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Global Policy Forum Annual Report 2019



Annual Report 2019



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Global Policy Forum Annual Report 2019

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I. Overview

Global Policy Forum (GPF) is a New York-based 501c3 organization and independent policy watchdog, committed to holding decision-makers accountable to a rights-based approach to multilateralism. It monitors and reports on intergovernmental and United Nations activities scrutinizing the UN system and engaging with country representatives and UN officials to advance human rights and sustainability. GPF works with alternative and progressive Civil Society Organization (CSO) voices, notably feminist organizations and those from the Global South.

GPF's unique value lies in its ability to bring to light and leverage the oftentimes inconspicuous opportunities and spaces across the multilateral system as well as policy analysis and advocacy at major fora such as the UN High-level Political Forum and Commission on the Status of Women. Global Policy Forum reaches organizations that have not been able to access global civic space as much as others due to geographical distance, bureaucratic accreditation processes and a full calendar of UN meetings that is difficult to navigate. These spaces include governance processes and institutions critical to ensure quality implementation of agreements and accords, such as the work on reform of the UN development system, and of the UN Statistical Commission.

Through these processes, GPF promotes dialogue on complex and systemic issues through publications, participation in official UN sessions, panel presentations, and informal and off-the-record meetings with many government representatives and UN Staff. It also facilitates meetings amongst CSOs and participates actively in progressive CSO networks as well as the Women's Major Group and other stakeholder engagement mechanisms.

GPF deploys a two-pronged approach: directly influencing Member States and UN Staff while holding them accountable to rights-based and values-driven decisions and mobilizing CSOs to hold their own governments accountable primarily at national and global levels. In doing so, GPF ensures accountability at multiple levels, enabling greater civil society influence and impact.

GPF is acknowledged as a credible source of policy analysis and a knowledge broker on issues relating to intergovernmental negotiations. GPF strongly believes that to strengthen international cooperation and create a value-driven, rules-based international order, governments must confront policy gaps, address the links between a myriad of issues and design policies that interconnect. This requires eliminating impediments to policy and fiscal space essential to realize advocacy efforts and gains across many areas such as the care economy, the right to health, social protection, climate justice.

II. Program areas 2020

Global Policy Watch



Global Policy Watch

Global Policy Watch, the main project of GPF, convened with the Instituto del Tercer Mundo (Social Watch), was developed to promote accountability and to engage Civil Society Organizations working on the full range of issues of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Social Watch's network of local, national, and regional CSOs enables GPW to reach a wide audience with its analysis and to support CSO activities.

GPF leads the Global Policy Watch project by applying its two-pronged organizational approach to monitoring and advocating on UN policy processes and meetings related to the 2030 Agenda. It is used by public interest groups as a primary source of information and analysis on UN developments.

The Global Policy Watch website (www.globalpolicywatch.org), serves as its main monitoring tool and is the backbone of activities, analysing current UN dialogues and negotiations. It concentrates on a wide range of UN policy processes including but not limited to those of the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, UN Funds and Programmes, the Secretary-General's Decade for Action, and the UN Statistical Commission. Its main language is English, with occasional posts in Spanish, French, and German.

The site features Global Policy Watch briefings, blogs, UN meeting monitors, which are used by UN Member States, UN officials and CSOs. In 2019 the site was accessed 24,860 times, with 2,440 publication downloads.

The GPW communications strategy has had a broadening effect on policy monitoring and accountability across policy streams through an active and informative Twitter account (@gpolicywatch), which brings to the forefront implications of key global negotiations in real-time. It is used as a resource by communities that are impacted by those policies or actively involved in shaping them (Government delegates and UN staff around the world) and supports CSO and social movement efforts to organize themselves for social change.

Written Analysis and Advocacy

Global Policy Forum publications provide a detailed assessment of UN processes and are used to inspire and prompt policy advances/advocacy among Member States, UN Staff and CSOs. In 2019, GPF introduced the "UN Monitor", which gives a brief, but comprehensive rundown and summary of UN negotiations. During the year it published ten UN Monitors and five briefing papers through the Global Policy Watch project.

