

PARTNERSHIPS FOR A BETTER-EDUCATED AND HEALTHY WORLD

ECOSOC High-Level Segment 2002

Ministerial Roundtable Breakfast on “Partnerships for a better-educated and healthy world”

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“If we are to achieve the UN Millennium Goals, we must move ahead as partners. Such partnerships must include not only governments, which have the primary well being of their population, but also the private sector, which provides most of the wealth in the world today, and non-governmental organizations.”

Secretary-General Kofi Annan

Since taking office in January 1997, the UN Secretary-General has underscored the importance of the UN working more closely with the private sector, foundations and other representatives of civil society in order to identify new and additional resources to support key efforts such as the fight against the AIDS pandemic and the promotion of girls' education. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular the ones addressing health and education, provide a challenge as well as an opportunity for new partnerships.

The UN recognizes that Governments cannot reach the MDGs alone and that civil society has an important role to play, both as advocates and as active partners. There has been considerable progress on new alliances with the Report by the Secretary General at the 2001 General Assembly “*Cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particularly the private sector*” (A/56/323). The United Nations Fund for International Partnership, UNFIP, is mandated to build new partnerships with the UN system, in close collaboration with the private sector focal points that have been appointed in 20 UN organizations. Considerable progress has been achieved in the health and education areas. In the health sector, for example,

- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria was established;
- The Rockefeller Foundation's efforts to build a multi-foundation coalition for Mother-To-Child-Transmission (MTCT) Plus initiative were supported;
- The Coca-Cola Company is using its vast infrastructure to deliver UN advocacy materials and supplies to remote distribution points in Africa.

In education, Cisco Systems, Inc. has entered into a strategic partnership with the United Nations. The Cisco Networking Academy Program has been established in more than half of the world's LDC's to train students for the Internet economy. Seventy academies have been established at universities, secondary and technical schools. In Africa, women comprise 23% of the enrolment. The goal is to give students the same quality training in information technology (IT) as in advanced countries. The partners include Cisco Systems, UNDP, the United Nations Volunteer Programme (UNV), the United Nations Information Technology Service (UNITeS) and the United States Agency for International Development.

The challenge is enormous and rests on two fronts: in bringing in the private sector to better understand and work with expertise of the greater UN family, as well as in equipping the UN system to be flexible and responsive to the ways in which the private sector operates. Future solutions to problems of such vast magnitude as the fight against HIV/AIDS can only be found by building partnerships and alliances. In particular, building such partnerships at the community and national levels.

Key questions with regard to global private sector alliances:

Building Sustainable Partnerships

- *How can the UN system best respond to the interests of the private sector in tapping their expertise and utilize inventions and technologies?*
- *How can champions of industries be identified to assist in implementing the Millennium Development Goals?*
- *What processes should be used for private sector alliances? Examples might include company affiliation on a thematic basis in line with the MDG or the identification of champions for leadership roles on a geographical basis.*
- *How best to align UN outreach to the private sector with NGO's, business associations and service organizations?*

Considerable attention has been given to western-based companies and foundations. Seeking new partners should be a global approach with increasing attention given to regional strategies and philanthropy at the country level. Even the poorest of countries has philanthropy potential and traditional practices for community and family support.

Key questions with regard to country philanthropy for development:

Philanthropy at the National Level

- *How best to align interests of the private sector, including family and medium sized enterprises to identify with development goals?*
- *How to build community support for development, including encouraging volunteerism?*
- *How can university and academia be tapped for community service?*
- *How can corporate social responsibility incorporated within university curricula?*

It is vital to build on the new promise in the New Partnership for Africa's Development, **NEPAD**, and the commitment by the G-8 meeting.

Hopeful Outcome

- *Framework for Partnerships for the Millennium Development Goals at country level;*
- *Encouragement of Government led business coalitions with the UN system;*
- *Support for initiatives such as Health InterNetwork, UNITeS.*