Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development – A case study of the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth

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Abstract

This thesis discusses global partnerships for sustainable development. Global partnerships have come to be considered as key tools for the implementation of certain international sustainable development goals and there is a growing literature on the subject. Nevertheless, no study has yet been done of the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth, initiated by the Government of Sweden in 2016. The partnership is presented as a concrete input to several of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially numbers 8, 10, and 17. This provides an important opportunity to make sense of the Global Deal partnership, in particular since it is the first attempt of its kind to unite all stakeholders on the global labour market to work together to provide decent work and inclusive growth for all. What are the goals of the Global Deal, how was it formed, and how is it being implemented? The analysis presented in this thesis is based on a literature survey, documentary analysis, and interviews with the Global Deal Partnership’s support unit at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This thesis argues that the Global Deal partnership is a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership, developed through an inclusive goal-setting process, and implemented with monitoring and reporting functions.

Keywords: 2030 Agenda, sustainable development goals, partnership, the Global Deal, decent work and economic growth, global governance, international development cooperation, sustainable development.

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Summary

During the past decades, global partnerships for sustainable development have become increasingly popular. Stakeholders across sectors have convened to pool resources and coordinate joint efforts to solve shared problems. In the spring of 2018, United Nations registered 3,825 partnerships on its Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals online platform (UN, 2018a). The hope is that global partnerships will have the potentials to steer development towards directions that are more sustainable. This raises a number of key questions that deserve scholarly attention, namely, how should we conceptualise these partnerships, implement them, and understand their function and impact?

Previous research has found that global partnerships partly exist because of the limited capacity of multilateralism in today’s globalized world order. Up until now, international cooperation has failed to deal with the pressing problems and complex dimensions of sustainable development. States are no longer the only relevant actors to solve challenges at the global level and provide common goods – help from the private sector is needed. In the field of sustainable development, multi-stakeholder partnerships therefore emerge as governance structures based on a mix of public and private actors on missions to provide long-term solutions to pressing sustainability concerns.

The primary aim of this thesis is to make sense of the Global Deal partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth. The partnership is the first attempt of its kind to unite all stakeholders on the global labour market – governments, business representatives, trade unions, and other non-governmental organisations - to jointly work towards the implementation of several of the goals established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015). The secondary aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of what partnerships for sustainable development in international life are, how they are formed, for what purpose, and what they do.

In order to make sense of the Global Deal partnership, a qualitative case study of the partnership will be conducted. This thesis has utilized the process tracing method and collected material via semi-structured interviews with the partnerships support unit at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and documentary analysis. Middle range international relations theory concerning partnership creation, international cooperation, and global governance - in particular from the neoliberal tradition - will be used as an analytical framework in order to analyse the data from the case study and make sense of the Global Deal partnership.

The results show that Global Deal partnership can be conceptualised as global multi-stakeholder partnerships and an innovative tool for the governance of the global labour market. It is developed though an inclusive goal-setting process, and includes monitoring and reporting functions. Future research on the Global Deal is encouraged to develop frameworks for evaluating the function, impact and outcomes of the partnership.

Keywords: 2030 Agenda, sustainable development goals, partnership, the Global Deal, decent work and economic growth, global governance, international development cooperation, sustainable development.

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### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSP</td>
<td>Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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1. Introduction

The United Nations’ Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) online platform is a global registry of voluntary commitments and multi-stakeholder partnerships supporting the implementation of the seventeen SDGs outline in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established in September 2015 at the United Nations. In May 2018, the online platform registered 3,828 partnerships. The SDG that then had attracted the creation of most partnerships was goal number fourteen, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, with 1,594 registered partnerships in May 2018. The second most attractive SDG for partnership makers, with 710 registered partnerships in May 2018, was number eight, for the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (UN, 2018a).

Partnerships are without a doubt considered an effective instrument for realising global objectives regarding sustainable development. Already in 1992, governments and businesses were encouraged by the Agenda 21, established at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, to “strengthen partnerships to implement the principles and criteria for sustainable development” (UN, 1992:30.7). The development of public-private partnerships became part of the 8th Millennium Development Goal in 2000 (UN, 2015), and during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg 2002, over 200 partnership initiatives between public and private actors were launched (UN, 2003). Not surprisingly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, established in September 2015, declares partnerships as important “means of implementation” for its 17 SDGs (UNGA, 2015; Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017:5). In addition to calling for a strengthened spirit of global solidarity and confirming the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development to overall improve the cooperation in financing and capacity-building, SDG 17 states that multi-stakeholder partnerships shall complement the Global Partnership and “mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries” (UNGA, 2015; Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017:5).

The Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth is a global partnership initiated by the Swedish government in 2016. It targets the challenges at the global labour market and has been seen as a pet project of the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven who, prior to being elected leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party in January 2012, was an active unionist, occupying the seat as board member of both IF Metall and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (Svensson, 2016; Government Offices, 2014). The Global Deal partnership has, as of April 2018, nearly 90 partners representing governments, businesses and employer organisations, trade unions and other organisations (ILO & OECD, 2018).

Since the Global Deal is said to be the first attempt of its kind to unite all stakeholders on the global labour market to jointly work towards the implementation of several of the goals established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Östmark, 2017), this thesis will be dedicated to making sense of what the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth is and will address these key questions: What are the goals of the partnership? How has it been formed, and how is it being implemented? These questions are considered important to answer in order to get a better understand of both the Global Deal partnership in particular, and global partnerships for sustainable development in general.

1.1. Outline of the study

This research project consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study’s objective and includes a description of the background to it, as well as outline of this thesis. Chapter 2 presents the aim, research question, literature review of the research used to make sense of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development and the contribution of this paper. This chapter will also present the method.
and limitations of the study. Chapter 3 presents the concept of partnership in the international setting and draws connections with theories of international relations, especially neoliberalism, as a foundation for understanding and analysing the case study that follows. Chapter 4 consists of a description of the development and implementation of the Global Deal partnership. It provides insight into the key events and actors involved in the creation of the partnership. Chapter 5 analyses the empirical findings of the case study using selected middle-range theories about international cooperation presented in chapter 4. Chapter 6 addresses the research question raised in chapter 2 and offers a discussion about how the empirics and analysis connects to findings in other studies. Chapter 7 presents the study’s conclusions.
2. Approach and method

2.1. Aim

The primary aim of this thesis is to make sense of a global partnership for sustainable development – the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to describe and understand the partnership. The secondary aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of what partnerships for sustainable development in international life are, how they are formed, for what purpose, and what they do.

2.2. Literature Review and Contribution

Although an emerging topic, global partnerships for sustainable development have been studied significantly during recent years. While some have looked at lessons for fostering new partnerships for sustainable development (Beisheim & Liese, 2014; Beisheim, 2012; Dodds, 2015; Kaan, 2014; Rein et al., 2005; Warner & Sullivan, 2017) others have examined more specifically their potential role for delivering the SDGs (Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017; Dodds, 2015; Hazlewood, 2015), as well as tried to make sense of partnerships (Schäferhoff et al., 2009; Svensson & Nilsson, 2008).

For example, Beisheim & Liese (2014) and Rein et al (2005) aim is to identify the conditions under which transnational public-private partnerships are successful in providing collective goods in areas of limited statehood, so that they may be of use to others in establishing and adopting similar models of cross-sectoral partnerships initiatives for sustainable development. Warner & Sullivan (2017) objective is to share practical experiences in establishing and implementing partnerships and to show how partnerships work in order to contribute to the understanding of partnerships and the way in which partnerships can contribute to poverty alleviation and development. The aim of Kaan’s (2014) paper is to identify causal explanations to why some partnerships are more effective than others. By critically surveying the literature on transnational PPPs, Schäferhoff et al (2009) aim to make sense of transnational public-private partnership in international relations. Svensson & Nilsson (2008) book investigates whether partnerships, that they understand as form of organisations, make development work more sustainable compared to other top-down and bottom-up governed strategies for change.

Nevertheless, a study has not yet been done of any partnership that is particularly constructed in line with the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, nor of the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth, initiated by the Government of Sweden in 2016. Of the literature mentioned above, the only one discussing partnerships for decent work is Kaan (2014), who by assessing the effectiveness of a few partnerships aims to establish causal explanations to why some partnerships are more effective than others. Warner & Sullivan (2017) focus on the oil, gas and mining industry, as these sectors have tended to be the primary drivers of foreign investment in developing countries, and look specifically on partnership projects in local communities in developing countries. Adams and Martens (2015) paper discusses the impact of private funding to the causes of the United Nations by analysing global partnerships relating to gender equality, sustainable energy, and scaling up nutrition.