» **Global Policy Watch Briefing #28: Social Protection: Hot Topic but Contested Agenda.** Barbara Adams, Karen Judd.

Contributing to the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women, this examines how the unfair global trade and investment system and lack of a debt work-out mechanism deviate the resources that should secure a universal social protection system.

» **Global Policy Watch Briefing #29: Who Influences whom in the policy arena? Statisticians seek greater voice.** Barbara Adams, Karen Judd.

This drew attention to the main points of contention between data and policymaking and the asymmetrical power dynamics that shape them.

» **Commentary on Special Issue of Global Policy journal: Knowledge and politics in setting and measuring SDGs numbers and norms.** Barbara Adams.

» **Global Policy Watch Briefing #30: The HLPF review has to match the ambition of the 2030 Agenda.** Barbara Adams.

This examines the issue of UN Reform in the context of decreasing trust in the multilateral system and offers original proposal to strengthen democratic governance in that system.

» **Global Policy Watch Briefing #31: Global Indicator Framework for SDGs: value-added or time to start over?** Barbara Adams, Karen Judd.

» **Global Policy Watch Briefing #32: Snakes and ladders in sustainable development indexing:** Roberto Bissio.

In the **Monitor** series, #03 “UN Partnership Forum 2019 ‘Partnerships Driving Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs’” addressed UN engagement in partnerships. **Monitor #11:** “UN General Assembly’s Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Tensions and interests on macroeconomics hide behind ‘consensus’” explored the debates about the UN’s role in macro-economic affairs.

These were distributed in hard copy at relevant meetings, through Twitter, and via many relevant mailing lists, reaching several thousand recipients. Their content was regularly quoted by UN, Member States and civil society organizations, such as the Third World Network, Inter Press Service, International Labor Organization, UN Committee on Development Policy, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, and the UN Conference on Trade and Development.

Global Policy Watch is unflinching in its support for a strong civil society presence in monitoring and reviewing the 2030 Agenda, and uses its publications, frequent presentations, trainings, one-on-one and small-group advisory sessions to further this approach.

GPF regularly takes the floor at UN events and other meetings to stress the link between civil society’s immediate concerns and UN processes beyond the 2030 Agenda. These include the lead-up to the UN’s 75th Anniversary, preparations for the 2020 review of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and the repositioning of the UN Development System.



Launch of the 2019 Spotlight on Sustainable Development Report

Reflection Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Established in 2010, the Reflection Group addresses the structural obstacles that hinder the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, such as the fragmentation of policy processes, the lack of policy coherence, and the influence of corporate vested interests.

Since the 2015 UN Summit on Sustainable Development, the Reflection Group has produced a periodic “Spotlight on Sustainable Development Report” to assess success in implementing the 2030 Agenda. GPF has participated in the editorial board for these reports since 2016, as well as being a regular contributor.

The Reflection Group published its fourth Spotlight Report “Reshaping governance for sustainability” in July 2019. The GPF New York office contributed a chapter, provided editorial support and facilitated the launch during the HLPF. The Report explores the failure of governments to implement transformational policies that meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda. It calls for key obstacles to be tackled, and for a sweeping shift in how and where power is vested.

The launch included diverse perspectives from governments and CSOs on what national reporting does (or does not) reveal on the 2030 Agenda. These presentations revealed clear tensions in achieving the SDGs at a national level, which are not receiving the level of discussion needed in the Voluntary National Reviews if countries are to meet the 2030 deadline. Among these tensions are the trade-off between economic growth and long-term sustainability and the need for not only policy coherence, but funding that reflects and respects such coherence.

Commission on the Status of Women and defending women’s rights

In 2019 Global Policy Forum monitored and supported CSO demands at the 63rd Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Aligning with the 2019 priority theme of social protection, GPF released **Briefing #28:** “Social Protection: Hot Topic but Contested Agenda”.

During CSW, GPF jointly organized an event with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), and MADRE: “We

want equal access! Austerity policies vs. feminist activism”, moderated by GPF’s Barbara Adams. This explored how austerity measures have impacted women’s access to public services, and explored feminist strategies to counteract this and promote alternatives.

