



ADVOCATING TOGETHER FOR THE SDGs

HOW CIVIL SOCIETY
AND BUSINESS ARE
JOINING VOICES TO
CHANGE POLICY,
ATTITUDES AND
PRACTICES



*Advocating Together for the SDGs
- How civil society and business
are joining voices to change policy,
attitudes and practices*

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

One of the challenges associated with this work is that commonly used terms like advocacy, lobbying and campaigning are often used interchangeably and mean different things to different people. For the purposes of this report, such terms and concepts referred to in this report are as follows:

Advocacy:	Public support or recommendations made for a change to policies, practices or attitudes.
Advocacy collaboration:	Public support or recommendations made jointly by civil society and business for a change to policies, practices or attitudes.
Lobbying:	Strategic, formal and informal means of influencing specific decision makers on a specific issue.
Campaigning:	Actions, events and activities to raise awareness of a specific issue working more widely across organised groups or individuals.
Systemic challenge:	A challenge arising because of multiple related failures in the overall system rather than a single individual factor, and which is often rooted in the actions and interactions of diverse yet interconnected, interdependent stakeholders.
Systemic change:	Change that seeks to impact the functioning of an overall system rather than one specific part of the system, and which requires the active engagement of interconnected, interdependent stakeholders to be successful.
Transformational policy change:	Policy interventions that support systemic and sustainable change with the potential for large-scale impact in an area of a major development challenge.

ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

Background

With the advent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), new models of collaboration are transforming the way different sectors approach and tackle shared sustainable development risks and opportunities. Whilst much of the focus to date has been on spreading responsible practices and mobilising financing and solutions, an emerging area of collaboration between civil society and business is centred around policy advocacy and the opportunity for both sectors to work together to influence and encourage appropriate government policies in support of the SDGs.

To explore this opportunity further, Business Fights Poverty has brought together a core group of organisations at the forefront of advocacy collaboration between businesses and NGOs to learn from their experiences. They are Anglo American, GSK, International Alert, Mars, Oxfam and Save the Children. Further insight and facilitation has been provided by the Corporate Responsibility Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School. Roundtables were also convened in London and New York with a broader group of civil society, business and UN organisations (listed in the Appendix) with the goal of answering the question: “*How can advocacy collaboration between civil society and business help to shape the public policies and wider action needed to achieve the SDGs?*”.

The focus of this work is policy advocacy that is undertaken jointly and publicly by civil society and business. Advocacy collaboration is defined as: *public support or recommendations made jointly by civil society and business for a change to policies, practices or attitudes.*

Purpose

The concept of advocacy collaboration by civil society and business in support of sustainable development is relatively new, under-explored and ill-defined. With this in mind, the following guide aims to:

- Explore the drivers and rationale for advocacy collaboration
- Demonstrate what advocacy collaboration looks like in practice, alongside analysis of the pros and cons of different approaches and when to use them
- Highlight advocacy collaboration challenges and building blocks for responsible advocacy collaboration
- Encourage more advocacy collaboration initiatives to help advance the SDGs.

Intended audience

The intended audience for the guide are practitioners working in policy, advocacy and government relations roles in civil society organisations and businesses. We also hope the guide will be a useful resource for policy makers looking to engage external stakeholders in policy development in support of the SDGs.

Methodology

The work has been informed by in-depth discussions and multiple interviews with core group organisations, dialogues in London and New York comprising more than 30 civil society, business, government and academic institutions (see appendix) and a literature review (see appendix).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Civil society and increasingly businesses are using their voices and influence to drive the policies needed to achieve the SDGs

The SDGs represent a complex systemic challenge. Governments must take the lead but face significant constraints:

Governments must establish policies that address inequalities and protect the environment, commit resources and create frameworks for action that enables all sectors to play their part in the achievement of the SDGs. Governments though face significant challenges, including fiscal constraints, political divisions, state fragility, corruption and institutional failures. Moreover, they are often under pressure to deliver short-term results, whereas many of the complex systemic challenges being addressed through the SDGs require long-term integrated policy reforms that need to be pursued far beyond most government and electoral lifecycles.

Civil society and business have an important role to play, including through advocacy, to help shape policy, change attitudes and increase accountability:

Government constraints point to the need for active engagement by civil society organisations and companies, not to replicate government responsibilities or let them “off the hook”, but to advocate for policy reforms and public resources in support of the SDGs, and to unlock additional resources and enhance capabilities to achieve implementation.

Civil society organisations have long been at the forefront of environmental and social advocacy and campaigning. In recent years, companies that are integrating sustainability into their core values and business models have also started to demonstrate a willingness to publicly take similar policy positions and advocate for them.

Individual advocacy by civil society and business is important but insufficient to drive the long-term changes to policy and practice needed to achieve the SDGs:

Business advocacy alone may lack sufficient recognition of wider social and environmental challenges outside of the core business and supply chain and being a “first mover” on changes to policies and practice can be commercially risky. Civil society advocacy may lack influence with governments and the necessary resources to sustain activity, and policy priorities may lack a sufficient focus on a government’s economic goals. Individual advocacy can also be undermined by issues of trust, credibility and legitimacy.

Joint advocacy is emerging as a powerful tool to shape better policy, build political capital for change, and shift entrenched attitudes and practices

Recognising their individual constraints, civil society and business are increasingly seeing joint advocacy as a powerful tool to change attitudes, policies and practices in support of the SDGs:

A growing number of examples, including those in this guide, suggest that joint advocacy, which works in the public interest, balances the policy goals of both business and civil society, is underpinned by transparency and robust evidence and backed up by action, can overcome the limitations of individual efforts and deliver greater impact.

Advocacy collaboration can unlock three powerful opportunities to drive transformational policy change in support of the SDGs:

- 1. Building better policy and political capital for change:** By pooling expertise, evidence and insights, both sectors are better able to understand issues, agree shared priorities and identify new and better ways to tackle complex systemic challenges. Through the actual process itself of collaboration, they build the political capital that transformational change requires.
- 2. Shifting entrenched mindsets:** Given that structural and mindset change is hard to achieve, unlikely partners advocating together can help to shift old attitudes and norms and enable wider reach to non-traditional stakeholder groups and opinion leaders. The ability of companies and NGOs to combine economic arguments with social, humanitarian and environmental messages can be particularly effective in gaining attention and changing the way policy makers conceptualise issues.
- 3. Strengthening trust:** Advocacy collaboration can also build a deeper understanding of complex issues between organisations, which generates internal shifts in attitudes, behaviours and practices over time and enables organisations to build the trust necessary to move into more challenging policy spaces.

Policy makers can also benefit from advocacy collaboration which, by consolidating multiple perspectives and evidence into coherent and consensus-based policy recommendations, can improve the quality of policy design, provide assurance and political capital for change and make the policy analysis and consultation process more efficient.

