

GPF Annual Report 2016



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Contents

I.	Overview	4
II.	Programme areas 2016	6
	1. Global Policy Watch.....	6
	2. Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.....	10
III.	GPF Facts and Figures	12
	1. GPF board, staff and finances.....	12
	2. GPF website and social media.....	13
	3. Publications 2016.....	13
	4. Chronology of GPF activities 2016.....	14

I. Overview

Global Policy Forum (GPF) is an independent policy watchdog that monitors activities of the United Nations (UN). It scrutinizes global policymaking and promotes accountability and popular participation in decisions related to social justice, sustainability, peace and security, human rights and international law.

GPF is convinced that active popular participation is needed to defend and strengthen multilateralism and international governance institutions. While far from perfect, the human rights-based global governance system is the best defence against rising xenophobic, authoritarian and unilateralist trends that threaten peace, development and sustainability.

GPF gathers information and circulates it through publications, newsletters, presentations, the internet, and social media. It plays an active role in civil society networks and advocacy interest groups. GPF organizes meetings and conferences; publishes original research in reports and policy papers; and participates in policy dialogues and expert group meetings addressing the implications of the changing world on multilateralism.

Basic facts

GPF was founded in New York in December 1993 by a group of progressive scholars and activists. GPF is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, with consultative status at the UN. In September 2004, Global Policy Forum Europe (GPF Europe) was founded as the sister-organization of GPF. GPF Europe is registered as a not-for-profit organization in Germany. GPF maintains an office at UN headquarters in New York. GPF Europe's office is based in Bonn, Germany.

Programs

GPF uses a holistic approach, linking social with economic, financial, and environmental issues, peace and security, human rights and gender equity. The programs of GPF and GPF Europe currently cover concepts of sustainable development, financing for development and tax justice, inequalities, corporate accountability and the influence and power of transnational corporations, UN reform and global governance.

GPF Website

The GPF website (globalpolicy.org) is the primary communications vehicle. With more than 30,000 documents, the GPF website is one of the most comprehensive independent sources for information on international politics worldwide. In 2016, a total of 94 contributions was added to the site on the varied GPF themes. These contributions were visited a total of 172,469 times. All in all, globalpolicy.org was visited ca. 2.5 million times (an increase of roughly 1% over 2015) by about 1.3 million users (an increase of over 4.5%) in 2016.



Networking

GPF and GPF Europe play an active role in international civil society networks and coalitions, particularly Social Watch, the Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Alliance for Tax Justice, and the Treaty Movement. GPF corresponds with numerous civil society organizations (CSOs), networks and foundations. Barbara Adams represents GPF on the international coordinating committee of Social Watch.

Partners and supporters of GPF and GPF Europe

A centre piece of GPF work has been the involvement with the Civil Society Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives, which GPF founded in 2010 in collaboration with a number of international NGOs and networks. Central themes and challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) were discussed at numerous meetings and events. One result was the 2016 report “Spotlight on Sustainable Development“ (Spotlight Report).

Activities of GPF are implemented in close cooperation with civil society organizations and networks. 2016 partners and supporters of GPF include:



II. Programme areas 2016

The work of Global Policy Forum in 2016 centered on the discussions around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, the means of implementation (MoI) of the SDGs. In addition, GPF also participated actively in the discussions on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).

GPF's activities in 2016 were implemented in the following two programs:

1. **Global Policy Watch**
2. **Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

1. Global Policy Watch

The major activity of GPF in 2016 was its participation in the Global Policy Watch (GPW) project, jointly implemented with Social Watch. The overall objective of the project has been to promote accountability and empower citizens in the deliberations and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

2016 has been a momentous year following the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA). Yet, there is already a sense that for all the recent talk at the UN about implementation and transformation, it is falling short. During 2016, GPW contributed intensively to the information flow, monitoring and civil society advocacy around the 2030 Agenda. While this Agenda and the SDGs at its core seek to raise the level of ambition of the international community, there is also a sense that it requires deep transformations in the UN development system itself, in addition to a coherent framework of indicators and a strong follow up and review mechanism.