The Global Deal is a crucial case with unique features. First of all, the partnership is the first attempt of its kind to unite all involved sectors on the global labour market - governments, business, trade unions, and other organisations – to commit to the enhancement of social dialogue and the promotion of joint solutions. Secondly, the Global Deal aims to improve the understanding and practise of social dialogue on the international arena. By using the agendas of decent work, job quality and inclusive growth, the partnership is able to demonstrate the critical role that a well-functioning social dialogue can play for improving both the conditions for labour and capital, as well as the society as a whole. Thirdly, the goals of the partnership are in line with the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, especially goal number 8 on decent work and economic growth and goal number 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries. The partnership is also in line with SDG number 17 that highlights the importance of global partnerships.
and cooperation and a rule-based, fair systems of trade as means to achieve a more sustainable future for all. Ultimately, there are few, if any, other partnership working to enable multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation on the topics of decent work and inclusive growth and particularly at the comprehensive scale as the Global Deal partnership does.

2.3. Research Questions

To achieve the aim of making sense of the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth the following research questions are of particular interest:

- *What are the goals of the Global Deal?*
- *How was the Global Deal formed?*
- *How is the Global Deal being implemented?*

2.4. Method

In order to make sense of the Global Deal, a qualitative case study of the partnership will be conducted. This will allow the investigation of a partnership within its real-life context, test hypotheses about partnership creation in the context of an individual case and develop an understanding of the phenomenon of partnerships. It also helps to achieve a high level of conceptual validity, although just regarding one case.

The method of process tracing will be applied for this paper. By using a process tracing method, I attempt to find the connections between observed outcomes and likely causes. Moreover, I examine the history of the partnership with the help of material collected via documentary analysis (Andersson, 2012; Analytical Group, 2015; Ljung, 2015) and semi-structured interviews with government officials working with the Global Deal partnership at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Östmark, 2017) (Unger Belin, 2018). The interviewees, in particular, provided this research project with crucial knowledge and unique insights about the development of the partnership.

Middle range international relations theory, in particularly from the neoliberal tradition, will be used as an analytical framework in order to process the data from the case study and make sense of the Global Deal partnership. In contrast with highly general and abstract international relations theories that “focus on correlations between the ‘start’ and ‘finish’ of a phenomenon”, middle-range theories help to “identify recurring conjunctions of mechanisms and provide hypotheses on the pathways through which they produce results” (George and Bennet, 2004:8). This theoretical approach will provide more conditional and specific generalizations about global partnership create for sustainable development and the Global Deal partnership.

2.5. Limitations

Given that this research project only investigates a single case study, the kind of conclusions that will be made in this thesis will not be generic. Case studies are limited by their ability to only make provisional conclusions on how much a particular variable affect the outcome in particular situations or generally contribute to the outcomes of similar type of cases (George & Bennet, 2004). Even though a case study can achieve a significant contribution to knowledge in terms of high internal validity and good historical explanations of a particular phenomenon, it cannot make generalizations that apply to a broad group of cases. As George & Bennet explain, “even when a plausible argument can be made that a factor is necessary to the outcome in a particular case, this does not automatically translate in to a general claim for its causal role in other cases” (George & Bennet, 2004: 27). Hence, instead of revealing how much a particular variable may matter for a particular outcome, a case study can assess whether and how a certain variable matter, and suggest factors that could be important in other cases as well.
Moreover, another limitation of this thesis is that I have only interviewed government officials working at the Global Deal support unit and consulted documents produced by the Government of Sweden, ILO and OECD when gathering my data for the case study. The Global Deal partnership is a multi-stakeholder partnership between governments, businesses, trade unions, and other international organisations, however I have not consulted any business or trade union representatives during the work of this thesis. While the Global Deal support unit can give a relevant picture of the development and implementation of the partnership, further opportunity to discuss key issues with other members of the partnership could provide a better understanding of the dynamics of the partnership.
3. Theorising Global Partnerships

Solving global problems at the international level has shown to be difficult. Speth (2005) and Park et al. (2008) provide for example excellent accounts on how the international society has failed to confront global environmental challenges. Barrett (1999) outline in his article about international cooperation and the international commons, how the problems of international cooperation have characteristics that can be explained by the well-known Prisoners’ Dilemma game. Essentially, governance systems, i.e. “institutionalised modes of social coordination to produce and implement collectively binding rules, or to provide collective goods” (Risse-Kappen, 2011:9), are generally considered to work reasonably good at the national level where the state has a positive authoritative role, but poorly or not at all on the international, transnational and global level (Young, 2011).

Realist international relations theorists understand the anarchic character of the international system as the main barrier to successful cooperation at the international level (Waltz, 1959; Young, 2011). Understanding the international system as anarchic means that one understands it as having no ruler, “no overarching authority to enforce order” (Russell, 2010:96)1. In the absence of a regulator, power relations guide the outcomes of international relations since human nature ultimately yearns for power in order to ensure survival (Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1959). Cooperation and compliance with international agreements becomes therefore something fairly difficult according to realist theorists since states prefer to avoid complying with “inconvenient obligations” that are not found of utmost importance (Parker, 2011). If states do join co-operations and comply with agreements, realism tends to argue that the co-operations are built on shallow agreements “that reflect the law of the least ambitious party” or that the actors would have acted according to a co-operation agreement even in the absence of one (Parker, 2011). As Donnelly in Burchill et al. describes it, “anarchy can defeat even our best intentions” (2005:37)

Nevertheless, there are also international relations theorists that are more positive about the prospects of international and global co-operation regarding common affairs – most of whom would call themselves neoliberal international relation theorists. The central concern of neoliberalism is the cooperation among states and other actors in the international system (Sterling-Folker, 2010). Even though neoliberal international relations theorists acknowledge that obstacles to cooperation can be difficult to overcome in an anarchic environment, they recognise that the growth of international institutions in the twentieth century has made international cooperation relatively easier to achieve compared to before (Sterling-Folker, 2010). The international institutions that neoliberals refer to appeared as multilateral organisations with physical locations, buildings, staff, budgets, as well as like international regimes, which consist of “sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations” (Krasner 1983:2 in Sterling-Folker, 2010). Neoliberalism is based on the understanding that humans are able to design international institutions that can substantially alleviate the negative impacts of anarchy on international cooperation. In order to realize this cooperation successfully however, neoliberalism believe that “the structure and design of international institutions plays an important role, as well as the frequency of interaction and information exchange among the involved actors” (Sterling-Folker, 2010:123).

This chapter will discuss global partnerships as a form of co-operation in the international system, drawing on literature explicitly on global public-private- and multi-stakeholder partnerships. The chapter explains explicitly the concept of multi-stakeholder partnerships and highlights two process management conditions for partnership success frequently encountered in the literature on multi-stakeholder partnerships: goal-setting and regular monitoring and reporting. In this chapter, different

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1 This does not imply that the international system is viewed to be a chaos, but rather that the order that does exist in the system is not imposed from above by a world government, but rather from below, by its actors (Russell, 2010:96).
terms and theoretical perspectives are presented as a foundation for understanding the empirics in chapter 5, the analysis in chapter 6 and discussion in chapter 7.

3.1. What are partnerships?

There is now a precise and universal definition of partnership. In fact, most of the time concepts such as ‘projects’, ‘networks’, ‘clusters’, and ‘partnerships’ are haphazardly used to describe some kinds of cooperation without paying much attention to their specific meaning (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008a). As a result, the term ‘partnership’ is often used to describe everything from “loose networks and alliances to more institutionalised joint ventures” (Caplan & Stott, 2008:23).

Nelson & Zadek (2000:14) define partnerships as the engagement of “people and organisations from some combinations of public-business and civil constituencies” in “voluntary, mutually beneficial, innovation relationships to address common societal aims through combining their resources and competencies”. Caplan & Stott understand partnerships in a similar way, describing how partnerships “involve two or more organisations that enter into a collaborative arrangement based on synergistic goals and opportunities that address particular issues or deliver specified tasks that single organisation cannot accomplish on their own effectively” or “cannot purchase the appropriate resources or competencies purely through a market transaction” (2008:24). Warner concludes the characteristics that are common to partnerships “include voluntary engagement, mutually agreed objectives, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations, and ‘added value’ to what each partner could achieve alone” (2017:24).

Nevertheless, Svensson & Nilsson (2008b) are of the opinion that most definitions of partnerships, like the ones presented above, are too simplistic. Instead, Svensson & Nilsson argue that partnership is “a form of work used in social planning and development in which actors with complementary and sometimes overlapping interests and areas of responsibility are involved in a common planning, decision-making and implementation process” (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008a:10). They chose to describe partnerships as organisational forms that involve a) some form of horizontal decision-making processes (i.e. shared power), b) valued contribution of different kinds of resources beyond financial, and c) flexibility to adapt the objectives and activities of the collaboration as circumstances dictate (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008b).