A growing number of examples are emerging, but advocacy collaboration remains relatively ill-defined and under-utilised:

It is hard to define and categorise different approaches, as joint advocacy is often dynamic and fluid in nature, constantly evolving in response to shifts in the public policy agenda and changing government and stakeholder priorities. This guide sets out three approaches which have been observed during the research and development of this guide:

1. Advocacy collaboration that aims to advance the implementation goals and impact of a specific business – civil society delivery partnership.
2. Advocacy collaboration that aims to influence the policy agenda at a moment in time around a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone, for example a change in government, a change to legislation or a global summit.
3. Advocacy collaboration that aims to address a complex systemic challenge to achieve transformational policy change over the long-term.

The challenges of joint advocacy can be overcome using six building blocks for responsible and effective advocacy collaboration

Three areas of challenge arise from advocacy collaboration which participating organisations need to be prepared to navigate:

1. **Operational challenges:** For business, achieving full alignment between internal practices and external advocacy and between sustainability and government relations functions can be challenging. Civil society can also experience tensions between private sector engagement teams and campaigning, policy and fund-raising functions.
2. **Governance challenges:** Both business and civil society organisations are vulnerable to conflict of interest. This could arise, for example, if a policy change resulting from advocacy collaboration commercially benefits participating companies, or leads to public funding that disproportionately advances the interests of one civil society organisation over another.
3. **Reputational challenges:** Issues occurring in a respective partner's operations may have a damaging effect on the reputations and perceived legitimacy of those organisations directly associated with it.

Many of the challenges associated with advocacy collaboration can be overcome if organisations consider six key building blocks for responsible advocacy collaboration when designing and implementing joint advocacy initiatives:

When used, these building blocks can strengthen trust between advocacy partners and increase the perceived legitimacy and impact of advocacy collaboration activities:

1. Respect the leadership role of government but be prepared to use your voice and influence.
2. Put the interests of people and planet at the heart of advocacy collaboration.
3. Invest sufficient resources at the outset to gather the data and evidence necessary to build a shared understanding of the challenge and to inform policy priorities.
4. Understand and manage stakeholder dynamics and the political economy of policy change.
5. Ensure coherence and consistency between external advocacy positions and internal policies and practices.
6. Conduct advocacy collaboration transparently and in a spirit of mutuality, good faith and accountability.

To fully realise the potential of joint advocacy, new mindsets and skillsets will be needed by all sectors:

- Governments need to establish policy priorities and frameworks that bring together all sectors and incentivise action and collaboration.
- Businesses need to build a deeper understanding of the broader sustainability challenges beyond their core operations and supply chains and ensure internal policies and practices are consistent with external advocacy.
- Civil society organisations need to be more open to balancing mandates to challenge business with a recognition that business needs to be part of the solution in many cases, and to aligning their own internal programmes, ranging from campaigning to cooperation.

1. DRIVERS OF ADVOCACY COLLABORATION

The SDGs represent a complex systemic challenge, and all sectors have a role to play in achieving them

In September 2015 at the United Nations, 193 Member States committed their countries to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a framework and roadmap developed by multiple sectors, including government, civil society and business, to achieve a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world by 2030.

The SDGs, which pledge to *Leave No-one Behind*, consist of 17 goals and 169 targets. They cover global challenges as diverse as poverty eradication, health, education, energy, water and sanitation, gender equality, peace and good governance, economic growth, job creation, climate change and environmental sustainability.

Three key factors distinguish the SDGs from previous development frameworks:

- They apply to all sectors. Public, private, civil society organisations and citizens, all have a role to play in their achievement.
- They are universal, applying to all countries.
- They recognise the inter-connections between issues and challenges. Progress on one goal cannot be achieved without progress on all of them.

As such, they represent an enormous and complex systemic challenge for the world and for every country, which no one sector can solve on its own.

Governments must take the lead, but face significant constraints and governance gaps

As the adopters of the SDGs, national governments have the ultimate responsibility for achieving them. They need to take the lead, set the direction and create the enabling environment for others to play their part. In particular, governments must be accountable for:

- Establishing policies that prioritise action to address inequalities, respect human rights, help those left behind, protect the environment, and strengthen resilience, where appropriate, enshrine them in laws and regulations which are effectively implemented and monitored.
- Making tough choices on how to allocate limited public resources and balancing the economic, social and environmental interests of different groups in society.
- Creating frameworks for action that all sectors can unite behind, and which incentivise responsible investment, innovation and collaboration.

Despite ambitious goals and good intentions, most governments face significant constraints in delivering on their SDG commitments.

Fiscal constraints

First, is the challenge of fiscal constraints. In most countries, government policy reforms and funding commitments to achieve the SDGs are vulnerable to growing constraints on public finances. It is estimated, for example, that an additional \$2.5 trillion¹ in investment will be required globally every year to achieve the SDGs. It will be impossible to reach this level of additional funding without changes in two key areas:

- Domestic resource mobilisation² of which tax, including corporation tax, is a crucial component. Well-designed tax systems that redistribute wealth coupled with spending on social priorities have been shown to reduce income inequality and poverty.
- The creation of blended finance mechanisms³ among governments, business and civil society.

1. World Investment Report, Investing in the SDGs: An Action Plan. UNCTAD, 2014

2. Addis Ababa Action Agenda on the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (2015)

3. OECD (2018). Making Blended Finance Work for the Sustainable Development Goals. OECD Publishing, Paris.

Short-termism

Second, is the challenge of shifting political priorities and short time horizons. Most of the complex, systemic challenges being addressed through the SDGs require long-term and integrated policy reforms that need to be pursued over many years, far beyond most government and electoral lifecycles. Political leaders are incentivised to deliver short-term and visible results and it can be difficult to allocate public resources for long-term initiatives which lack immediate outcomes.

For this reason, it can also be politically challenging to fund preventative measures in areas such as climate change, public health, humanitarian assistance and peace building.

Declining trust

Third, the misalignment of short-term political incentives and priorities with the need for sustained, long term interventions is further exacerbated in an era of populism, declining trust in institutions and ‘fake news’. With public policy traditionally informed by a combination of political considerations, evidence and the advice of experts, new political forces and the internet have unleashed a wave of alternative interests, opinions and sources of information. Generally accepted facts, scientific evidence and the views of experienced experts are increasingly contested and mistrusted by citizens and some politicians.

Governance weaknesses

Fourth, government action in support of the SDGs can be further undermined by state fragility, conflict, corruption, institutional failures, or a lack of political will.

These constraints and governance gaps point to the need for active engagement by civil society organisations and companies, not to replicate government responsibilities or let them “off the hook”, but to advocate for policy reforms and public resources in support of the SDGs, and to unlock additional resources and enhance capabilities to achieve implementation.

