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FINANCING DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROMISE OF (MULTI-STAKEHOLDER) PARTNERSHIPS

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Abstract
Partnerships are increasingly presented as transformative and effective mechanisms to overcome challenges linked to the global governance of development. Development objectives are increasingly framed as joint interest schemes, whereby interested parties (i.e. stakeholders) undertake joint action to realize their desired goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDG 17 call for intensified involvement and engagement of partnerships in sustainable development, formalizing a role specifically for multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs). MSPs that bring together donor and developing States, the private sector, civil society and others, have emerged and continue to flourish as a hybrid model of governance set up and operated on the transnational plane to address issues of common concern. In the context of Financing for Development (FfD), MSPs have been recognized by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as one of the important drivers of the mobilization and sharing of "knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources," of allowing philanthropy to leverage of additional development funds and of delivering development results.

MSPs offer a particular model of cooperation that purposefully defies traditional development cooperation models based on States. This is true both for their financing mechanisms and for their

delivery mechanisms. As there is no universal definition of what constitutes an MSP under the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs and specific criteria to be considered an MSP in this respect, MSPs may range from institutionally governed global entities to ad hoc collaborations delivering in-kind contributions from business enterprises to local communities in settings akin to charitable donations. Given the level of diversity that characterizes various MSPs, the inward and outward financing structures cover a broad range.

In many cases, States remain central actors both in providing MSPs financial sources to continue investing in a given issue area and in being the addressees of MSP programs, policies and projects. Many prominent MSPs depend and run on replenishments from States (both donor and partner) and non-State sources (such as private businesses and philanthropic actors). The dependence on periodic replenishments may in fact create uncertain future both for developing country partners that come to depend on MSP resources in policymaking and implementation as well as for rights-holders destined to be the beneficiaries of MSP programs and projects. Finally, although MSPs manage substantial financial resources and run development programs with the potential to impact the lives of a great many people, they themselves are not regulated by the legal regimes that govern State actors, such as human rights law and development cooperation commitments under the OECD DAC. In an added level of complexity, while States participating in MSPs are bound and regulated by international legal regimes, other 'stakeholders' within MSPs, such as private businesses, philanthropic organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operate in areas of legal ambiguity.

The research seeks to first critically assess the promise of (multi-stakeholder) partnerships in delivering development by scrutinizing the modalities of inward and outward financing. The Inward financing perspective allows to map the different (types of) actors that collaborate in MSPs, especially in the context of sustainable development, and the different types of collaborations that exist. Secondly, the research seeks to address accountability issues linked to how MSPs are financed and how they in turn finance policies, programs and projects from the combined lenses of political accountability and legal accountability by analyzing three components: 1. Responsibility (political)/ obligations (legal), 2. Answerability (political)/ Rights & duties (legal), and 3. enforcement (political)/ legal applicable regimes and frameworks (legal).