, such as the pope. Many of the world's largest environmental groups, the so-called "big greens," also realized they needed to be involved, even if that involvement was not going to be exactly what they had envisioned. The moment was deemed to be too important for any actor to pass up.

Finally, this partnership would not have succeeded in achieving its goals without funding. Without the financial support necessary to mobilize, at the local and international levels, this multistakeholder coalition would have been perceived as an elites-only process. Financial support was crucial in ensuring that mobilization via social media engagement could happen.

Regional Multistakeholder Coalitions

The United Nations has been the default convening authority for a wide range of multistakeholder coalitions, and it is often treated as the only legitimate vehicle for creating these partnerships. But when the United Nations chooses not to play the role of convener (for lack of resources and/or support, or if it recognizes that it is not best suited to do so), or when it fails to achieve stated goals, stakeholders tend to fail to recognize other spaces to convene. Regional and local coalitions, as well as other types of civil society-led coalitions, can be just as effective in implementing mandates as long as the proper structures and instruments for accountability are put in place to facilitate them.

While there is consensus in the international community that regional integration should be promoted, there is less consensus around how that should be done and the makeup of models that do not resemble the European Union. There is still obscurity around how to build structures and institutions to foster this type of multistakeholder cooperation and governance, as well as consensus over what change looks like and which stakeholders should get a seat at the table.

Different issues require different, perhaps less traditional, mechanisms of mobilization and governance. One of those rests in the convening role that regional coalitions can play. The Economic Community of West African States is an example of an organization with a mandate similar to the United Nations, albeit with different structure and resources. However, it can teach many lessons about how coalitions at the regional level can be just as effective as the more traditional, global-governance partnerships.

The African Union is another example of a regional coalition with a great deal of potential to be the convener of multistakeholder coalitions. The African Union has, for example, succeeded in addressing the issue of child marriage by bringing together tribal and local leaders and international nonstate actors to seek solutions. Another area of success has been promoting peaceful and credible elections and transfers of power, with help from the international community, and the guidance of local and community leaders from different tribes and religions. Civil society organizations also have had a great deal of impact on peace and security in Africa. For example, the Bring Our Girls Back effort, which aimed to rescue more than 200 girls kidnapped from the Chibok school in Nigeria, was the product of a coalition led by women's organizations from civil society.

The future of regional coalitions is still unclear. But with the low levels of trust in traditional global governance organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, these smaller partnerships seem likely to become the norm in global governance rather than the exception. In order for these coalitions to succeed, however, there has to be an effort to invest in them to make them less bureaucratic and political and more democratic and inclusive.

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Multisectorial Multistakeholderism

Stovepiped responses continue to be one of the main obstacles to international cooperation on key interrelated challenges. Some people have argued for developing explicit linkages in cooperative multistakeholder action in such areas as human rights, corruption, Internet freedom, and corporate social responsibility in extractive and agricultural sectors and climate change, since from a democratic governance point of view, crosscutting partnerships tend to be more inclusive than vertical ones. Indeed, this is occurring among major

UN multistakeholder partnerships, which are developing habits of consultation and coordination among themselves. On the issue of ending child marriage, for example, numerous partnerships working on the root causes and solutions are beginning to coordinate with each other.

What is happening in other forums, however, appears to be a trend toward broader partnerships and coordination to solve complex, or "wicked," problems, in which actors participate as themselves, not as coordinated members of a given multistakeholder effort. Often, coordination efforts that are successful at the local level are harder to replicate at the global level.

Different international partnerships can and do identify other national spaces where issues can be promoted, since a lot of them are crosscutting, such as child marriage, climate, and peacebuilding. The multisectorial nature of many of these coalitions can facilitate coordination with governments and other nonstate actors. Vertical partnerships, effective in many realms, are not the only model under which multistakeholderism can flourish.

The United Nations has traditionally been the default convener in most instances of multisectorial multistakeholderism, perceived by many as the go-to backbone to facilitate and coordinate.