In the context of the GPW project, GPF participated in the Financing for Development Follow-up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the UN Statistical Commission's work with the Inter-Agency Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (IAEG-SDGs) on global indicators for the SDGs. Additionally, GPF also participated actively in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) operational activities for development segment – including the ECOSOC dialogue on longer-term positioning of the UN development system, which is a key contribution to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).

GPW aims to help bridge the gap between public interest in sustainable development, participation of civil society, and their national and the global efforts. The project's strategy combines three components: Monitoring of information, advocacy, and networking.

Website: The website (www.globalpolicywatch.org) serves as the monitoring tool of the project and the backbone of its information activities. The website is mainly in English, but relevant information is translated into Spanish and some key documents also into French.

The site features Global Policy Watch event priorities, blogs, briefings and issue updates. The GPW homepage features the latest publications and Twitter feed, supplemented by GPW news highlights.

GPW offers regular summaries on the key issues at stake and the positions of key governments and negotiation groups around them, to enable civil society to properly identify advocacy needs and opportunities. See, for example, the briefing published in November on “Refining the Indicators” (www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2016/11/11/refining-the-indicators/) or the briefing published in April on the upward trends of proliferation of partnerships as a means to finance the achievement of the SDGs (www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2016/05/23/partnerships-and-the-2030-agenda-time-to-reconsider-their-role-in-implementation/)

Twitter: The GPW Twitter account <https://twitter.com/gpolicywatch> was created to ensure trustworthy updates during meetings related to the 2030 Agenda in New York. In addition, it provides live coverage of the UN General Assembly Second Committee.

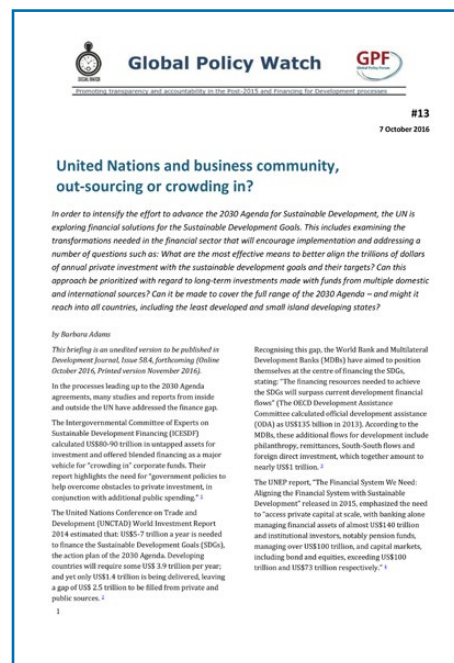
Twitter is used to connect with influencers / key individuals involved in the intergovernmental processes at the UN. By engaging in relevant conversations and being clear-spoken, Global Policy Watch has gained a respected presence as a credible source of critique and knowledge of the UN processes. Currently, the Twitter account has gained over 3,400 followers, including central actors at the UN.

Blogs and Briefings: Over the course of 2016, Global Policy Watch produced 25 blog entries on topics ranging from the SDGs global indicators to UN reform discussions. Additionally, articles were distributed via twitter and frequently reproduced in the mailing lists of Global Policy Forum, Social Watch and other relevant/subject-specific mailing lists. The blog was visited from 153 countries.

Seven briefing papers were prepared to provide an in-depth analysis and snapshot of vital topics related to UN processes in New York (see list of publications below). These papers were disseminated to international mailing lists, reaching several thousand recipients (mainly in the global South), as well as on the Global Policy Watch mailing list.