Despite the differences noted above, all definitions of partnerships refer to a more or less formal co-operation between actors in the private and public sector. Partnerships are mostly characterised as voluntary by nature, and involving some form of collective activity that is mutually beneficial to those involved. Partnerships are created in order to exploit the benefits of cooperation – the pooling of resources and sharing of risks and benefits (Caplan & Stott, 2008).

3.2. Goals & partners

Partnerships are formed to perform a task or solve a complicated problem. Svensson & Nilsson (2008a) describe that the idea with partnerships is to motivate the participants, being flexible, include both reflexion and learning, and contribute to long-term effects. While flexibility is achieved by have no formal decision-making power, nor being regulated by law, reflexion, learning and long-term effects are attained by partnerships since they in a way balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches to governance; top-down since it is a more formal governance constellation than networks; bottom-up since it still requires a lot of engagement from its partners (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008a).

The difference between partnerships and traditional network co-operations is that working in a partnership entails awareness and commitment on the part of partners in a more obvious way than cooperation in a network does (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008a). While networks are based on voluntary participation, partners are usually required to sign up to a partnering relationship once joining a
partnership (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008a; Caplan & Stott, 2008). Partners should feel ownership over the specific task at hand together with the others in the partnership - “As a partner, an actor is one of several that together will take concerted action to solve a social problem and achieve (structural) change” (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008b). Hence, partners’ ideal role in partnerships is to make substantive contributions to the partnerships stated goals. This can be done by contributing financially, convening power, leveraging technical skills, reflecting and learning together with others (Caplan & Stott, 2008). In fact, a reason for the growing interest in the partnerships is, as Caplan & Stott (2008) note, to develop the more informal cooperation in the network organisation into a more structured collaboration, in which partners are more action-oriented.

Moreover, it is not enough to contribute to an external change when partnering up with a partnership. Partnerships generally require their partners to be aware of the fact that external change may also require internal change within the partners own organisations (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008b:11). Hence, in order to be successful, the work of a partnership requires in addition to collaboration, support and understanding, also the willingness and commitment to change on the part of the organisations that form the partnership. In the words of a Co-ordinator of the Swedish EQUAL Programme², “the difference between a development partnership and a project is that you don’t just want to change the world around you, in a development partnership you also have to be prepared to change yourself” (Svensson & Nilsson, 2008b:11). This impacts positively to the prospects of the long-term effects of the partnership.

3.3. Multi-stakeholder partnerships

In the literature, there are two common forms of global partnerships discussed: Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs). PPPs “constitute a hybrid type of governance in which non-state actors co-govern along with state actors for the provision of collective goods, and thereby adopt governance functions that have formerly been the sole authority of sovereign states” (Schäferhoff et al. 2009). Even though partnerships have no formal decision-making powers, nor are regulated by law, PPPs tend to involve a legally binding contract generally between two signatories (Caplan & Stott, 2008:25). Transnational PPPs are, simply put, agreements for collaborative governance between public and non-state actors from different countries.

While PPPs generally involve only two counterparts, one from the public sector and another from the private sector, MSPs are forms of cooperation between various stakeholders – state and non-state actors (Schäferhoff et al. 2009; Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017:5). These actors include governments, international organisations, businesses, trade associations, foundations or non-governmental organisations. MSPs include partnerships described as cross-sector and inter-sector partnerships (Hasslewood, 2015).

In comparison with PPPs that generally operate under clear legal or regulatory structures, targets and timeframes, MSPs involve less transactions-based relationships with more of an emphasis on horizontal accountability (Caplan & Stott 2008:25). MSPs usually have very ambitious goals, but are more flexible when it comes to goals, targets and timeframes than PPPs (Caplan & Stott, 2008:25). MSPs are not regulated nor under any legal identity (Caplan & Stott, 2008:25).

² The EQUAL Initiative (2000-2008) aimed to support innovative, transnational projects aimed at tackling discrimination and disadvantage in the labour market. The initiative was financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and co-funded by the EU Member States. For more information, visit the initiative’s legacy website at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal Consolidated/
3.4. How should multi-stakeholder partnerships be implemented?

As mentioned in chapter one, much of the literature on MSPs aims at identifying the conditions under which these partnerships are successful (Beisheim & Liese, 2014; Warner & Sullivan, 2017; Dodds, 2015). Two process management conditions for partnership success frequently encountered in the literature on multi-stakeholder partnerships are stringent goal-setting (Beisheim and Liese, 2011; Abbott et al., 2000; Keohane and Victor, 2011) and the implementation of regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms (Wigell, 2008; Bäckstrand, 2012; Biesheim and Liese, 2014).

3.4.1. Goal-setting

How ambitious and stringent the goals of a partnership are, as well as the precision of the norms applied by the partnership, impact the effectiveness and success of MSPs (Beisheim and Liese, 2011). Fairly evidently, high levels of precision of norms and goals limit the room for interpretation, while lower degrees of precision allow for discretion and interpretation. In the cases that Beisheim and Liese examine, several suggest that rules are so vague and broad that they impede partners compliance to the partnerships norms and targets, complicate monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. Keohane and Victor (2011) also note that the precision of rules and goals impact the way in which actors are inclined to interact with partnerships – the more precise rules and goals, the more stability and reassurance the partnerships convey and the more actors are inclined to invest resources in them.

Moreover, goals of partnerships should be aligned with international norms. Studying the dominant norms of the global environmental politics, Bernstein (2002) has concluded that the reason why certain environmental norms have prevailed globally over others has had to do with their so called ‘social fitness’. According to Bernstein’s theory of social fitness, “new ideas must find some ‘fitness’ with the existing international social structure – or broader set of institutionalised norms already accepted as legitimate bases of governance in the international system” (Bernstein, 2002:8). Even though Bernstein recognises that “ideas and agency are important in the formulation of creative proposals to address global problems”, he maintains that “these ideas interact with broader social structures in which they must find a legitimate basis, or fitness, in order to be acceptable to relevant communities” (Bernstein, 2002:8)

Ultimately, the goal-setting in partnerships is not only important because of the end product but also in terms of the way in which goals are set – In order to be successful, partnerships need to set their goals in a collaborative and inclusive process. Visseren-Hamakers et al. (2007) connect trust building and improved collaboration within partnerships to the level of consensus regarding strategies and goals, which is intrinsically connected to the likelihood for success. For example, investigating partnerships in biodiversity governance, Visseren-Hamakers (2009:69) finds that “basic consensus among partners on the strategies for sustainable development, on development cooperation and on the role of partnership as governance mechanism is needed in order for the partnership to be successful”. Good processes for goal-setting are therefore important to have in place when developing partnerships. These processes ought to include “developing a common vision and goals from the very outset, working toward a common problem-definition, and aiming for clear and measurable goals” (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2016).

3.4.2. Monitoring & reporting mechanisms

An essential element in the design of any international institution, organisation and partnership has been the responsibility for collecting and disseminating information about the participating actors in the form of institutional mechanism such as monitoring and reporting. While monitoring mechanism defines standards, indicators and measures of goal attainments, reporting systems are designed to share information about the progress of the partnerships (Bäckstrand, 2006). Vigorous and open monitoring
and reporting system to record processes and progress are argued to have positive effects on the performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for several reasons.

First, monitoring and reporting mechanisms enable organizational learning. Since monitoring and reporting deal with collection, analysis and use of information to enable decisions to be made, they “facilitates systematic learning from previous successes and challenges and those encountered during implementation” (FAO, 2018). Organisational learning is good because institutions have proven more effective when they have learned to be able to quickly adapt to new circumstances (Folke et al. 2005). Moreover, Folke et al (2005) also describe how developing a common understanding through learning and drawing on various knowledge systems and experiences, has the potential to lower the partners cost of collaboration and conflict resolutions within partnerships, as well as motivated creativity for adaptive co-management efforts.

Second, monitoring and reporting mechanisms make partnerships transparent, which in turn is instrumental for process legitimacy and accountability (Visseren-Hamakas, 2009; Wigell 2008; Bäckstrand 2012; Bexell & Mörh, 2010). Bernstein defines legitimacy as the “acceptance and justification of shared rule by a community” (2005:142). Bäckstrand expands on Bernstein’s definition of legitimacy, and argues that “legitimacy can be conceived of as the quality of the particular social and political order, the normative belief held by actors that the particular rule, institution or order ought to be obeyed” (2006:291). In the context of partnerships for sustainable development, Bäckstrand argues that legitimacy is based on the partnerships’ ‘performance’ and ‘delivery’ of their promised results, and whether partnerships are “open to public scrutiny as well as representative and inclusive of different stakeholders’ interests” (Bäckstrand, 2006:292). Habermas, who first introduced the term ‘legitimation crisis’ in the 1970s, explained the importance of legitimacy. According to Habermas, without legitimacy “it is not possible by administrative means to maintain or establish effective normative structure to the extent required” (Habermas, 1973: 47, see also Reus-Smit, 2007).