While hard to construct, coordinate, and ensure the accountability of it, multisectorial multistakeholderism can be successful. The challenge is in identifying the types of issues, the right mix of stakeholders, how vertical linkages can best work alongside crosscutting ones, and how legislative, normative, and cultural barriers can be overcome. Thus, a system's understanding of issues and how they are interconnected is fundamental in a world of complex relationships. Part of that includes looking for actors who, while engaging in different forms of action at varying levels, still share a vision of what the end goal of a multisectorial multistakeholder coalition should be.

The United Nations has traditionally been the default convener in most instances of multisectorial multistakeholderism, perceived by many as the go-to backbone to facilitate and coordinate. But not all issues fit the UN-led model. In that case, regional organizations, other nongovernmental institutions, individuals with specific moral authority, or even governments themselves can serve as conveners. Models that don't solely depend on the secretary-general's office and that can be used by other regional organizations and institutions need further exploration.

The biggest challenges in multisectorial multistakeholderism lie in the realms of coordination and accountability: Whose job is it to do the longer-term support? While strong leadership is necessary, the convener also ought to be able to distribute its power and ensure that participants know there is not a single voice with authority, and all actors in the coalition are equally responsible.

Different values and theories of change can also be obstacles in multisectorial multistakeholderism. Without coordinated and coherent ownership of issues and an understanding of why they are in the interest of the country and society, it is hard for real change to take place.

Looking Ahead

What We Know

- The quality of multistakeholder action revolves around the organizing power of the actors, and multistakeholderism still needs mechanisms in place to sort that out.

- The efficacy of multistakeholder coalitions are maximized when they acknowledge that different actors have different roles to play throughout the process, from identifying the problem to implementing the solution.

- The stakeholders who participate in these coalitions and the stakeholders who decide on the criteria for eligibility for participation place enormous weight on the degree to which these partnerships will be perceived as legitimate.

- Competing visions and low levels of trust are serious threats to successful multistakeholder coalitions.

- It is a problem if stakeholders choose to be part of a coalition but seem not to be fully committed to its mission.

- Any authentic multistakeholder coalition must accommodate the needs and skills of actors; as the coalitions evolve, so do the actors, their behaviors, and their levels of involvement. The leveraging of this dynamic by most crafty businesses, governments, and civil society organizations makes the actors and the coalitions successful.

- Sometimes a process that is more closed and doesn't include every stakeholder is necessary when efficacy and speed are important.

- Different forces can work in tandem: grassroots and elite coalitions can play to their strengths, coordinate efforts, and find mechanisms to expand their power within their silos and ensure that successful implementation takes place.

- The arc of history is moving toward greater participation of individuals, but multistakeholder processes are not the only way to get there.

- Multistakeholder initiatives have grown around problem solving, but problem solving can mean different things if a coalition's purpose is to mobilize as opposed to govern.

- The best way to understand and replicate multistakeholderism is through a deep dive into case studies of other multistakeholder coalitions that have already been identified. Determining whether each multistakeholder coalition in global governance is unique is crucial to understanding the dynamics of these processes: how they come together, mobilize, and seize opportunities.

- While there is consensus in the international community on the fact that regional integration should be promoted, there is less consensus on how that should be done and the makeup of models that differ from the European Union.

- The multisectorial nature of many of these coalitions can facilitate coordination with governments and other nonstate actors. Vertical partnerships, effective in many realms, are not the only model under which multistakeholderism can flourish.

- In order to make coalitions legitimate, according to international community consensus, it is crucial to be mindful about which stakeholders get in the room and what their assigned roles are.

- Multistakeholder processes rely on mechanisms that help bring solutions to the floor; but just looking for different solutions is not enough: it is becoming increasingly clear that these processes cannot be agreements between elites only.

- Diminished public trust can be rebuilt through engagement and seriously addressing grievances, and finding mechanisms to empower those who believe they have been left out.

- Solutions to governance do not necessarily need to be public-sector institutionalized to be valid.

- Determining the makeup of a legitimate and inclusive coalition is a crucial need moving forward.

For Further Exploration

- Determine whether every multistakeholder arrangement is unique, and if there is a model to be followed and lessons to be learned.

- Examine long-term versus short-term approaches to multistakeholderism.

- Develop taxonomy on:

  ° Different forms of governance.