“ *Most of the complex, systemic challenges being addressed through the SDGs require long-term and integrated policy reforms that need to be pursued over many years, far beyond most government and electoral lifecycles.* ”

Civil society and business have an increasingly important role to play, including through advocacy to help shape policy, change attitudes and increase accountability

In recent decades, both businesses and civil society organisations have played an increasingly active role in support of sustainable development. In the case of business, this contribution has manifested primarily through a shift from traditional philanthropy, to a focus on the impact of core business activities and value chains. Civil society organisations have strengthened their ability to provide technical expertise, understanding of population needs, and direct on the ground access to communities and networks.

Civil society organisations have long been at the forefront of environmental and social advocacy and campaigning. In many cases they have advocated or campaigned not only to and against governments, but also to and against companies.

Historically, some large companies and industry groups have pursued – and continue to use their influence and resources in support of policies that may be harmful to sustainable development⁴. Large companies spend millions of dollars annually in efforts to influence government policy and by far the greatest proportion of spending is focused on advancing commercial priorities⁵. In addition, there are concerns that the dominance of industry and sector bodies by large companies can lead to their interests being promoted over the needs of small businesses within the same sector.

In recent years though, leading companies have started to demonstrate a willingness to publicly take policy positions on social and environmental issues and actively advocate for them. Once considered to be irrelevant or to lie beyond direct business or industry interests, these issues are now being viewed as a higher priority, at least by the companies that are integrating sustainability goals into their core values and business models.

Moreover, recent major shifts and volatility in the broader political environment have also encouraged companies to take a more active and visible role on sustainability issues.

Through such advocacy, civil society and business can:

- Use their insights and leverage to inform effective policy making that encourages more inclusive and sustainable policies and public investment
- Shape global agendas and national and local development priorities
- Mobilise action when policy frameworks and processes are ineffective, too slow, or lack ambition or political will
- Strengthen data and accountability for results.

Advocacy is undertaken by civil society organisations and businesses individually and collectively within their own sector through NGO alliances and industry bodies. Activities encompass a wide spectrum of established tactics. For civil society, commonly used tools and tactics include direct engagement with government officials, public awareness and mobilisation campaigns, company benchmarking and alliance building.

Large companies undertake direct engagement with governments, support cause marketing campaigns, fund NGOs to engage in advocacy work, participate through traditional trade associations, chambers of commerce and dedicated business to business sustainability leadership coalitions, and invest in research and thought leadership.

“ In recent years, leading companies have started to demonstrate a willingness to publicly take policy positions on social and environmental issues and actively advocate for them. ”

4. Corporate Europe Observatory (2017). Corporate Lobbying Influence over the Council of the European Union

5. Centre for Responsive Politics. Lobbying Database. OpenSecrets.Org

While individual advocacy by civil society and business is important and necessary, it is insufficient to drive the long-term transformational change in policies, mindsets and practices needed to achieve the scale and ambition of the SDGs

As the inter-linkages between public and private roles and responsibilities for the SDGs grow, important governance questions are being raised about how to ensure appropriate, responsible and transparent engagement by business and civil society in global and national policy processes.

When undertaken individually or only within their own sector, both business and civil society advocacy efforts have limiting factors that potentially undermine their impact.

Limitations of business only advocacy:

- **Trust and legitimacy:** While some welcome more active policy engagement by business, others voice concerns about the threat of regulatory capture and undue political influence, and the lack of a level playing field, transparency and accountability in the way companies engage with governments. There are also critiques about a lack of consistency between what companies say and then do in relation to sustainability, particularly concerning disconnects between company sustainability commitments and the activities of government relations functions and industry bodies directly engaging with policy makers on their behalf.
- **Sufficient understanding of social and environmental challenges:** Company efforts to adopt policies that aim to embed social and environmental sustainability into operations and supply chains may be undermined by a lack of consideration of - and engagement with - wider systemic issues, for example poverty or inequality, that lie beyond a company's immediate sphere of operation. As a result, the impacts of company action may be limited or in some cases have unintended consequences.
- **Commercial disincentives:** Individual action by a company to advocate for and adopt more responsible and sustainable business standards and practices can create commercial risks and act as a disincentive to be a "first mover" in policy change.

Limitations of civil society only advocacy:

- **Ability to influence government:** Civil society acting individually or even together can lack access to or credibility with governments and policy makers. Moreover, a mounting body of evidence suggests that the civil society space is shrinking in a number of countries as a result of increased legal restrictions and in certain cases more authoritarian government action⁶.
- **Lack of economic perspective:** Civil society-led advocacy which focuses only on the social and moral case for policy change and fails to take into account economic considerations, may risk being weakened in the eyes of government policy makers looking to prioritise economic growth and job creation.
- **Resources:** Civil society can often lack the necessary financial resources to undertake effective and sustained advocacy.

6. Closing space – democracy and human rights support under fire. Thomas Carothers and Saskia Brechenmacher. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2014

Civil society and business are increasingly seeing joint advocacy as a powerful tool to change policies, attitudes and practices

The constraints outlined above make it difficult, if not impossible, for either civil society or business on their own to drive the integrated and sustained policy change needed to achieve the SDGs. Despite often having different motivations and starting points, a growing number of businesses and civil society organisations are seeing the opportunity to come together around a joint advocacy agenda.

For them, advocacy collaboration offers three powerful opportunities to drive transformational change:

Building better policy solutions and the political capital for policy change

First, by building a strong, shared appreciation of economic, social and environmental challenges through the pooling of expertise, evidence and experience, both sectors are better able to understand issues and find new and better ways to tackle complex systemic challenges. Through the actual process itself of collaboration, they build the political capital that transformational policy change requires.

Shifting entrenched attitudes and norms

Second, given that structural and mindset change is hard to achieve, unlikely partners advocating together can help to shift old attitudes and norms.

The ability of companies and civil society organisations to speak jointly and combine strong economic growth arguments with strong social, humanitarian and environmental messages, can be particularly effective in gaining attention and changing the way policy makers conceptualise issues. And by coming together in large numbers, they can also demonstrate widespread popular support for a transformational agenda and leverage one another's reach, influence and credibility with non-traditional stakeholder groups and opinion leaders.

Influencing internal policies and practice

Third, advocacy collaboration can also build a deeper understanding of complex issues between organisations, which generates internal shifts in attitudes, behaviours and practices over time and enables organisations to build the trust necessary to address more challenging issues.

Of course, business and civil society do not agree on every issue, and there remains an important role for each sector to play in challenging one another's practices and holding each other to account.