Moreover, transparency and access to information, together with some form of sanctions, are preconditions for accountability (Bexell & Mörh, 2010). According to Bäckstrand (2006), “accountability refers to the relationships between actors”, and Crowther et al (2015:15) explain that accountability “exists where there is the demand for the justification for a function of task that is performed by an individual or body for another individual or body”. Visseren-Hamakas (2009) among others, note that both public and private constituencies are increasingly demanding accountability and disclosure of partnerships activities, spending and impacts of financial or in-kind contributions.

Moreover, accountability has beneficial effects not only for partnerships’ stakeholders, but also for the partnerships themselves. In fact, in addition to being the means through which stakeholders and partnerships can be held responsible for their decisions and actions, accountability is also a mean by which stakeholders take internal responsibility for shaping the mission and values of the partnership, open themselves to external scrutiny and performance assessment (Blagescu & Young, 2005). This is believed to promote a culture and practice of compliance with partnerships’ policies and advance learning and innovation (Blagescu & Young, 2005). Neoliberal international relations theory particularly believes that partnerships’ mechanisms for monitoring participants behaviour and transparency are particularly important for compliance since monitoring and transparency makes all actors aware of one another’s behaviour. As Sterling-Folker (2010) writes, “by providing for the systematic review of each members practices, institutions highlight areas of potential defection and, because [partners] are aware that their conduct is being regularly monitored, it encourages compliance” (2010:126)

3.5. Conclusion

To summarize, this chapter has discussed partnership as a form of co-operation in the international system. Even though there is no clear and universal definition of partnership, all definitions consulted during the research for this thesis refer to a more or less formal action-oriented co-operation between
actors in the private and public sector, characterised as voluntary and mutually beneficial. MSPs are forms of cooperation between various stakeholders and with more flexible goals than PPPs. Open and rigorous goal-setting, and regular monitoring and reporting are identified as key features of developing successful global MSPs. These process management conditions help partnerships find legitimacy in the excising international governance system, attract stakeholders to join the partnerships, enable organizational learning, and foster transparency, which is instrumental for the legitimacy and accountability of partnerships.
4. Case Study: The Global Deal Partnership

“Sometimes, I know I’m guilty of this, we sort of think about the way political leaders change things is by passing laws or by passing budgets, and often we forget that as political leaders we are able to convene people and crystallize a set of values, and I think right now there’s a big opportunity for us to bring together a new coalition of business, civil society, labour, and politics and translate that into a set of standards that could actually begin to make a bit of an impact” – MP Liam Byrne, British Labour Party, at Anna Lindh Seminar 2012 (Andersson, 2012:15)

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The Swedish Prime Minister Löfven launched the “Global Deal Partnership for Decent work and Inclusive growth” in connection with the United Nations General Assembly’s 71st meeting in New York at the 21st of September 2016 (Government Offices, 2016). About 300 participants from unions, companies, and international organizations participated in the event (Morsi, 2016). Some of the most notable guests at the launch where the General Director of the International Labour Organisation, Guy Ryder, the General Secretary of the Organisation of Economic Development and Cooperation, Angel Gurria, the General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation Sharan Burrow and the Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden (Government Offices, 2016e).

Stefan Löfven’s vision of creating a Global Deal between capital and labour was based on a strong wish to improve working conditions, advance corporate performance, and create more inclusive growth by advancing tripartite collaboration between workers, companies, and governments. Presenting his idea about a global deal on the international labour market at the ECOSOC Session in New York in March 2015, PM Löfven emphasized the shared responsibility of all actors on the international stage to deal with the troubling issues on the global labour market. In his statement at the session, Löfven acknowledged that “We share a planet, we share a global economy, and we increasingly share a global labour market. For this reason, we also share the task of finally taking responsibility for global working life” (Löfven, 2015).

This chapter presents the Global Deal partnership. Before the international launch of the partnership in 2016, the Global Deal concept and partnership had been developed in a couple of steps. It had for example been discussed at a 2012 Anna Lindh Seminar in Stockholm devoted specifically to the topic, organized by the Swedish Social Democrat Party, Olof Palme International Center and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) (Andersson, 2012). Once the Swedish Social Democrat Party stepped into government in 2014, the initiative was developed within the Government Offices of Sweden. This chapter explains the Global Deal partnership’s goals, how it was formed and how it is being implemented.

4.1. What are the goals of the Global Deal partnership?

The goal of the Global Deal is to jointly with governments, businesses, trade unions and other organisations address the challenges in the global labour market (Global Deal, 2017b). Workers are in many places around the world denied their fundamental human rights at work (ILO, 2018a). Child labour remains a serious concern in the 21st century (UN, 2018) and migrant workers continue to suffer from significant decent work deficits, enjoying little social protection, poor working conditions, and vulnerability to exploitation and forced labour (ILO, 2018d; ILO, 2017c). The ILO estimates that annually 2.78 million deaths are results of occupational accidents or work-related diseases (ILO, 2018b; ILO, 2017) and that 374 million non-fatal injuries and illnesses each year are work-related (ILO, 2018b). What is more, 780 million workers are also not considered to earn enough to lift themselves and their families out of poverty (ILO, 2018g).
In addition to the decent work deficits endured worldwide, the global labour market is also facing significant challenges relating to the changing quality of existing jobs and the need to create an estimated 600 million new jobs by 2030 to keep pace with the growth of the global working-age population (ILO, 2018g). Few would deny that globalisation has successfully lifted millions of people out of poverty and created a lot of jobs and business opportunities around the world. At the same time, however, the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation vary significantly across different sectors, regions, and social groups. Cities’ and rural areas’ experiences of the impacts of globalisation are conflicting, and so too are those of well-educated and less educated citizens. The advantages and disadvantages of globalisation are also encountered differently between traditionally leading major economies and new emerging economies. Both on the domestic and international level, the unequal and exclusive growth that has been observed in the wake of globalisation, is argued by many to be the seed for the growing populism, protectionisms, and pessimism in the 21st century (Neville, 2016; Collier, 2018).

The Global Deal partnership aims to encourage “governments, businesses, unions and other organizations to support and enhance social dialogue between employers, trade unions, governments, civil society and others.” (Global Deal, 2018). The partnership refers to the ILO’s definition of social dialogue that defines it as including “all types of negotiation, consultation or simply an exchange of information between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy” (ILO, 2018e). The idea with strengthening social dialogue is that active social dialogue can contribute to successful industrial relations, promote decent work, and quality jobs, and increased productivity. By extension, social dialogue is believed to foster greater equality and inclusive economic development that will benefit workers, companies, and societies (Global Deal, 2018). PM Löfven calls the application of social dialogue “a win-win-win” opportunity for all actors on the labour market since workers are provided with opportunities for a fair income and freedom to organise express their concerns, businesses are provided with more stable and secure supply chains and better conditions for long-term planning, and societies as given increased potential of building trust and reduce inequalities (Government Offices, 2016a). In this way, by bringing the various actors together, the goal of Global Deal is to promote joint solutions while still allowing the parties to represent their different interests (Global Deal, 2018). Ultimately, the Global Deal aims to work towards the enabling of all people to benefit from globalisation.

4.2. How was the Global Deal partnership formed?

*Social Democrat Party and Anna Lindh Seminar 2012*

Eight months after stepping into his new role as leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, Stefan Löfven introduced his idea about a global deal between capital and labour for the first time to an international audience at the Anna Lindh Seminar on the 17th of September 2012 in Stockholm (Andersson, 2012). The Anna Lindh Seminar is annually organised by the Swedish Social Democratic Party and Olof Palme International Center, in honour of the Swedish politician Anna Lindh’s memory. In his introductory speech, Stefan Löfven explained how he envisioned a global deal between capital and labour to be “at the very core of the possibilities of global cooperation”, “a basic model worldwide” that would put in place “a foundation for free and fair trade, shared prosperity and decent work for all” (Löfven, 2012); “With the tools of democratic cooperation, with the strength of mutual respect I truly believe labour and capital can come closer together to each other, country by country” (Löfven, 2012).