Events: GPF organized – in cooperation with various partners – a number of events related to the 2030 Agenda and its implementation:

- » **Side event on the occasion of the 47th meeting of the United Nations Statistical Commission and the 60th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women: “How to hold the ‘rich and powerful’ accountable in the 2030 Agenda: Roundtable discussion on monitoring, review and SDG indicators”** (8 March 2016 at the Baha’i International Community in New York).





Event during the international Strategy and Networking Workshop in Geneva, October 24



Side event on 8 December in New York

- » **Side event on the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development: “Shadowing SDG-implementation” civil society action for meaningful participation and accountability** (11 July 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York). The event was convened to showcase how civil society shadow reporting has been used thus far to hold governments accountable in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

More on this side event is available here: The summary of the side event is available here: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/11316Summary%20HLPF%20side%20event%20Shadowing%20SDG-implementation.pdf>

- » **Side event on the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development: Civil Society Exchange: “Shadowing SDG – Implementation. Civil Society Action for meaningful participation and accountability** (13 July 2016 at the Baha’i International Community in New York). Co-organized by: Alliance Sud, DECA Equipo Pueblo, German NGO Forum on Environment and Development, ECESR, Global Policy Forum, Social Watch Philippines, Social Watch, Kepa and VENRO.
- » **Side event parallel to the 13th session of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters and ECOSOC Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters: Strengthening domestic resource mobilization through international cooperation in tax matters** (8 December at the United Nations Church Centre in New York). The side event provided an opportunity to learn and discuss where the reform of the work of the UN Tax Committee currently stands more than one year after the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Since then, many initiatives have been developed and others have been rearticulated. What is the relationship among these different initiatives and are they enhancing international cooperation in the spirit of the AAAA?
- » **International Strategy and Networking Workshop: Global 2030 Watch Strategy Workshop** (22-24 October 2016 in Geneva). The meeting brought together leaders of key international social and economic justice groups and networks, and it was an opportunity for reflection, information exchange and strategizing around the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The workshop was organized in cooperation with Social Watch, Arab NGO Network, DAWN, Third World Network (TWN) and FES-Geneva.

Advocacy and organising for UN reform

The ambitious vision of the 2030 Agenda challenges the UN development system to be fully relevant in responding to the inextricable links across social, economic and environmental concerns. This is not just an issue of greater efficiency and effectiveness within existing arrangements. It is a question of what roles the UN development system should play to fully meet the demands of new commitments aimed at a comprehensive transformation of development.

Reorienting the UN development system to be fully relevant depends on political will, in addition to technical solutions. It calls for a transition strategy for the system to move from where it is to where it needs to go. One starting point GPW focused on is the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review. The review can be part of propelling the system into a new era to realize its full potential in implementing the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development.

Confronted with preparations for the QCPR resolution, ECOSOC decided to convene a transparent and inclusive dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the interlinkages between the alignment of functions, funding practices, governance structures, organizational arrangements, capacity and impact and partnership approaches.

In addition to official side events, Global Policy Watch organised several informal meetings with CSOs and Member States at the request of the Vice President of the ECOSOC, to discuss the future of the UN development system and draw on the expertise of civil society actively engaging in UN reform in the context of the 2030 Agenda and outlook for the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).

GPF expertise on Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships 2016

Member States, the UN and the Secretary-General have been active in promoting partnerships as a key means of implementation for sustainable development but without an assessment of effectiveness or commitment to UN norms and standards. Global Policy Watch has been active and effective in deepening the analysis and attention to the role of partnerships in this context.

Barbara Adams, Chair of Global Policy Forum was invited by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) to participate in an expert group meeting held in February 2016 entitled “Multi-stakeholder partnerships on implementing the 2030 Agenda: Improving accountability and transparency”. This led to not only the production of the GPW policy brief “Partnerships and the 2030 Agenda: Time to reconsider their role in implementation”, but to her continued participation in and analysis of how the United Nations will take forward the proliferation of partnerships in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

These ideas and recommendations served as an input to the Partnership Forum in March 2016, including the afternoon discussion held during the one-day event on “Promoting accountability and transparency of multi-stakeholder partnerships for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”.