Initial evidence suggests that advocacy collaboration can have an increased impact and deliver real benefits for businesses, civil society and policy makers

The experience of organisations contributing to this work suggests that advocacy collaboration, which works in the public interest, balances the policy goals of both business and civil society, is underpinned by open dialogue, trust and honesty, builds on robust evidence and is backed up by action, can overcome limitations of individual efforts and deliver real benefits.

Potential benefits for business:

- 1. Deepening understanding of social and environmental challenges:** Business can access civil society's on the ground expertise, evidence and insights, to build understanding of wider social and environmental challenges. This can add substance and credibility to a company's advocacy activity as well as helping it to improve its sustainability performance and stakeholder relationships on the ground.
- 2. Increasing trust and legitimacy:** Joint advocacy that reflects the views of both civil society and business in a transparent and mutually respectful manner, can also help to address concerns about business legitimacy and lack of trust that can undermine business advocacy efforts.
- 3. Mitigating the commercial risks of acting alone:** Joining forces with other businesses as well as civil society organisations helps to reduce the potential commercial risks of being a lone champion on a policy issue. Jointly pushing for legislative change that compels laggards to keep up ensures that the playing field remains level.

Potential benefits for civil society:

- 1. Harnessing business influence on governments:** Civil society organisations advocating with business can harness the more established relationships that companies often have with governments, especially with ministers that direct a country's economic priorities and resources. In some cases, civil society organisations have asked large companies to make the case for more progressive workplace and human rights laws to governments. They reason that governments are more likely to take on board the views of large investors and employers directly impacted by such policy measures.
- 2. Influencing the internal policies and practices of businesses:** Evidence suggests that collaborating on advocacy can be a powerful way for civil society organisations to influence change in business partner attitudes, policies and behaviours.
- 3. Enabling access to business resources:** A lack of financial resources can often be a significant barrier to civil society-led advocacy and joint advocacy efforts. Large companies especially can leverage increased funds, technology platforms, networks and scaling capabilities.

Potential benefits for policy makers:

By bringing together and consolidating multiple perspectives and pieces of evidence into a coherent policy position and recommendations, advocacy collaboration can also be beneficial for policy makers by:

- 1. Improving the quality of policy design and implementation:** Advocacy collaboration can help governments to design more effective policy and regulations and contribute to the building of public institutional capacity to achieve more effective implementation.
- 2. Providing assurance and political capital:** A common policy narrative developed and endorsed by a wide range of organisations can provide policy makers with a greater level of assurance that they are heading in the right direction. This in turn can also strengthen public support or "political capital" for the public policies that emerge.
- 3. Reducing administrative burden:** Advocacy collaboration can reduce the burden of gathering and evaluating multiple and fragmented information and points of view. This can be particularly valuable for government departments facing severe capacity or resource constraints.

While offering clear opportunities to drive transformational policy change, advocacy collaboration remains poorly defined and challenging, and is under-utilised as a result

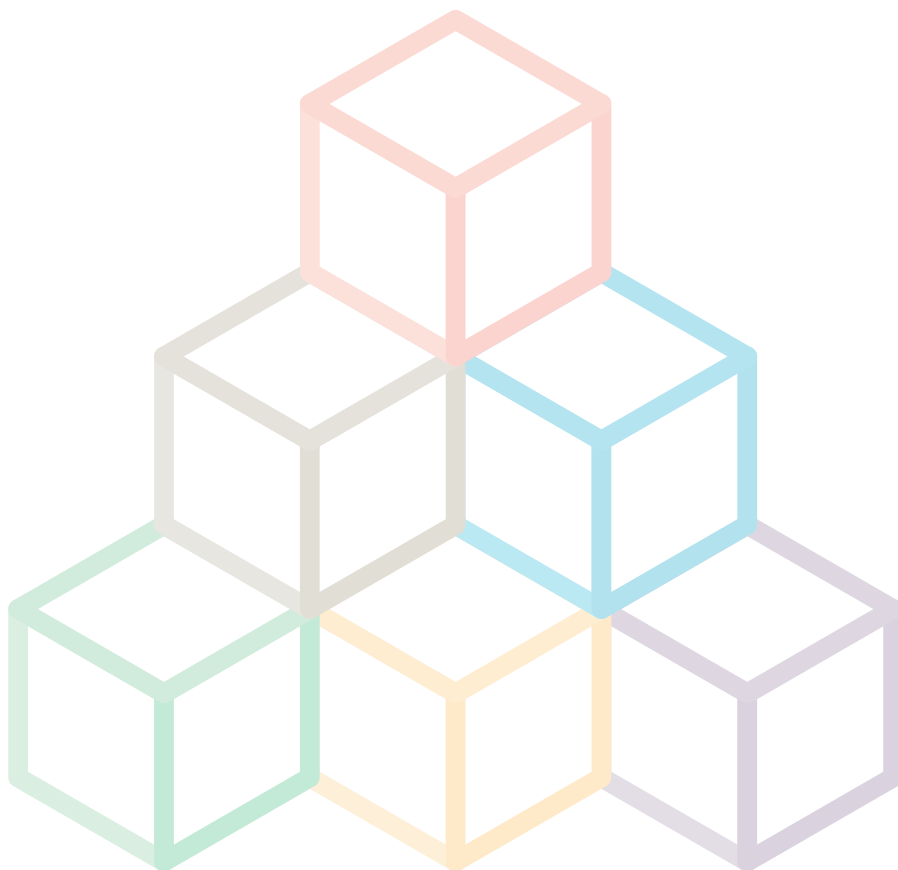
As the examples in this guide show, business and civil society organisations advocating together, or on behalf of one another, can have a positive impact on policy and policy makers, while also delivering benefits for society. But there are barriers that need to be overcome if advocacy, and advocacy collaboration, is to be a legitimate and effective tool for achieving progress on the SDGs.

There often remains a fundamental misunderstanding and lack of alignment in the way civil society and business experience, understand and approach issues.

Business' participation in policy processes remains hotly contested and, in some areas, controversial. For companies, taking the lead on non-financial or non-commercial issues, especially those that are politicised, can pose a risk to the company's reputation as well as its relations with the government and potentially some of its customers.

NGOs and businesses also face reputational risks when they join forces.

This guide has been developed to help build greater understanding of the opportunities presented by advocacy collaboration and to help overcome some of the challenges.