In 2012, the topic of the Anna Linde seminar was “A New Global Deal Between Capital and Labour” and the participants at the event were government ministers, members of parliament, senators, executive directors, chief secretaries, advisors and other representatives from the global labour market – public, private, and trade union confederations. Together the participants gathered perspectives from countries

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3 Anna Lindh was killed in 2003 while holding the post of Sweden’s Minister of Foreign Affairs. The seminars annually organised in her name address global affairs, focusing mainly on the Middle East and globalisation.
as diverse as Kurdistan, Tunisia, Sweden, Korea, Poland, South Africa, Angola, the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy (Andersson, 2012). After Stefan Löfven’s introductory speech, the seminar continued with a discussion centered around the concept of shared prosperity, how the relationship between capital and labour can be made more balanced, and how to secure fundamental labour rights and decent work for all (Andersson, 2012). The seminar was in a way the start of the formation of the Global Deal partnership.

In 2014 the Swedish Social Democratic Party won the general elections in Sweden and stepped into government together with the Swedish Green Party. The Social Democrats had focused their election campaigns on issues relating to education and employment and promised the establishment of a feministic approach to Swedish foreign policy once in power. In Stefan Löfven’s first Government Declaration on the 3rd of October 2014, he indicated that his government was to proceed with the idea of a Global Deal between labour and capital. The Prime Minister declared that his government would “work for a global order between labour and capital that strengthens an international economy that benefits all and subdues no one” (Löfven, 2014:4).

The Analytical Group on Global Cooperation and May 2015 Workshop

The Stefan Löfven’s newly established government started to work on formulating a proposal for a Global Deal between capital and labour in February 2015. The Prime Minister gave the task of developing his idea about a Global Deal to Kristina Persson, the Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation (Government Offices, 2018). To look at the Prime Minister’s vision for a Global Deal that could facilitate the joint treatment of the challenges on the global labour market, Minister Persson formed an Analytical Group for Global Cooperation (henceforth referred to as the Analytical Group). With the directive to investigate how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, together with its seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs), could be implemented in Sweden and globally, the Analytical Group embarked on examining what Swedish initiative could gain special meaning in the post-2015 development era (Government Offices, 2015).

The Analytical Group worked independently from the Ministry for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation, led by two chairmen – Loa Brynjulfsdottir, from the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, and Thomas Hammarberg, a renowned Swedish diplomat and former European Council’s Commissioner for Human Rights (2006-2012). In addition to the two group leaders, the Analytical group consisted of nine other delegates - representing the academia, the civil society, think-tanks, business sector and investment community (Analytical Group, 2015). The main secretary of the group was Sofia Östmark. Östmark was later appointed as the Swedish government’s ambassador of the Global Deal partnership.

On the 6th of May 2015, the Global Cooperation group organised a workshop in Stockholm to discuss the idea of a “Global Deal between Capital and Labour”. To the half-day event, representatives from international organizations, the private sectors, civil society, unions, employer organisations, and government officials were invited (Analytical Group, 2015; 2015a). The Analytical Group’s Summary Report of the Global Deal Workshop 2015 (2015b) provides a good overview of the main presentations, discussions, and highlights of the event.

Similarly, to the Anna Lindh seminar back in 2012, the workshop aimed to discuss the vision of a Global Deal and try to identify some concrete ways of making it a reality. The first part of the workshop evolved around the informal briefing paper that had been put together by David Ljung, a political advisor to the Swedish Social Democratic Party in the European Parliament, at the request of the Analytical Group. Ljung (2015) argued in his paper how the partnership had to be tailored to the post-2015 international development agenda and discussed how it could be specified and promoted internationally. Ljung remarked that a Global Deal projects could be operationally tied to several of the promised post-2015 sustainable development goals, particularly those targeting decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), quality education (SDG4), no poverty (SDG 1), gender equality (SDG 5), and reduced inequalities within and among countries (SDG 10). Discussions that followed
Ljung’s presentation highlighted among other things the importance of supporting existing ILO frameworks in order to transform the global economy at the very core (Analytical Group on Global Cooperation, 2015b).

**The Proposal & Collaboration with ILO and OECD**

After their workshop in May 2015, the Analytical Group sat down to work on a proposal on how the Prime Minister’s vision on Global Deal between labour and capital could be given a concrete form and be developed, and presented their final result in June 2015 (Analytical Group, 2015). The proposal laid down the arguments for why a Global Deal partnership was needed, suggested what different components should be included in the vision for it. The proposal also provided recommendations on the continued work ahead for the establishment of a partnership for decent work and inclusive growth.

The Analytical Group’s proposal recommended several things. First of all, it suggested that “Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth” ought not to develop new frameworks or agreements, or start a new international organisation. Social dialogue between companies, unions, and states, nationally and internationally, is already an established practice, and the OECD and ILO, among other global interest groups, are working actively on the global labour market with putting principles and rule frameworks in place. The proposal highlighted in particularly the importance of strengthening the UN’s Agreement on Responsible Investment and Global Compact, ILO conventions, as well as the World Banks’s Performance standards.

Instead of establishing a new organisation, the proposal argued that a Global Deal initiative could contribute with giving political direction and power to the overall developments, systematisation, and acceleration of existing processes for the enhancement of social dialogue between the different actors on the global labour market. The purpose of the Swedish initiative, according to the proposal ought to be the development of a platform to elevate the issue of social dialogue and to strengthen current cooperation structures. By encouraging partners to commit themselves to develop individual action plans to implement social dialogue and decent work in their respective countries and organisations, the Global Deal could give political guidance and power to the general development, as well as systematise and escalate existing processes. The Analytical Group recommended that the action plans of the Global Deal initiative ought to be tightly connected with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national planning tools of each partnering country, in order for the initiative to develop into a useful tool for the implementation of particularly the SDG 8 on decent work and inclusive growth (Analytical Group, 2015).

Moreover, the Analytical Group recommended that the Global Deal partnership would be based on an initial declaration of intent, and launched together with like-minded actors. This would help the initiative to gain sufficient impact from the start, according to the Analytical Group (2015). The initiative’s declaration of intent was proposed to lay down the vision and will of a global partnership for decent work and inclusive growth based on effective social dialogue (Analytical Group, 2015). Gathering like-minded governments, business, trade unions and other international organisations was pointed out by the proposal as a priority. By recruiting partner governments from different regions in the world, the partnership would be able to create “champions” for social dialogue across the globe that could subsequently continue engaging other actors. Businesses that already have well-developed frameworks and apply social dialogue practices were also explicitly highlighted by the proposal as crucial initial target groups for the Global Deal initiative.

In the long-term, the proposal envisioned that some permanent structures were needed to be developed for the Global Deal. In addition to creating a gender-neutral steering group in which representatives from all the actor categories would participate, the Analytical Group argued that permanent support unite would be good to establish. This permanent support unite could work as the institutional memory of the Global Deal initiative as well as a neutral arena where the partners could meet (Analytical Group, 2015).
According to the proposal, the permanent support unit should not be a new, own organisation of its own, but rather connected to an already established one. The Analytical Group recognised risks involved in connecting a support unit close to a key organisation on the global labour market, such as ILO and OECD, and instead recommended the cooperation with a civil society organisation (CSO) like the Just Jobs Network. The reasoning behind this held that the Global Deal initiative might disappear in the other operations of organisations like ILO or OECD, and that the Just Jobs Network already works with labour issues from an equality and sustainability perspective (Analytical Group, 2015).

Nevertheless, although the Analytical Group saw risks with placing a future support unit within the ILO or OECD, it recognised that both of the organisations had expressed strong interest in being part of the development of the Global Deal initiative and that cooperation with the two organisations would be of great benefit for the partnership. The ILO’s triparty structure and its work for decent work, development aid, and analytical capacity were acknowledged as central components for the work of the Global Deal, and the OECD’s launch of its Inclusive Growth initiative was seen to be entirely in line with the Global Deal’s vision (Analytical Group, 2015). Hence, the ILO and OECD could offer indispensable infrastructure for the advancement of the Global Deal.

ILO on Decent work

The ILO has pushed for Decent Work for a long time and is working hard with governments, employers, workers’ organizations, multilateral organization and civil society to put Decent Work for all at the center of inclusive growth and sustainable development (ILO, 2015a). The ILO believes that “productive employment and decent work are key elements to achieving a fair globalization and poverty reduction” and has therefore developed the organization’s own Decent Work Agenda that looks at job creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue (ILO, 2018f). The goal of the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda is to “deliver quality jobs along with social protection and respect for rights at work to achieve sustainable, inclusive economic growth, and eliminate poverty” (ILO, 2018f). ILO recognises that its Decent Work Agenda is crucial for advancing the entire sustainable development agenda and has therefore stated that the organisation is ready to work with its constituents and in partnership with all actors in the development field in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda targets that are so critical to the advancement of social justice (ILO, 2017d; ILO, 2015a).