GPF, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, MADRE and Regions Refocus hosted a reception for CSOs in New York. GPF also contributed to and spoke on multiple Women’s Major Group webinars during and following the 2019 High-Level Political Forum.

Measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals

GPF has carried out extensive research and analysis on the global SDG indicator framework, and its findings that year were published in **GPF Briefing #29** “Who influences whom in the policy arena? Statisticians seek greater voice”.

GPF attended side events and meetings during the ECOSOC UN Statistical Commission, using its knowledge and expertise to support civil society participants. It participated in the launch of the Global Policy Journal Special Issue on Knowledge and Politics in Setting and Measuring SDGs, with input from Barbara Adams, that summarised her contribution.



Spotlight on Sustainable Development – Report 2019

UN reform and repositioning the UN development system

UN Reform continues to be an important issue for the General Assembly and Security Council, a topic in which GPF takes an active interest. Its **Briefing #30** “The HLPF review has to match the ambition of the 2030 Agenda”, has been sourced by many groups such as the Women’s Major Group and the UN2020 constituency in their discussions on UN reform.

GPF foresees the UN’s 75th Anniversary as an opportunity for the UN to take stock and recommit to multilateralism. In anticipation of this GPF’s Barbara Adams spoke at the UN75 Global Dialogue in June 2019 (full video).

During the UN General Assembly’s High-Level week in September 2019, GPF’s Barbara Adams and Jens Martens spoke and moderated a session: “High-level Political Forum (HLPF) Reform including the Role of Private Sector in the UN” at the People’s Assembly. They highlighted concerns about the trend toward “multistakeholderism”, the increasing role of the private sector and a crowding-out of the public sector in governance, as described in **UN Monitor #07: “People’s Assembly Debates UN Reform and HLPF Review”**.

Expertise on partnership arrangements

Inadequate financing of the UN has prompted the UN and its Member States to embrace a range of private sector partnerships and finance patterns, including solicitation of funding from philanthropies and big business as a key means of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Global Policy Forum has carried out an assessment of how far these partnerships commit to UN norms and standards. As part of this activity, Barbara Adams, Jens Martens and Karolin Seitz participated in a research workshop: “Multistakeholderism: A critical look” in March, organized by the Transnational Institute and co-sponsored by the Institute for Multistakeholder Initiative Integrity (MSI Integrity).

In 2019, GPF released **UN Monitor #03: “UN Partnership Forum 2019 ‘Partnerships Driving Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs’”**. The former takes stock of private sector influence on the 2030 Agenda, while the latter highlights how UN partnerships have the potential to re-position the ECOSOC Partnership Forum towards a policy-shaping body. Further, UN Staff College (UNSSC) invited Barbara Adams as a lecturer on their course “Building Partnerships for

Sustainable Development” in July at the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development to focus on the idea of partnerships, including those with Civil Society, at the UN Country-team level.

GPF in Social Media

In addition to targeted mailings, GPF’s strategic communications include an active **Twitter** presence (@globalpolicy), and the **GPF website** (www.globalpolicy.org). This has more than 30,000 documents, and has a reputation as a comprehensive independent source for information on international politics.

GPF partners and networks

GPF is a source of expertise and policy analysis for universities, CSOs, UN staff and Member States, and all its activities are implemented in close cooperation with CSOs and networks. These include: the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Public Services International (PSI), Social Watch, Society for International Development (SID), and Third World Network (TWN).

Annex – GPF Facts and Figures

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

GPF operations are governed by a Board in New York, and GPF Europe's operations are governed by a separate Board in Bonn, Germany. Most of GPF's and GPF Europe's annual funding comes from foundations, partner organizations, membership fees and individual donations.

The GPF Board and staff 2019



Barbara Adams
President



Marina Lent
Vice President



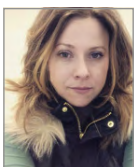
Marina Durano
Treasurer



Jens Martens
Secretary and Executive Director
of GPF Europe



Elena Marmo
Programme Officer



Sarah Dayringer
Programme Team Member

Chronology of GPF 2019 activities

10–11 January **CSO Forum prior to the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit**, UN-ESCWA/Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Beirut, Lebanon. Barbara Adams, Jens Martens and Roberto Bissio were panellists.