2. ADVOCACY COLLABORATION IN ACTION

Emerging types of advocacy collaboration

Advocacy collaboration between civil society and business has been relatively under explored to date. There is no commonly agreed definition or clear categorisation of different approaches. The examples gathered during the course of this study offer a wide divergence of models and approaches. A variety of criteria could be applied to their analysis, including:

- **Scope of issues and policy goals:** Advocacy collaboration addresses a diverse range of policy issues and SDGs and policy goals can be highly specific or broad. Even when collaboration is focused on a specific issue, each issue comprises a range of goals and interconnected issues. Our research shows examples that are targeting issues as diverse as climate change, women's empowerment, universal health coverage, human rights and security.
- **Timeframe:** Advocacy collaboration can focus on ad hoc opportunities as they arise, or on long-term policy change; advocating organisations can proactively set the policy agenda or react to it.
- **Size:** Advocacy collaboration can range from just two organisations advocating together to many hundreds working together in coalitions.
- **Level of focus:** Joint advocacy can target policy makers at a global, regional, national or local level. Often advocacy collaboration takes place at two or three of these levels simultaneously.

While all these criteria have been considered in our analysis, for the purpose of this report, we have decided to focus on three different types of advocacy collaboration which we have observed, and which are seeking to advance the following advocacy objectives - to:

1

Advance the goals and impact of a civil society – business delivery partnership

2

Influence the policy environment around a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone

3

Solve a complex systemic challenge by achieving transformational policy change over the long-term

What is clear from our research is that these approaches are not mutually exclusive. Advocacy collaboration is often dynamic and fluid in nature, constantly evolving in response to societal needs, the shifting rhythms of the public policy agenda and changing government and stakeholder priorities. For example, advocacy collaboration may start life as a component of a bilateral delivery partnership between a company and a civil society organisation targeting a specific near-term policy goal at the country level. It may then evolve into a broader coalition to address a wider set of policy issues at a regional level. Over time the coalition may then join forces with other coalitions to address more complex systemic challenges at a global level over the long-term.

For each broad type of advocacy collaboration, we explain their main characteristics, provide illustrative examples, summarise the pros and cons of each approach, and suggest when to consider using them.

1 Advance the goals and impact of a civil society – business delivery partnership

Characteristics:

Civil society and business delivery partnerships range from long-term strategic relationships over multiple geographies to project-based, time-bound implementation partnerships in specific countries or locations. Joint policy advocacy is often an integral part of programme activities when public policy is either a barrier or an enabler to the achievement of a partnership goal and its ability to achieve impact that is more sustained and/or scalable.

For example, a partnership between a bank and a civil society organisation to increase financial inclusion could be undermined by the lack of a workable regulatory framework for mobile payments, alternatively, joint efforts to improve the management of scarce water resources could be undermined by insufficient policy incentives or industry regulation.

Pros:

- **Generates evidence to strengthen the credibility of advocacy:** Delivery partnerships that feature robust results measurement frameworks can enable partners to build a stronger shared understanding of an issue and provide powerful insights, data and evidence, which can be used to inform and strengthen policy “asks” to governments.
- **Enables internal policy and mindset change:** Long-term civil society - business partnerships that are underpinned by strong relationships of trust enable partners to influence each other’s own internal policies, cultures and practices, and help to drive progress towards more broad and challenging policy issues and ambitious advocacy goals over time.

2 Influencing the policy agenda around a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone

Characteristics:

Civil society organisations and businesses are also coming together in response to specific policy opportunities or threats, or to take advantage of a specific event or milestone. Often time-bound and opportunistic, this type of “pop up” coalition can be established to respond to, or influence, a specific policy measure by a government, for example a piece of legislation, or to take advantage of a major gathering of policy makers.

Advocacy partners may have worked with each other before and/or are “like minded” members of existing coalitions, networks and initiatives, so that they already have broadly aligned policy positions and have the familiarity needed to act quickly on a collective basis.

Pros:

- **Enables focus and ambition:** Like-minded organisations can more easily agree specific and ambitious policy goals and positions and are better placed to push a more transformative agenda and specific targets.
- **Delivers tangible results:** By being focused on near-term threats, opportunities or milestones, tangible and demonstrable results can be achieved along the way to long-term change.
- **Low cost / low maintenance:** Ad hoc advocacy collaboration tends to comprise a manageable number of organisations, established on an informal basis, and therefore easier to initiate, co-ordinate and disband. A costly permanent “backbone” structure to support activity over a longer period of time is not required.

3 Addressing a complex systemic challenge to achieve transformational policy change over the long-term

Characteristics:

Civil society organisations and businesses are also joining forces to mobilise hundreds and sometimes thousands of organisations to support more transformational and broad-based policy change over the long-term to tackle complex systemic challenges.

These types of coalitions tend to be more rare and are designed to demonstrate a large-scale cross-sector consensus and support for transformative policy change, whilst recognising that sustained effort over the long-term will be required to achieve it.

Pros:

- **Enable sustained policy engagement over the long-term:** Systemic change coalitions provide the means to sustain a sense of momentum and continuity on long-term and complex policy challenges, for example: climate change, water security, health systems strengthening and global development.
- **Greater influence:** The participation of a large number of organisations from different sectors increases the potential to influence policy makers and achieve policy adoption by participants at scale.

Cons:

- **Potentially constrained by size and longevity:** Whilst advocacy conducted by organisations as part of a delivery partnership can generate valuable results, their overall ability to influence action by governments and other sectors can be hindered by their size and ability to sustain engagement beyond the life of the partnership. Within tightly defined delivery partnerships, it can also be challenging for a wider set of organisations to become involved and join forces.
- **Specificity of partnership policy goal may limit overall impact:** Overall impact of advocacy can be limited by the specificity of the policy goal, which may only address one dimension of the overall challenge.

When to use:

When the ability for a delivery partnership to achieve its specific goals can either be constrained or enabled by a change in public policy.

Featured examples:

- Save the Children and GSK
- International Alert and Anglo American
- Oxfam and Unilever

Cons:

- **Do not sustain long-term change:** “Pop up” advocacy may be able to influence and impact the policy agenda at a moment in time and achieve a tangible result, for example a change in the law, but is not set up to drive changes to policy, mindsets and practices over the long-term, nor does it address other interconnected issues that may undermine progress.
- **More limited ability to mobilise large-scale support for change:** Although a group of progressive organisations are able to set an ambitious and transformative agenda, they may lack the mainstream broad-based support required to influence large-scale transformative change.

When to use:

At a moment in time when like-minded organisations identify the need to influence the policy agenda linked to a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone, or they see the need to react quickly to a pending policy change.

Featured examples:

- CARE USA, Mars and other companies
- Ethical Trading Initiative with business, civil society and trade unions.
- We Are Still In

Cons:

- **More difficult to drive an ambitious transformative agenda:** The need to represent the interests of a large and potentially diverse group of organisations potentially comes at the cost of being less able to agree on very specific and ambitious policy goals and targets.
- **Hard to show tangible change in the short-term:** It can be hard to maintain a sense of achievement or momentum on the way to long-term policy change.
- **Greater complexity and higher maintenance and transaction costs:** Large-scale coalitions are complex and often costly to establish, manage, manoeuvre and maintain. They need a more structured and permanent coordinating body, requiring sustained funding and senior level support from participating organisations.