OECD Inclusive Growth

The OECD has recently started to accelerate their focus on inclusive growth. The organisation produces today regularly reports on the reason behind inequalities and the consequences of unequal distribution of recourses (OECD, 2008; 2011; 2015) and has engaged with several initiatives to highlight the importance of inclusive growth (OECD, 2018). The OECD launched, for example, their Productivity-Inclusiveness Nexus in 2016, released the report Bridging the Gap and policy paper Time to Act: Making Inclusive Growth Happen, at the OECD Forum in 2017, and is about to present a network of Business Leaders for Inclusive Growth “to support global efforts to tackle inequality, increase prosperity and ensure that it is widely shared” (OECD, 2018a; no date). The OECD defines inclusive growth as “economic growth that creates an opportunity for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society” (OECD, 2018). The organisation recognises that “in just about every area, whether it be education, life expectancy, or employment prospects, success is determined by socio-economic status, wealth and assets, sex, age or the places where people live” (OECD, 2018).

4.3. Implementing the Global Deal

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven accepted the Analytical Group’s proposal on the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth, delivered to him in June 2015. The year that followed came to involve intense mobilization of the partnership and preparation for its international launch in September 2016. The work for the partnership was coordinated from the Prime Minister’s Office and focused on
the recruitment of the core partnership group in support of the initiative and developing the declaration of support of the partnership. As the proposal had suggested, the Global Deal was not to be a legally binding treaty, but rather to be underpinned by a declaration of support that partners are asked to associate with when joining the partnership.

The Global Deal’s Declaration of Support confirms partners’ commitments to enhance social dialogue in the labour market and support national efforts to achieve SDG 8 (Global Deal, 2017). By signing the declaration, partners commit to the advancement of decent work and inclusive growth on the global labour market by exchanging ideas, solutions, and experiences, promoting concrete initiatives and formulating voluntary commitments in connection with their participation in the Global Deal. The declaration of support also states what it means for the different types of partners to join the Global Deal; For governments, the joining with Global Deal includes recognising social dialogue and facilitating a policy and institutional environment that can enable it, as well as ratifying (or making sustained efforts towards ratification of) and respecting the ILO’s fundamental Conventions. For employers’ organisations and business, this means acting in a way that is socially responsible by committing to respect fundamental principles and rights at work and promote social dialogue within their own operations and throughout their supply chains. It also implies, as responsible social partners, a willingness to engage with relevant stakeholders locally, nationally, regionally or globally. For trade unions, this means fulfilling their social responsibilities when they negotiate, but also contributing as responsible social partners to the development of the company or organisation of which they are part. For all partners, this means recognising inclusive growth and sustainable development as shared objectives and acting through the Global Deal to move together towards their realisation” (Global Deal, 2017).

The voluntary commitments, that are to be submitted to the partnership’s support unit, can either relate to initiating new action or reinforcing already existing efforts to achieve the vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth, and partners are encouraged to identify and formulate commitments based on their respective context and capacity (Global Deal, 2017a). The commitments are to be as concrete as possible and therefore the partners are asked to, when submitting their commitments, to specify the challenges the commitment address, the main objectives of the commitment and the goals they aim to achieve (Global Deal, 2017a). They are also asked to identify with what partners they would potentially join to achieve their set targets and the existing reporting mechanisms that can be used to follow up their commitment (Global Deal, 2017a). On the 18th of May 2018, all commitments that had been sent in to the Global Deal support unit at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs were presented in the partnership’s first Flagship report (ILO & OECD, 2018).

The list in Figure 1. shows the initial core group of states, businesses, trade unions and other organisations that first signed up for the Global Deal partnership prior to its launch in New York in 2016. In addition to the nine countries, six companies and eight trade unions that joined the partnership from the very beginning, the ILO, OECD, and United Nations Global Compact joined the partnership. Just as the Analytical Group’s proposal had recommended, the regional diversity of the first countries joining the partnership was, highly intentionally achieved (Östmark, 2017a).
Initial Core Partner Group of the Global Deal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Angola, Austria, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Sweden, Tunisia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>H&amp;M, ICA Group, Scania, Swedfund, T B Team, Tunisian, Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicraft (UTICA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>European Trade, Union Confederation (ETUC), The Industrial and Metal Workers Union in Sweden (IF Metall), The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (SACO), The Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO), The Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), Unionen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Organisations</td>
<td>ILO, OECD, United Nations Global, Compact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. List of initial core partner group of the Global Deal at the time of the international launch of the partnership in 2016 (Unger Belin, 2018)

After the international launch of the Global Deal at the United Nations in New York in September 2016 the responsibility of the initiative was moved from the Prime Minister’s Office to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in February 2017. In March 2017, an ambassador and coordinator was appointed to the Global Deal and a support unit established. The Global Deal support unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was given the task of coordinating Global Deal and developing the cooperation between countries, companies, and unions that partnered with the initiative. Ambassador Östmark describes the work of the support unit as creating a platform for dialogue, and although the partnership relies on partners input on where they think the Global Deal can add value, the support units task is to identifying knowledge gaps and creating the kind of knowledge that is not already out there by the ILO or OECD (Östmark, 2017). For example, in 2017 the Swedish government partnered with the ILO and the OECD to conduct a business case study, analysing social dialogue from a private sector perspective (Global Deal, 2017c). The hope was to enlighten about the benefits of social dialogue for business and encourage actors in the business sector to join the partnership. In September 2017 four officials were working for the Global Deal – one Ambassador/Coordinator, two Deputy Director, and one Desk Officer.

During 2017 the focus of the Global Deal support unit was on organising big events and creating momentum. In June 2017 both a ministerial roundtable discussing the Global Deal was held in the margins of the International Labour Conference in Geneva, as well as a Global Deal meeting in Paris, hosted by the OECD, to take stack of the partnership’s activities to date and discuss the programme of the work for the remainder of the year. In September 2017, a High-level follow-up meeting of the Global Deal was hosted by Sweden, the ILO and OECD in New York in connection to the World Economic Forum’s Sustainable Development Impact Summit (Eriksson, 2017). This event marked the one year anniversary of the partnership and was aimed to assess the progress of the Global Deal one year after its launch. Several high-profile leaders took part in the High-Level Follow-up Meeting and declared their support for the partnership (Eriksson, 2017).

On the 22nd of November 2017, the Prime Minister Löfven hosted a high-level seminar about the Global Deal and trade in Geneva together with WTO Director-General Roberto Azavedo and a Senior Officials’ Meeting the day after, on the 23rd of November (Andersson, 2017). On the high-level seminar, prominent speakers representing academia, business, trade unions, governments and other organisations, including
ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, discussed how the benefits of trade could be better shared. The aim of the Senior Officials’ Meeting on the 23rd was for partners to meet, share experiences and deepened their knowledge about the Global Deal. Partners discussed and later agreed on a strategy for the coming year, 2018, and gave valuable input to the strategic direction of the partnership.

The idea for 2018 is to do more regional and local seminars and workshops to build networks, knowledge sharing and capacity building in Global Deal-associated countries (Unger Belin, 2018). “Some of the partners have committed to organising conferences, meetings, and other events as channels for exchanging best practices and disseminating information on social dialogue and industrial relations (Argentina, France, Colombia, ITC, LO, and TCO). For example, the Government of Colombia has pledged to organise a regional seminar to promote the principles of the Global Deal in Latin America. The Colombian seminar, which will involve representatives from governments as well as social partners, will provide an opportunity to share experiences and discuss the key role that social dialogue can play in fostering more stable workplaces and societies through the improvement of labour relations and the management of conflict.”

A second strategy for 2018 is to develop knowledge about the Global Deal and its issues topics. On the 18th of May 2018, the partnership’s first Flagship Report was released (OECD & ILO, 2018). The report is meant to be a recurring report that will be published every other year and serve as the main tool for following up on the Global Deal partnership. In addition to reporting on the partnership’s developments and outcomes, the purpose of the report is also to provide a portrait of the “foundations, trends and challenges connected to social dialogue and sound industrial relations” (OECD & ILO, 2018:8). By identifying challenges, promoting an exchange of ideas and experiences, discussing joint projects and solutions, the report aims to provide solid evidence to policy-makers and stakeholders. In addition to the Flagship Report, the Global Deal partnership will release four thematic papers during 2018; one on social dialogue and gender, other on social dialogue and the 2030 Agenda, a third on social dialogue and the informal sectors, and a fourth on social dialogue and the future of work (Unger Belin, 2018).

Moreover, from September 2018, it is envisioned that the Global Deal support unit will be moved from its current location at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden to a joint OECD/ILO office (Unger Belin, 2018). This plan goes against the original Global Deal proposal, which suggested that a support unit for the partnership should not be placed within an organisation that already is at the core of the global labour market, such as the ILO or OECD. As mentioned before, the proposal feared that the Global Deal could risk disappearing within the rest of the operations of such big and established organisation. Instead, the Global Deal proposal argued that a CSO like the Just Jobs Network would be a better place for a future Global Deal support unit (Analytical Group, 2015).