9–11 February **Pyeongchang Global Peace Forum (PGPF)**, South Korea. Barbara Adams was a participant and panelist.

6 March **UN 2020 Coalition on the “Synergies and Opportunities with the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement**, Barbara Adams gave a presentation (via video) on the 2019 PGPF Working Group.

11 March **International Reception for “Networking Across Boards and Borders: Strategies for Advancing Gender-Responsive Social Protection, Access to Public Services and Sustainable Infrastructure**, GPF, FES Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, MADRE and Regions Refocus, New York.

14 March **We want equal access! Austerity policies vs. feminist activism**”, side-event during the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women at the UN Headquarters, New York. Barbara Adams was the moderator.

17–18 March **The 4th Retreat of the Group of Friends of Monterrey**, Mexico City. Organised by Mexican and German governments, with Swiss government support, Wolfgang Obenland, GPF Europe, was a participant.

18–19 March **Multistakeholderism: A critical look**, A research workshop: Transnational Institute, co-sponsored by the Institute for Multistakeholder Initiative Integrity (MSI Integrity), Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Barbara Adams, Jens Martens and Karolin Seitz were participants.

3 May **SDG Global Festival**, Bonn, Germany. Barbara Adams, Roberto Bissio, and Jens Martens were participants.

28 June **UN@75 & Agenda 2030: For Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement**, Baha'i International Community, New York. Barbara Adams was a participant.

2–5 July **Building Partnerships for Sustainable Development**, UN System Staff College (UNSSC) course, Bonn, Germany. Barbara Adams was a guest lecturer.

11 July **Panel Launch of the 2019 Spotlight on Sustainable Development Report “Reshaping governance for sustainability”**, co-organized by GPF, Social Watch, DAWN, ANND, PSI, TWN, SID, UNRISD, and FES, New York. Barbara Adams was the moderator. Roberto Bissio and Jens Martens were panellists.

11 July **National Reports on 2030 Agenda – What do they (not) tell us?** Side event at the HLPF, organized by UNCDP, UNDP, GPF and Social Watch, New York. Barbara Adams and Roberto Bissio were panellists.

24–25 September **Panel Discussion** with Barbara Adams und Jens Martens at the **People’s Assembly** in New York

12 November **UN2020 Strategy Meeting**, World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy, CIVICUS, the Stimson Center, the Workable World Trust, FES, United Nations Association-UK, Soroptimist International, NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, New York. Barbara Adams was a participant.

Publications

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Adams, Barbara (2019): The HLPF review has to match the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. Global Policy Watch Briefing #30, New York. <https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/07/11/hlpf-review-ambition-2030-agenda/>

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HLPF Side event
“National Reports on 2030 Agenda – What do they (not) tell us?”,
with Barbara Adams, GPF,
Pedro Conceição, UNDP,
Prof. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr,
New School,
and Roberto Bissio, Social Watch.

Bissio, Roberto (2019): Snakes and ladders in sustainable development indexing. Global Policy Watch Briefings #32, New York.

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<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/03/04/measuring-the-sdgs/>

Adams, Barbara/Dayringer, Sarah; UN Monitor 03: UN Partnership Forum 2019: Partnerships Driving Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs.

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Marmo, Elena; UN Monitor 05: VNRs and Progress Measurement Beyond the HLPF.

<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/07/30/vnrs-progress-measurement-hlpf/>

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<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/08/28/un-general-assembly-week-of-summits-qa/>

Marmo, Elena; UN Monitor 07: People's Assembly Debates UN Reform and HLPF Review.

<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/10/01/debates-un-reform-hlpf-review/>

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<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/11/30/loss-and-damage-from-climate-change-how-much-should-rich-countries-pay/>

Marmo, Elena; UN Monitor 11: UN General Assembly's Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Tensions and interests on macroeconomics hide behind "consensus".

<https://www.globalpolicywatch.org/blog/2019/12/19/unga-committee-economic-financial-affairs/>