When to use:

When seeking to address a complex systemic issue and a large base of supportive organisations are able to reach a consensus on the long-term policy change required to successfully address the challenge, and have sufficient senior leadership support and resources to sustain engagement over the long-term.

Featured examples:

- 2030 Water Resources Group
- U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

3. CHALLENGES AND BUILDING BLOCKS FOR RESPONSIBLE ADVOCACY COLLABORATION

Analysis of examples provided by core group participants as well as experiences and insights shared by round-table participants, have highlighted a number of challenges arising from advocacy collaboration, which organisations need to be prepared to navigate.

Drawing on analysis and feedback, we have grouped challenges around three themes:

- Operational challenges
- Governance challenges
- Reputational challenges

We have considered how each challenge can impact each organisation individually and the advocacy partnership itself:

1. Operational challenges

Operational challenges relate to the process of implementing advocacy collaboration.

For business

- **Alignment:** Establishing complete consistency between internal policy and practice and external policy advocacy can be challenging for companies, especially large, complex and global organisations. In addition, global headquarters-led policy initiatives may come up against resistance from, or raise challenges for, local country operations, due to a lack of appreciation of the local political and cultural reality on the ground.
- **Competing priorities:** Competing agendas can also arise between sustainability subject experts in companies seeking to advance their priorities, and the external or government affairs function that leads day-to-day engagement with policy makers. Government affairs teams, which are often measured and rewarded on their ability to deliver near-term results, may find it difficult to justify spending time or political capital promoting issues that are long term and offer intangible results.

For civil society organisations

- **Alignment:** The same issues of internal alignment also manifest themselves in civil society organisations. As they increasingly focus on building relationships with business, tensions can arise between private sector engagement teams and campaigning, policy and fund-raising functions, who may have legitimate concerns about how engaging visibly with business will be perceived by their stakeholders.

For the advocacy partnership

At the advocacy partnership level, operational challenges include:

- **Long-term trust building:** Effective joint advocacy between a business and a civil society organisation requires a level of trust and familiarity that can only be established over time. This requires a long-term commitment of time by all organisations and the necessary financial resources to sustain the relationship.
- **Maintaining momentum:** Policy engagement and advocacy, especially when addressing complex systemic issues, can take significant amounts of time to show results. Maintaining energy and support when progress is slow and intangible can be hard for advocacy partners.

Speed of decision making on an issue can also vary. Civil society organisations that take a highly participatory approach to decision making may be challenging to work with if a quick response to a policy issue is required. A lack of meaningful metrics for measuring the effectiveness of advocacy also makes it hard to demonstrate progress.

- **Different advocacy approaches:** Businesses and civil society organisations looking to advocate together need to consider whether their partner's advocacy approach aligns with their own. For example, the campaigning tactics of a civil society organisations may not be appropriate or acceptable to a partner company.
- **Co-ordination and integration:** Effective advocacy collaboration can also be hindered by competing campaigns and coalitions advocating on the same issues, which leads to a more fragmented and less impactful overall message. Also, most advocacy activity remains highly issue-specific and siloed.
- **Funding:** Funding relationships bring challenges when one partner's financial support is vital to the other.

2. Governance challenges

There are also a set of challenges that relate to how advocacy collaboration is governed.

For business and civil society organisations

- **Conflicts of interest:** Civil society organisations and businesses advocating together are vulnerable to conflicts of interest. This could arise, for example, if a change in a policy resulting from advocacy collaboration commercially benefits participating companies, or leads to one NGO receiving funding over another. Companies advocating together also need to be mindful of anti-competitive practices.

For civil society organisations

- **Credibility and objectivity:** Civil society organisations also need to carefully consider how joint advocacy with business impacts their credibility and ability to hold business to account on more contentious issues.

For the advocacy partnership

- **Power dynamics:** Everyone's views need to be heard. Large companies and civil society organisations with greater resources and influence need to be careful that they do not crowd out or eclipse the voices and views of smaller, more marginal and less well-resourced groups.

3. Reputational challenges

Finally, there are a set of challenges that relate to how advocacy collaboration can impact an organisation's reputation.

For business and civil society organisations

- Civil society organisations and businesses advocating together are vulnerable to issues that may arise in their respective partner's direct operations or value chains.

For the advocacy partnership

- If a reputational issue arises with a participating organisation or set of organisations, the overall credibility and legitimacy of the advocacy activity can be seriously undermined

“Everyone's views need to be heard. Large companies and civil society organisations with greater resources and influence need to be careful that they do not crowd out or eclipse the voices and views of smaller, more marginal and less well-resourced groups.”

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR RESPONSIBLE ADVOCACY COLLABORATION

Many of the challenges associated with advocacy collaboration described in the previous section can be overcome if organisations consider six key building blocks when designing and implementing advocacy collaboration initiatives.

These building blocks can help to establish trust between advocacy partners and increase the perceived legitimacy of advocacy collaboration activities. They have been informed by the input of multiple organisations consulted in the process of developing this guide.

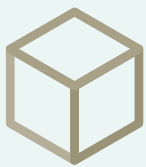


1 Respect the leadership role of government, but be prepared to use your voice and influence

Organisations working together on public policy advocacy need to ensure that their activities are aimed at informing and supporting, but not replacing, the responsibility of elected governments to decide public policy. They should also acknowledge the primary role of elected governments in regulating the private sector and setting policy which the private sector may not agree with.

Working closely with government on the development of policy can lead to better policy and more impactful outcomes, and the resources and levers of government can also be critical to the effective implementation of policy at scale.

When governments fall short, or do not live up to their commitments, civil society and business have a responsibility to hold governments to account.



2 Put the interests of people and planet at the heart of advocacy collaboration

Civil society and businesses that advocate together should reflect the interests and needs of people, communities and the environment. Whilst public policy change can unlock benefits and opportunities for advocating organisations, the ultimate beneficiaries should be people and planet.

Businesses need to consider how to engage with societal and environmental issues that lie beyond direct commercial interest and move from business case to values-based leadership and decision making.

Civil society organisations and businesses need to be particularly mindful of the importance of fully understanding the needs and aspirations of the people they are advocating on behalf of. They should also support the inclusion of marginalised groups in policy processes, and ensure their views and wishes are not eclipsed by larger and better resourced organisations. Large organisations can play an important role in building the capacity of community groups and small civil society organisations to advocate for themselves.