  ° Different forms of multistakeholderism.

  ° The various ways governance and multistakeholderism interact.

- Examine if a multistakeholder arrangement can be led by a single state and be successful.

- Determine whether the distinctive quality of multi-stakeholder coalitions is that they have players from various sectors.

- Explore how early warning systems connect across sectors.

- Determine if multistakeholder processes are most relevant at the global governance level, or if processes that don't cross state borders could also be worthy of further exploration.

- Explore what makes global governance "global" in terms of kinds of governments and representation.

- Explore limits to expansion of multistakeholderism.

- Determine whether the multistakeholderism formula to resuscitate democratic governance in the world will be a policy issue.

- Understand multistakeholderism as a program-delivery methodology.

- Determine if evaluation of multistakeholder processes should include all pertinent voices.

- Determine what a checklist for gaps of governance should include and what questions should be asked.

Potential topics for case studies include:

- Coalitions that have succeeded in reducing democratic deficits.

- Genesis: who convenes with what authority and/or neutrality?

- Driving goal/purpose: is the coalition for problem solving, advocacy/mobilization, consensus building, norm setting, etc.?

- Degree of inclusivity.

- Importance of having a "minimum engage-and-consult" approach.

- Who decides who is in or out?

- Relationship of multistakeholder processes to formal government structures.

- Impact of entry points of participation at different stages:

  ° Inception (problem solving).

° Consolidation (treaty, law, agreement).

° Implementation, monitoring, enforcement.

° Accountability.

- Forms of backbone support to multistakeholderism.

- Transparency and communication.

- Role of Global South.

Appendix 1: Key Takeaways

Multistakeholderism and Democracy
- Don't confuse the two.
- At its best, multistakeholderism:
  ° Opens spaces for representation and legitimacy.
  ° Brings top-down and bottom-up approaches together.
  ° Makes space for those not at the table through report backs and facilitated conversations.
- Consider how multistakeholderism relates to social contract, another avenue toward aims that Westerners describe as democracy and justice.

Multistakeholderism and Governance
- Some participants believed multistakeholderism must lead to governance, but the solution to governance does not necessarily need to be public-sector institutionalized in order to be valid.
- The need exists for development of taxonomy on:
  ° Different forms of governance.
  ° Different forms of multistakeholderism.
  ° The various ways governance and multistakeholderism interact.
- Long-term versus short-term approaches to multistakeholderism and governance should be explored.

Multisectorial Multistakeholderism
- The People's Climate March is a good example of a success story.
- Sustainable Development Goals are a good case study for how to enforce multisectorial multistakeholder accountability.
- The potential for multistakeholder processes of data-driven accountability is enormous.
- There is a younger generation in institutions that is comfortable with information sharing.
- There is a need to harness instincts and technology that are available.
- The private sector has already figured out the power of big data.
- Private, for-profit entities have played critical roles in multistakeholderism to date, but outcomes are mixed across sectors.
- Agriculture and natural resources have shown a great deal of interest in engagement with other stakeholders, on food-security issues, for example.
- In Africa, global businesses have engaged, while regional ones—the continent's engines of growth—have been more reticent.
- The depth of business engagement, as well as forum shopping and so-called forum fatigue, are important variables.

Techniques of Multistakeholderism
- Practitioners and advocates can share and learn from existing rules and guidebooks.
  - *The MSP Guide—How to Design and Facilitate Multistakeholder Partnerships*
  - *Multi-Stakeholder Processes for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding: A Manual*
  - *Multistakeholder Initiatives: A strategic Guide for Civil Society Organizations*
  - *The Social Contract in Situations of Conflict and Fragility Concept Note*
- The degree to which actors trust each other impinges upon whether multistakeholderism can be democratic.
- Complex communication is one of the most underestimated capacities of multistakeholderism processes.
- The role of the convener is neutral/nonthreatening versus most significant/powerful.
- Convenings and publications are important tools for drawing conclusions and recommendations; share techniques that carry across cases; not all are unique.

Participant List

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Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only. Participants attended as individuals rather than as representatives of their governments or organizations.

The Stanley Foundation

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