The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: Fostering Transformative Partnerships?

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The HLPF:
Fostering Transformative Partnerships by means of orchestration?

Partnering with(in) the UN: a challenge?
ACUNS Annual Meeting - UN@75: The future of partnership and multilateralism
June 27th 2020, 14:10-15:10 (UTC+1)
1) The HLPF’s mandate

Building on the CSD and the Rio+20 outcome document >>

UNGA 2013, A/RES/67/290:

- Provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations
- Follow up and review progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs
- Provide a platform for partnerships
2) Research findings on partnerships

• Effectiveness and legitimacy of partnerships vary and are controversial

• Situation before 2015: many did not deliver or only improved over time (see Pattberg et al. 2012; Beisheim & Liese 2014)

• After 2030 Agenda: Set-up meta-governance to enable and foster partnerships & ensure their effectiveness?

• No consensus among actors on necessity, function and form of UN meta-governance & existing one (Partnership Exchange, Partnerships for SDG platform, learning tools) has been rather weak, fragmented and contested (see Beisheim & Simon 2015, 2018)
3) The HLPF: orchestrator of partnerships?

• At the time of its creation scholars suggested that the HLPF must orchestrate “by default and design” (see Bernstein 2013; Abbott & Bernstein 2015)

• Orchestration is a soft and indirect governance mode, where one actor, the orchestrator, enlists the voluntary assistance of a second actor, the intermediary, to govern a third actor, the target, in line with the orchestrator’s goals (see Abbott et al 2015, p. 349)

• Case selection: SDG Reviews & SDG 16 Review

• Combined with evaluation studies (see Hansen & Vedung 2010; as applied by Widerberg 2017)
4) Who orchestrates how and what?

**PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES & INPUTS**

**ACTIVITIES**

**OUTPUTS**

**Organize preparatory meeting** (SDG 16 conference)

**UN-system**
- convenes
- endorses
- sets the agenda

**stakeholders**
- coordinates

**Gather inputs and publish reports**
- UNSG Progress Report
- SDG Progress Report
- Synthesis reports
- Background notes
- ...

**SDG 16 Review panel**

**UN member states**
- ?
- ?
- ?

**stakeholders**
- ?
- ?

**New initiatives and commitments facilitated**

**Interest and new discourses on SDGs generated**

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**Orchestrator**

**Intermediaries**

**Targets**

**Situation Theory**

**Causal Theory**

**Normative Theory**

**Limiting factors**
- ?
- Causal ambiguities

Marianne Beisheim & Felicitas Fritzsche

cc Felicitas Fritzsche

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5) Results and Implications

Preliminary Results:

- HLPF is constrained by institutional and functional limiting factors when trying to orchestrate partnerships
- The role of the HLPF as an orchestrator for partnerships is ambiguous and contested

Implications for HLPF Review:

- Link between reviews conducted at HLPF and partnerships should be strengthened (> mandate)
- One option: ECOSOC Integration Segment/Partnership Forum
Thank you!

For SWP publications on sustainable development governance:

For on-going project work on the HLPF Review:

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