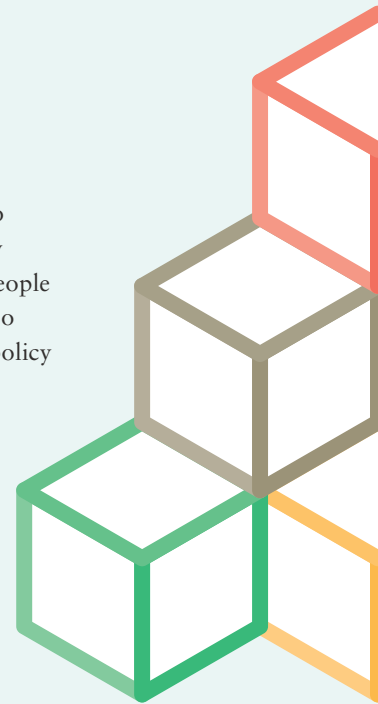


3 Invest sufficient resources at the outset to gather data and evidence to build a shared understanding of the challenge and inform policy priorities

Investing time and resources to ensure policy advocacy is underpinned by credible, consensus-based data and evidence is essential, for example using science-based data and targets as a foundation for advocating on climate change goals or health data baselines for advocating on public health or nutrition policies. Underpinning a policy argument with what science or operational evidence demonstrates is necessary for tackling an issue or set of issues, and ensuring it is accessible to non-specialist decision makers, helps to unite stakeholders around a shared understanding of priorities, builds trust and creates demand for a collective response.

Taking the time up front to clarify the specific desired policy outcome is also essential. Being clear on the destination but being more flexible on how to reach it can lead to stronger engagement and greater support. Careful attention should be paid to calibrating the level of goal specificity and policy detail without diminishing the overall impact of advocacy.

When advocating together around long-term, systemic challenges, organisations should break down long-term policy goals into more specific short- and medium-term targets and milestones to maintain a sense of achievement and momentum amongst policy makers and advocacy partners.





4 Understand and manage stakeholder dynamics and the political economy of policy change

At the same time, data and evidence are not enough in the absence of a clear understanding of stakeholder dynamics and the political economy of policy change. Before activating advocacy activities, partners need to pay careful attention to including the perspectives and priorities of all stakeholder groups and policy makers, and to building familiarity and trust-based relationships to enable them to then move on to designing and advocating solutions together.

Advocating organisations also need to consider how their policy positions and “asks” align with and support government priorities, and include concrete recommendations for how they could be implemented.

Rather than presenting facts alone, advocacy partners should also look for opportunities to engage policy makers with the issue first hand or through compelling story telling. Enabling policy makers to experience an issue in person, potentially through a field visit or a stakeholder engagement session, can help to bring an issue to life and be more impactful in demonstrating the benefits of a policy measure.



5 Ensure coherence and consistency between external advocacy positions and internal policies and practices

Businesses participating in advocacy collaboration need to ensure that there is complete consistency between their external advocacy positions and activities, and business strategies, investments, policies and practices in their core operations and value chains. Advocacy should also look to be consistent with science-based targets.

Internal and external policy alignment needs to be driven by effective management systems and guidelines across business functions and geographies, from HQ to regional, national and local levels of the organisation. Visible and sustained senior leadership support is a key requirement for successfully achieving this alignment.

Advocating businesses also need to ensure that representative organisations, whether they be industry trade associations or sector bodies, are also advocating the same policy positions.

Civil society organisations need to ensure that joint advocacy with a company, or group of companies, is fully consistent with their overarching strategy and theory of change, and that time is taken up front to “socialise” joint advocacy and validate policy asks with colleagues in campaigning or policy roles. Similar to large companies, large international NGOs need to take care to align global, national and local advocacy efforts.

All advocating organisations should ensure their public policy positions and practices adhere to key universal principles and standards, for example, the ten principles of the UN Global Compact, or the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Furthermore, organisations identifying with the SDG framework should assess and recognise all their impacts – both positive and negative – and avoid taking a selective “cherry picking” approach to supporting the SDGs.



6 Conduct advocacy collaboration transparently and in a spirit of mutuality, good faith and accountability

Organisations need to be clear and transparent on their motivations and expectations for engaging in advocacy collaboration from the start.

At the same time, advocacy collaboration also needs to be conducted in a spirit of good faith, honesty and openness, regardless of the eventual outcome.

Organisations need to establish a clear actionable policy for managing conflicts of interest, be open and transparent about funding and governance arrangements and put in place credible dispute resolution and accountability mechanisms.

4. CALL TO ACTION

Building the political capital for transformative policy change is essential to achieving the SDGs

The SDGs establish a shared vision and roadmap for the world up to 2030. On paper, the challenges involved in many of the SDGs, though complex, are reasonably well understood, but in many cases the resources and solutions required to address them are yet to be fully mobilised.

A vital missing ingredient for success is often the sufficient political capital – the trust, goodwill and support - among all sectors. This needs to be built to drive the change in policies, mindsets and practices essential for the achievement of the SDGs. Although intangible, political capital will be a key enabler of progress towards 2030.

Advocacy collaboration by civil society and business has a key role to play

Joint policy advocacy can help to build the political capital for transformational policy change. Civil society and business can lend their respective voices and influence to encourage policy and mindset change, use their insights and experience to help inform and shape effective policy interventions, and hold governments and other stakeholders to account should they fall short.

To be truly effective advocacy collaboration needs to be underpinned by a commitment by all organisations to work together towards a common goal. With government in the lead and through open and transparent dialogue

that includes all sectors of society, organisations will be better placed to improve existing policy, and design policy innovations that have an even greater impact.

Having shared policy goals does not mean that advocacy partners will always agree on how to achieve them, but engaging in dialogue in an open and respectful way will be critical to narrowing the gaps in understanding that prevent the development and implementation of effective policy interventions, and to building a sense of shared ownership of the SDGs amongst all sectors.

Advocacy collaboration is challenging but business and civil society need to overcome the barriers and maximise the opportunities

Advocacy collaboration is not easy and can be risky. It often requires organisations to take a leap of faith and individual leaders to act and think differently, and sometimes take personal risks. But many of the associated risks can be overcome by paying careful attention to the building blocks for responsible advocacy collaboration outlined in the earlier section, which should be designed into joint advocacy initiatives.

To fully realise the opportunity, new mindsets and skillsets will be needed:

- Governments need to establish policy priorities and frameworks that bring together all sectors and incentivise action and collaboration.
- Businesses need to build a deeper understanding of the broader systemic challenges beyond their core operations and ensure consistency between internal policies and practices and external advocacy and policy positions.
- Civil society organisations need to be more open to balancing mandates that are focused on challenging business with a recognition that business and markets need to be part of the solution in many cases, and to aligning their own internal programmes, ranging from campaigning to cooperation.

When effective, advocacy collaboration can be a useful mechanism for combining the resources and voices of diverse organisations in a way that governments will at a minimum listen to, and ideally consult and engage with more strategically in a common quest to achieve the SDGs.

