

ENHANCING  
GLOBAL  
PARTNERSHIPS



# Enhancing global partnerships

*Multi-stakeholder partnerships are critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals everywhere. SDG 17 on means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda highlights the need to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources and to promote effective partnerships. By engaging key sectors of society in sustainable development efforts, UN DESA is both a matchmaker for new and a counsellor for existing partnerships. The Department opens regular avenues for policy dialogue and knowledge sharing, researches and analyses good practices from a myriad of sectors and helps all stakeholders to improve their capacity for developing and managing partnerships. Through a variety of online registries, UN DESA also encourages, compiles and monitors multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments announced at various international conferences in support of the SDGs.*

## Monitoring partnerships for the SDGs

As of September 2019, 4,901 partnerships and voluntary commitments have been registered on the Partnerships for SDGs Online Platform by stakeholders from different sectors, across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Housed and monitored by UN DESA, the Platform brings together registries launched in support of various UN conferences and processes, including the 2017 UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 (the Ocean Conference), the 2016 Global Sustainable Transport Conference, the 2014 SIDS Conference, and the 2012 Rio+20 Conference. The Platform also helps the partnerships grow and allows users to find and join a partnership or a community of action on a specific topic, including action networks maintained by other UN entities and actors.

In addition to compiling all the partnerships on a single

platform, UN DESA helps the partnerships, exchange experiences, thrive and grow. For example, the Department brought together the nine multi-stakeholder-driven Communities of Ocean Action in Incheon, Republic of Korea, from 30 to 31 May 2019, to share good practices and to deepen the existing partnerships and establish new ones. The Communities of Action drive the implementation of over 1,500 voluntary commitments made by Governments, the United Nations system, civil society organizations, academia, the scientific community, and the private sector during and around the 2017 Ocean Conference.

UN DESA engaged all kinds of partners for the 2030 Agenda through the 2019 Partnership Forum. The Forum demonstrated how the so-called inclusion targets in the SDGs could be translated into tangible “business goals” and make positive impacts in the lives of women, youth



United Nations Partnership for SDGs platform. Website: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships>

and vulnerable populations. Long-term engagement of partners, dialogue among them and effective regulatory frameworks are key to aligning private sector operations with the SDGs. The Forum also demonstrated the potential of big data for public good, while underscoring the need for consistency and sustainability of data to measure progress.

UN DESA used the 2018-2019 period to convene the HLPF Partnership Exchange, and the Global Multi-Stakeholder Small Island Developing States Partnership Dialogue. Between them, these two events attracted some 850 participants. To support the SAMOA Pathway High-level Midterm review, the Department also organized partnership dialogues in Mauritius, Tonga, Belize and Samoa, attended by 170 partnership focal points and experts.

On the analytical side, UN DESA studied the contribution that partnerships can make to the 2030 Agenda. In 2018, the Department conducted an in-depth analysis of over 4,000 partnerships and voluntary commitments registered through the Partnerships for SDGs online platform.

The Department also conducted an in-depth analysis of

the 555 partnerships for Small Island Developing States that have been registered on its platforms and prepared a “SIDS Partnerships Toolbox” to enhance the capacity for designing, monitoring and reviewing partnerships.

### Sharing SDG Knowledge

UN DESA's online Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform continued to be one of the UN's most viewed websites, with more than 5.7 million visits in 2018. That same year, UN DESA launched a new UN System SDG Action online database, which features inputs from over 40 UN entities on their actions to implement the 2030 Agenda. In the spring of 2019, the Department launched a searchable database of good practices, success stories and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The database, which now contains more than 500 entries crowdsourced from a variety of stakeholders, is a useful tool for scaling up SDG-related projects, and for inspiring new initiatives. The Department also created a new registry of SDG Acceleration Actions to collect voluntary initiatives and actions by countries and other actors to contribute to the urgent realization of the goals.



UN DESA Assistant Secretary-General Maria Francesca Spatolisano speaks to over 20 Caribbean countries gathered in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago at a meeting on implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean Region. Photo: ECLAC/Blaine Marciano



### Multi-stakeholder partnerships for better SDG data

UN DESA continued to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration in support of national data systems. For instance, UN DESA and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) convened the Collaborative on SDG Data Interoperability, which in October 2018 launched “Data interoperability: a practitioner’s guide to joining up data in the development sector”. In addition, UN DESA is co-leading the Data4Now initiative, together with GPSDD, the World Bank and the Solutions for Sustainable Development Network. This initiative aims to increase the use of robust methods and tools that improve the timeliness, coverage, and quality of SDG data.

### Ensuring a seat at the table for civil society

In 2018, UN DESA reviewed and processed a record number of applications for consultative status with ECOSOC. Of the 740 organizations who applied that year, 433 were granted consultative status. The current cycle has already shattered that record with more than 800 applications received so far. UN DESA supports the NGO

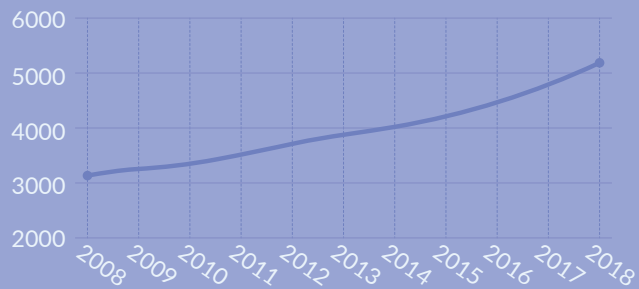
Committee in the assiduous process of reviewing these applications and the quadrennial reports submitted by NGOs with consultative status. The Department has also organized consultations between the NGO Committee and organizations with consultative status. As the interest in collaboration with the UN grows, UN DESA is stepping up its support to the NGO Committee to ensure that there is always a seat at the table for the civil society.

The 2019 high-level political forum on sustainable development in July was the largest meeting to review SDG progress to date. UN DESA facilitated the engagement of more than 2,000 registered civil society participants. The Department also ensured slots for 17

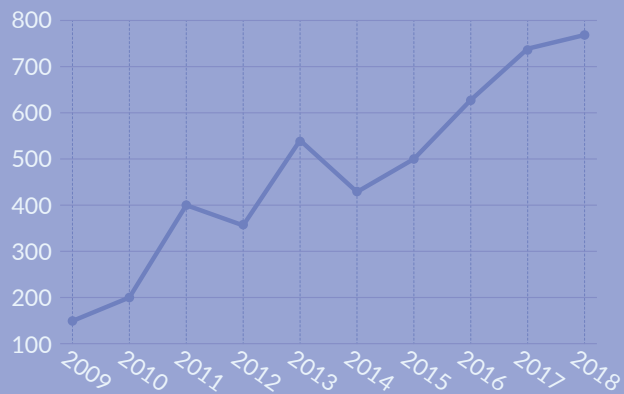
major groups and other stakeholders in side events as well as their participation in Voluntary National Review (VNR) presentations and in VNR Labs. In the lead-up to the HLPF the Department hosted a series of webinars to inform interested stakeholders about the forum and ways to engage in it. Close to 300 participants attended the first HLPF 101 webinar in December 2018.



Between 2008 and 2018, the number of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC increased from around 3,000 to over **5,000** – an increase of **66** per cent. The number of applications received annually increased from around **150** in 2009 to more than **800** in 2019.



Numbers of NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC



Numbers of applications for ECOSOC consultative status received between 2009 and 2018