Nevertheless, Josefin Unger Belin, Deputy Director of the Global Deal, explains that the choice of placing the Global Deal partnership’s support unit in the hands of the ILO and OECD fell naturally (2018). First of all, both of the organisations have been part of the development of the Global Deal from the very beginning. Secondly, together the ILO and OECD have undoubtedly better capacity, experience, and more human resources to organise and run an international secretariat than the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs or any other potential global organisation has. Moreover, by placing the partnerships support unit at the ILO and OECD the hope is to reduce the political assumptions connected to the initiative which, according to Unger Belin (2018), in some cases have challenged the promotion of the partnership.

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4 Ahead of the seminar, a discussion paper entitled ‘Global Deal and trade – harnessing the benefits for greater development, equality and growth’ was circulated to spur the discussions. The paper was authored by Sabina Dewan, President and Executive Director of the JustJobs Network, and Jens Suedekum, professor at Henrich-Heine University in Dusseldorf (Dewan & Suedekum, 2017).
4.4. Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has explained the Global Deal partnership’s goals, how it was formed and how it is being implemented. The goal of the Global Deal is to encourage governments, businesses, trade unions and other international organisations to jointly address the challenges in the global labour market. Social dialogue is promoted by the partnership as the mean by which to achieve successful industrial relations, increased productivity, decent work and quality jobs, and, by extension, greater equality and inclusive growth. The Anna Lindh Seminar in 2012, the Social Democratic Party’s success in the general elections 2014, the Analytical Group on Global Cooperation and the Global Deal Workshop in May 2015 has been highlighted as central events for the formation of the partnership. After the international launch of the partnership in 2016, the Swedish government has developed and implemented the Global Deal together with the ILO and OECD. The partnership is based on a Declaration of Support and asked its partners to submit their own voluntary commitments to achieve the vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth. In 2018 the partnership’s first Flagship Report was released, aimed at following up the development of the Global Deal. In September 2018, the aim is to move the partnership’s support unit currently placed at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, to a joint OECD/ILO office.
5. Analysing the Global Deal as a Multi-Stakeholder Partnership

As has been shown so far in this thesis, global multi-stakeholder partnership is a form of global partnership that involves various stakeholders and applies generally more flexible goals than traditional public-private partnerships. The Global Deal partnership has been developed by the Swedish government, ILO and OECD, and focuses on encouraging governments, businesses, trade unions and other international organisations to jointly address the challenges in the global labour market. What follows is an analysis of the empirical finding of the case study on Global Deal in the previous chapter using the middle-range theories about international cooperation and partnerships presented in chapter three.

To start with, the Global Deal is a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership. First of all, in the global labour market the contemporary reconfiguration of authority requires the involvement of actors from all sectors of society – governments, businesses, labour unions and other organisations – to face and solve its present challenges. The power of businesses and trade unions, non-governmental entities are strong, and governments cannot address the problems of the global labour market alone (ILO, 2017). The Global Deal aims to join and form cooperation between the various stakeholders on the global labour market in order to providing common goods in the form of decent work and inclusive growth.

Moreover, the partnership is a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership since although its overarching goals – decent work and inclusive growth on the global labour market – might be exceptionally ambitious, the specific action-plans of the partnership are considerably flexible. As the case study reveals, the Global Deal asks its partners to submit individual voluntary commitments to achieve the visions of the partnership. The commitments are encouraged to be as concrete as possible, and may either relate to initiating new actions or reinforcing already existing efforts to achieve the vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth (Global Deal, 2017a). Josef in Unger Belin, Deputy Director at the Global Deal support unit, believes that the use of voluntary commitments makes the partnership more adjustable to the different contexts, roles, sectors, and ambitions of the stakeholders at the global labour market. The voluntary commitments also have the function of requiring awareness and commitment to the Global Deal vision on the part of its partners. The action oriented feature of the Global Deal, together with its ambition to involve all stakeholders on the labour market and flexible approach to the means by which its vision is to be achieved, distinguish the partnership from traditional network or project co-operations, and affirms the initiatives as a global multi-stakeholder partnership

To continue, in addition to describing the Global Deal as a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership, one could also conceptualise it as an innovative tool for the governance of the global labour market. As mentioned at the outset of chapter three, governance systems refer to “institutionalised modes of social coordination to produce and implement collectively binding rules, or to provide collective goods” (Risse-Kappan, 2011:9). Partnerships can be conceptualised as a new form of global governance or a ‘governance tool’ since they aim to provide collective good (Börzel and Risse, 2005; Schuppert, 2011). Beisheim & Liese (2014) describes this as ‘diverse actors ‘co-governing’ in partnerships’. By drawing on a diverse set of actors – from governments, businesses and civil society – partnerships have the potential to connect multilateral norms and local action.

The empirical findings in chapter four suggest that the Global Deal partnership aims at pooling together the diverse expertise and resources from the different stakeholders on the global labour market in order to deliver on the SDGs, particularly SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth and SDG 10 on Reduced Inequalities. By being flexible and adaptable to its partners’ different contexts, the Global Deal manages to link its partners ‘local’ practices across different sectors with global sustainable development norms. In essence, the Global Deal has the potential to operationalise the principles of the SDGs and match them with realities on the ground (social coordination), and through that promoting decent work and job quality, and fostering greater equality and more inclusive growth (provide collective goods).
Furthermore, the Global Deal was developed through an inclusive goal-setting process. What is clear from studying the development of the partnership is that the goals have been established in a collaborative and inclusive process with actors important to solving the problems of decent work deficits and exclusive growth globally. The Anna Lindh Seminar organised in 2012 and the Global Deal Workshop in 2015 both invited representatives from all the different sectors involved in the global labour market – governments, businesses, trade unions, other international organisations as well as academia (Andersson, 2012; Analytical Group, 2015c). The Analytical Group that developed the proposal for the Global Deal partnership in 2015 also consisted of representing the academia, the civil society, think-tanks, business sector and investment community (Analytical Group, 2015). As mentioned in chapter three, setting goals in a collaborative and inclusive process provides partnerships good prospects for success since trust building and improved collaboration with partnerships are connected with the level of consensu regarding strategies and goals (Visseren-Hamakers et al., 2007).

The fact that the Global Deal continues to consult its partners on future strategies for the partnership, as it did in Geneva in November 2017 at the Senior Official’s Meeting, provides reason for being optimistic about the partnerships future.

Ultimately, although the Global Deal is not a legally binding treaty nor applies sanctions on partners that do not fulfil their stated commitments to the initiative, studying the implementation of the partnership shows that its engineers have followed the advice of partnership scholars and neoliberalism and included mechanisms for monitoring and reporting into the design of the partnership. While the voluntary commitments work as monitoring mechanisms, that define the standard of goal attainment of the partnership, the Flagship report will undoubtedly work as a reporting system that will show information about the progress of the partnership. The Flagship report explicitly states that it is “meant to be a recurring report that will be published every other year and serve as the main tool for following up on the Global Deal partnership. It will report on the partnership’s developments and outcomes” (ILO & OECD, 2018:12).

As explained in chapter three, these monitoring and reporting mechanisms will allow the partnership to actively engage with organisational learning and contribute to the transparency of the partnership. Organisation learning will make the Global Deal more adaptable to change and has the potential to lower the partners cost of collaboration and conflict resolutions within partnerships, as well as motivating creativity for adaptive co-management efforts (Folke et al., 2005). The goal is that transparency will enhance the legitimacy and accountability of the partnership (Visseren-Hamakas, 2009; Wigell, 2008; Bäckstrand, 2012; Bexell & Mörth, 2010). Legitimacy is crucial for the partnerships ability to by administrative means maintain effective normative structure to the extent that is required for delivering on the targeted SDGs (Habermas, 1973) and accountability provides justification for citizens and other investors in the partnership for the continues work of the Global Deal (Visseren-Hamakas, 2009). Accountability also encourages partnership to take internal responsibility for shaping the partnerships mission and values, and is consequently believed to promote a culture and practice of compliance with the partnership’s policies, among other things (Blagescu & Young, 2005; Sterling-Folker, 2010).

To conclude, the analysis of the Global Deal partnership provided in this chapter presents four main arguments. The results of the case study conducted in chapter four shows that the Global Deal partnership is (1) a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership and (2) an innovative tool for the governance of the global labour market. Innovative in the sense that it uses the concept and function of partnership between all the different stakeholders on the global labour market, not only states, to enhance decent work and inclusive growth globally. Moreover, the partnership is (3) developed through an inclusive goal-setting process, and (4) implemented with monitoring and reporting functions.
6. Discussing the Global Deal

This chapter addresses the research questions raised in chapter two as well as offers a discussion about how the empirics and analysis of this thesis connect to findings in other studies. To make sense of the Global Deal partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth, the following research questions were of interest at the start of researching for this thesis.