In December 2016, Barbara Adams participated in the dialogue meeting “Strengthening the role of Member States in the review of multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementing the 2030 Agenda”, organized again by UN DESA. This meeting aimed to deepen the discussion on the role of Member States in the review and monitoring of multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as understanding the different models of oversight and what multi-stakeholder partnerships would mean for review and monitoring.

2. Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

GPF continued to play an active role in the Civil Society Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The group has worked together for several years (under its original name Reflection Group on Global Development Perspectives) to look beyond conventional development concepts and goals, to rethink the models and measures of sustainable development and social progress – in the North and the South – and to address structural obstacles, such as the fragmentation of policy processes, the lack of policy coherence, and the influence of corporate vested interests. The group summarized its analyses and findings in the comprehensive report “No future without justice” (June 2012).

After the UN Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2015, the Reflection Group decided to continue its work and to develop, *inter alia*, a periodic “Spotlight Report” assessing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the structural obstacles in its realization with a particular focus on the rich and powerful. Core partners of GPF in the Reflection Group are Social Watch, Third World Network, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

In July 2016, the Reflection Group launched the pilot version of the report “Spotlight on Sustainable Development”. The GPF New York office contributed with information and editorial support to the publication. The publication provided the first independent review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its structural obstacles and challenges with a particular focus on inequalities, responsibility of the rich and powerful, means of implementation and systemic issues. The report channelled the findings of 19 international and regional civil society networks and 40 national civil society coalitions.

Partners of the report Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016



The report was launched at various occasions, inter alia in New York and Geneva:

Side event on the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development: “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Good or Bad Start?” (11 July 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York). During the event, the roundtable discussed the main obstacles to achieving the SDGs such as transnational spill over effects that influence or even undermine the implementation of the goals and current policy approaches, as they are reflected, inter alia, in the 2030 Agenda, an adequate response to the challenges and obstacles. At the side event key findings and recommendations of the report Spotlight on Sustainable Development were presented. The event was organized in cooperation with the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Social Watch, Third World Network, and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.



Side event during the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development, 11 July

Presentation of the report “Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016” (October 24, 2016 at the United Nations Office in Geneva). The report was presented in the UN in Geneva on 24 October. Some of the key findings and recommendations of the report were highlighted at the event. The session was moderated by Hamish Jenkins (UN-NGLS) with Richard Kozul-Wright, Director of the Division on Globalisation and Development Strategies of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as a discussant Policy Forum.



III. GPF Facts and Figures

1. GPF board, staff and finances

The operations of GPF are governed by a Board in New York, the operations of GPF Europe by a separate Board in Bonn. GPF and GPF Europe receive most of their annual funding from foundations, partner organizations, membership fees and individual donations.

The GPF board and staff 2016



Barbara Adams
President

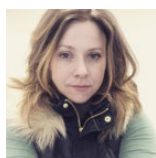


Marina Lent
Vice President

Abbigail Neville
Treasurer



Jens Martens
Secretary



Sarah Dayringer
Programme Officer

2. GPF website and social media

In addition to targeted mailings via various mailing lists the website is GPF's primary communications vehicle. With roughly 30,000 documents, the GPF website is one of the most comprehensive independent sources for information on international politics worldwide.

See www.globalpolicy.org

In addition, GPF is present on Twitter [@globalpolicy](https://twitter.com/globalpolicy).