- What are the goals of the Global Deal?
- How was the Global Deal formed?
- How is the Global Deal being implemented?

Based on the previous chapters, the listed research questions can be answered in a few points. First of all, the goal of the Global Deal is to improve the global governance over the global labour market and contribute to the implementation of several of the SDGs – in particularly SDG 8 on decent work and inclusive growth, and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities. The partnership aims to join governments, businesses, trade unions and other organisations address the challenges in the global labour market (Global Deal, 2017b). The partnership aims to encourage the different stakeholders to support and enhance social dialogue between employers, trade unions, governments, civil society and others. The idea with strengthening social dialogue is that active social dialogue can contribute to successful industrial relations, promote decent work, and quality jobs, and increased productivity. By extension, social dialogue is believed to foster greater equality and inclusive economic development that will benefit workers, companies, and societies. At the same time as globalization is seen to have delivered prosperity worldwide, it is understood to have increased the inequalities on the global economy. The Global Deal ultimately therefore aims to work towards the enabling of all people to benefit from globalization.

Secondly, the Global Deal partnership was formed through a process of deliberation with relevant actors. The concept of a Global Deal between labour and capital grew initially within the Swedish Social Democrat Party, led by party leader Stefan Löfven – a former unionist and board member of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation. The idea of a global deal between capital and labour was introduced for the first time to an international audience at the Anna Lindh Seminar in 2012. Participants at the event were government ministers, members of parliament, senators, executive directors, chief secretaries, advisors form a broad variety of countries and other representatives from the global labour market. Once the Social Democratic Party stepped into government in 2014 the idea of a Global Deal started to be developed within the Government Offices. Under the directorate of the Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation a proposal for the Global Deal partnership was put forward in the summer of 2015. The proposal had been developed by an Analytical Group consisting of representatives from the Swedish trade union confederation, academia, the civil society, think-tanks, business sector and investment community. The Analytical Group had prior to the finalisation of their proposal, organised a workshop to consult representatives from international organizations, the private sectors, civil society, unions, employer organisations, and government officials on the idea of a Global Deal between capital and labour. Once the proposal was accepted by PM Löfven and the partnership launched in New York in September 2016, the Global Deal has been developed by the Swedish government in collaboration with the ILO and OECD.

Moreover, the Global Deal is not a legally binding treaty but is rather being implemented based on a Declaration of Support and voluntary commitments of its partners. The Global Deal’s Declaration of Support confirms partners commitments to enhance social dialogue in the labour market and support national efforts to achieve SDG 8 (Global Deal, 2017). The voluntary commitments, that are to be submitted to the partnership’s support unit, can either relate to initiating new action or reinforcing already existing efforts to achieve the vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth, and partners are encouraged to identify and formulate commitments based on their respective context and capacity (Global Deal, 2017a). At the center of the implementation of the partnership is also its support unit. This support unit, currently positioned at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, works on
creating a platform for dialogue and identifying knowledge gaps about decent work, inclusive growth and the importance of social dialogue on the global labour market. The support unit fills these knowledge gaps by, together with the ILO and OECD, publishing continuously thematic papers relation to the issues concerning the Global Deal, as well as its Flagship report every other year. The Flagship report also serves as the main tool for following up on the Global Deal as it reports on the partnership’s developments and outcomes.

The analysis of this thesis connects to findings in studies of Wigell (2008), Bexell & Mörth (2010), Ivanova (2003), Hall (2002), Khagram and Ali (2009) and Schäferhoff et al. (2009). All of these studies recognise that global partnerships can be conceptualised as new forms of global governance mechanisms. As argued in the analysis of this paper, the Global Deal partnership can be conceptualised as a tool for the governance of the global labour market since it aims to operationalise the principles of the SDGs by engaging stakeholders on the global labour market (social coordination) and, through that, promoting decent work and job quality, and fostering greater equality and more inclusive growth (providing collective goods). Schäferhoff et al. identify for example that transnational public-private partnerships “constitute a hybrid type of governance, in which non-state actors co-govern along the state actors for the provision of collective goods, and thereby adopt governance functions that have formerly been the sole authority of sovereign states” (2009:451).

The next step after making sense of the Global Deal partnerships would be to attempt to evaluate it. Critics of global partnerships have question whether these new types of governance mechanisms are actually providing any collective goods to a significant degree. In fact, global multi-stakeholder partnerships have been described by some as purely neoliberal policy instruments that only in the end advance the special interest of private business (Richter, 2003; Utting and Zammit, 2009; Zammit, 2003). The involvement of the private sector has also been blamed to fragment the UN system and redesign public polices according to private interests rather than public needs (Brühl, 2007; Bull and McNeill, 2017; Martens, 2007).

For the evaluation of the Global Deal partnership, following questions could be considered: First of all, could some implementation indicators, drawn from the study of the implementation of the Global Deal, be used as factors for evaluation? For example, is the Global Deal able to attract sufficient stakeholders at the global labour market to effectively promote its goals? In May 2018, the partnership counted around 90 partners (ILO and OECD, 2018), however, how many stakeholders should really count as sufficient? Moreover, does the Global Deal truly solve policymakers’ problem with lack of knowledge, tools and other resources needed to respond to the complexities of governance over a globalizing labour market? Following up the development and execution of the voluntary commitments made by 51 different partners to the Global Deal, presented in the partnership’s 2018 Flagship report could be a good start for evaluating the partnership’s problem-solving capability.
7. Conclusion

What follows is a presentation of the conclusions of this study. The aim of this thesis has been to make sense of the Global Deal Partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth. The purpose has been to describe and understand the partnership. To achieve this aim, the research for this thesis has focused on discovering the goals of the Global Deal, how to partnership was formed and how it is being implemented.

The empirical research reveals that the goal of the Global Deal is to encourage governments, businesses, trade unions and other international organisations to jointly address the challenges in the global labour market. Social dialogue is promoted by the partnership as the mean by which to achieve successful industrial relations, increased productivity, decent work and quality jobs, and, by extension, greater equality and inclusive growth. Events like the Anna Lindh Seminar in 2012, the Social Democratic Party’s success in the Swedish general elections in 2014, the appointment of the Analytical Group on Global Cooperation for the creation of a proposal for the concept of a Global Deal between labour and capital, and the Global Deal Workshop in May 2015, were central for the formation of the partnership.

After the international launch of the partnership in 2016, the Swedish government has developed and implemented the Global Deal together with the ILO and OECD. The partnership is based on a Declaration of Support and asks its partners to submit their own voluntary commitments to achieve the Global Deal’s vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth. In 2018 the partnership’s first Flagship Report was released, aimed at following up the development of the Global Deal.

Analysing the Global Deal partnership with the help of middle-range theories about international cooperation and global partnership, this thesis makes four main conclusions. First of all, the Global Deal partnership is a textbook example of a global multi-stakeholder partnership. In addition to joining various stakeholders on the global labour market to work towards achieve a vision of a world of decent work and inclusive growth, the Global Deal is an action oriented but flexible form of cooperation. Second, since the Global Deal has the potential to operationalise the principles of the SDGs via its partnerships actions, and through that promoting decent work and job quality, fostering greater equality and more inclusive growth, the partnership can be conceptualised as an innovative tool for the governance of the global labour market. Governance refers to “institutionalised modes of social coordination to produce and implement collectively binding rules, or to provide collective goods” (Riss-Kappen, 2011:9). Third, the Global Deal was developed through an inclusive goal-setting process that provides prospects for success since trust building and improved collaboration with partnerships are connected with the level of consensus regarding strategies and goals. For example, both the Anna Lindh Seminar organised in 2012 and the Global Deal Workshop in 2015 invited representatives from all the different sectors involved in the global labour market – governments, businesses, trade unions, other international organisations as well as academia. Ultimately, the analysis concludes that the Global Deal has been implemented with monitoring and reporting functions. The partners’ voluntary commitments and the partnership’s Flagship report will allow the Global Deal to actively engage with organisational learning and contribute to the transparency of the initiative.

Future research on the Global Deal partnership, or any other of the 3 828 partnerships registered on the United Nations’ Partnerships for SDGs online platform, is encouraged to develop frameworks for evaluating the function, impact and outcomes of the partnership. Since the interest for global partnerships does not seem to cool off any time soon, the need for new insight into how global cooperation for the sustainable development can be implemented on will be necessary. There are still some years of hope left to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
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