3. Publications 2016

Adams, Barbara (2016): United Nations and business community, out-sourcing or crowding in? Global Policy Watch Briefing #13. New York: Global Policy Watch.

www.2030agenda.de/sites/default/files/GPW13_2016_10_04.pdf

Adams, Barbara/Judd, Karen (2016): Refining the Indicators: Opening the process; open for influence? Global Policy Watch Briefing #14. New York: Global Policy Watch.

www.2030agenda.de/sites/default/files/GPW14_2016_11_11.pdf

Adams, Barbara/Judd, Karen (2016): Silos or system? The 2030 Agenda requires an integrated approach to sustainable development. Global Policy Watch Briefing #12. New York: Global Policy Watch.

www.2030agenda.de/sites/default/files/GPW12_2016_09_23.pdf

Adams, Barbara/Martens, Jens (2016): Partnerships and the 2030 Agenda – Time to reconsider their role in implementation. New York: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung/Global Policy Forum.

www.2030agenda.de/sites/default/files/On-Partnerships-GPF-input-to-discussion.pdf

Global Policy Forum/DAWN/Third World Network et al. (Ed.) (2016): Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016 – Report by the Reflection Group on the 2030-Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York.

www.2030spotlight.org/

Martens, Jens (2016): The 2030 Agenda – a new start towards global sustainability? In: Global Policy Forum/DAWN/Third World Network et al. (Ed.): Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016 – Report by the Reflection Group on the 2030-Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, pp. 11-15.

www.2030spotlight.org/en/book/i1-2030-agenda-new-start-towards-global-sustainability

4. Chronology of GPF activities 2016

12 January	Panel discussion with Barbara Adams at the Joint Biennial Meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) and the OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) in Kampala, Uganda
21 January	Panel discussion with Barbara Adams on “Financing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the 2030 Agenda” in preparation of the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York
23 January	Panel discussion with Barbara Adams on “Undue Influence of Corporations & Philanthropic Foundation on WHO” in Geneva
8 March	Roundtable discussion “How to hold the ‘rich and powerful’ accountable in the 2030 Agenda” with DAWN, Third World Network and Social Watch in New York
18 April	Participation of Wolfgang Obenland in the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up in New York
21 April	Panel participation of Barbara Adams in the PGA’s High-Level Thematic Debate on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals “Financing poverty eradication and sustainable development” in New York
21 April	Panel- participation of Wolfgang Obenland in the Workshop “Intensifying and Expanding International Tax Cooperation to Achieve Sustainable Development” organized by South Centre, UNCTAD and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in New York.
19 May	Meeting of the Reflection Group in Berlin
23 June	Presentation of Barbara Adams at the Regional Workshop for Civil Society Organizations in the Arab Countries “Regional Approaches for the Implementation of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda“ in Lebanon
11 July	Side-event at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development “Shadowing SDG-implementation – Civil Society Action for meaningful participation and accountability” in New York
11 July	Side-event at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development “A Good or a Bad Start? Civil Society Reflection Group Report Launch: Spotlight on Sustainable Development 2016” in New York
13 July	Side-event at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development “Shadowing SDG-implementation – Civil Society Action for meaningful participation and accountability” in New York

2 August	Presentation of Barbara Adams at “New Approaches to Productive Development: State, Innovation, Sustainability and Industrial Policy” in Mexico City organized by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in New York
9 September	Presentation by Barbara Adams at the 13th AWID International Conference on “Challenging Corporate Power, Demanding Accountability: Feminist Resistance Struggles and Strategies” in Bahia, Brazil
13 September	Presentation of the report “Spotlight on Sustainable Development” at a Webinar organized by the Society for International Development
4 October	Panel Discussion “Corporate accountability and influence in the UN – Challenges for the new Secretary General and the UN” in New York
8 October	Presentation of Barbara Adams at the Social Watch Asia Regional Meeting “Citizens’ Initiatives in Asia: Gearing Up for the SDGs for Economic, Social and Environmental Justice in the Philippines”
23 October	Meeting of the Reflection Group and International Strategy and Networking Workshop: Global 2030 Watch in Geneva
24 October	Launching event of the Spotlight Report in cooperation with NGLS and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Geneva
8 December	Side-event at the session of the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters “Strengthening domestic resource mobilization through international cooperation in tax matters” in New York