CASE STUDY EXAMPLES

The following case studies provide examples of advocacy collaboration in action, and are structured around the three types of advocacy collaboration identified in the earlier section.

Each case study summarises the policy context and the advocacy goals of participating organisations, the strategies and tactics employed, and the results that have been achieved to date. In many cases the benefits, challenges and key lessons learned from the advocacy collaboration have been highlighted.

1 Advance the goals and impact of a civil society – business delivery partnership

- Save the Children and GSK – *Advocating together for Universal Health Coverage*
- International Alert and Anglo American – *Advocating together for the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights*
- Oxfam and Unilever – *Advocating together for greater recognition of unpaid care work and women’s empowerment*

2 Influencing the policy agenda around a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone

- Mars, CARE USA and a wider coalition of companies – *Advocating together to promote U.S. overseas development assistance*
- Ethical Trading Initiative – *Advocating with business, civil society and trade unions to improve the labour rights and conditions of workers in Myanmar, Cambodia and Turkey*
- We Are Still In – *Advocating continued U.S. commitment to and support for the Paris Climate Agreement*

3 Addressing a complex systemic challenge to achieve transformational policy change over the long-term

- 2030 Water Resources Group multi-stakeholder platforms – *Advocating together for policies to ensure a more water secure world*
- U.S. Global Leadership Coalition – *Advocating for America’s continued commitment to international development assistance*

1 Advancing the goals and impact of a specific civil society – business partnership

The following three examples describe the scope and impact of advocacy collaboration that is rooted in delivery partnerships between a civil society organisation and a business:

Save the Children and GSK – Advocating together for Universal Health Coverage



Policy context

It is estimated that one billion people lack access to basic healthcare, and more than two billion people lack regular access to essential medicines. To address these gaps, a global movement is building in support of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), the idea that everybody in the world should be able to access the healthcare they need without fear of financial hardship. It is recognised in SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, under target 3.8: Achieve Universal Health Coverage⁷.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations and World Bank are leading a global multi-stakeholder initiative: *UHC2030* which aims to encourage national governments to prioritise more public spending on strengthening their health systems, pointing to the socio-economic benefits.

Achieving UHC will require all sectors to play a role. There is broad agreement that governments have the responsibility for ensuring UHC for their populations in setting national health priorities and that funding for health services should shift from voluntary, out of pocket payments for services towards public funding through mandatory pooled resources. Other sectors, including business, need to align their contribution behind government priorities and support resource generation through wealth creation and the payment of appropriate taxes.

Advocacy goals

As part of their multi-faceted partnership launched in 2013 to help save the lives of one million children, GSK and Save the Children are advocating together in support of UHC, which is critical to achieving their shared vision of a world in which no child dies from preventable causes and all people can access good quality health services whatever their financial status.

Through the dedicated advocacy workstream of the partnership, both organisations are combining their voices to call for UHC to be prioritised in national and global funding plans, with a focus on mothers and children.

In addition to increasing access to medicines and innovations for universal immunisation and promoting responsible business practices, joint advocacy also aims to build a deeper understanding of the role of the private sector and explore how it can appropriately contribute to achieving UHC. For a company like GSK, this includes taking steps to make its medicines and vaccines available to the greatest number of people and using its voice to influence policy.

⁷ Target 3.8: Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

Advocacy approach

Save the Children and GSK have advocated together at different levels:

- **GSK company level:** In early 2014, with input and advice from Save the Children, GSK established its own policy position in support of UHC, clarifying its role as a private sector company and ensuring its own policies and practices were consistent with the goals of UHC. Both organisations co-developed a set of principles for governments and businesses to use when designing UHC policies.
- **Industry sector level:** GSK's policy position on UHC has helped to inform the development of a global pharmaceutical sector industry position in support of UHC. This was adopted in April 2014 and has ensured the sector now speaks with one voice on the issue.
- **Global policy level:** A short-term advocacy goal was to ensure a UHC specific target was incorporated into the SDGs. Subsequently, both organisations have worked to keep UHC on the global agenda with a focus on the role of the private sector through convening meetings in fora such as the World Health Assembly and the UHC Forum in Tokyo.
- **National policy level:** Both GSK and Save the Children have worked together to help mobilise grass-roots campaigns calling for free access to healthcare for children and pregnant women. In Burkina Faso for example, they supported the *Ma Voix* campaign that used the opportunity of national elections in 2015 to call for the removal of user fees for children under five and pregnant women⁸. Subsequently, a directive on this was issued under the newly elected government in April 2016.

Results to date

Advocacy collaboration to date has helped to contribute to some notable successes:

- **2014:** At the sector level, the major global pharma industry associations are aligned in support of UHC.
- **2015:** At the global level, UHC is a specific target within the SDGs and is spearheading efforts in delivering SDG 3.
- **2016:** At the national level, the newly elected government in Burkina Faso removed user fees for pregnant women and children under five, to be paid for by a new tax.

Benefits and challenges

Collaboration has enabled both organisations to stretch their own understanding of each other's positions and policy ambitions on the issue of UHC and wider related issues like tax transparency and the pricing of medicines.

Both organisations have been able to leverage each other's networks and convening power to widen their reach with stakeholders. For example, Save the Children has been able to facilitate GSK's engagement with the UHC 2030 partnership and GSK has enabled Save the Children to engage constructively with the global pharmaceutical sector.

Particular care has been taken to anticipate and address any perceived conflicts between GSK's commercial interests and the activities of the partnership. As commercial interests are not the only interests where conflicts can apply - any interest can become a vested interest for either partner - the partnership seeks to apply the same scrutiny across all activity.

Whilst UHC creates commercial opportunities for GSK, it is critical that these interests are not advanced through the partnership. Save the Children does not advocate for the use of GSK medicines specifically and continues to support the use of generic medicines and the improved affordability of essential medicines and vaccines. There are some differences in policy positions, which the two organisations acknowledge and incorporate in their own positions and communications, for example on the role of private health insurance.

Key takeaway

Having a shared vision on UHC and maintaining open, honest dialogue has enabled both organisations to make significant progress on shared advocacy goals despite some disagreement on "how" to achieve them.

8. Working Towards Universal Health Coverage in Burkina Faso: Evaluating partnership contributions to national policy change. June 2017. Carrie Baptist and Janna Miletzki

International Alert and Anglo American – Advocating together for the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights



Policy context

Mining companies which operate in unstable and fragile environments can be an important driver of socio-economic development, but their presence can also be a cause of conflict.

Key priorities for responsible mining companies operating in fragile environments include ensuring the safety and rights of employees and contractors, understanding and assessing the risks their operations can pose to impacted communities, protecting the security and respecting the rights of communities, and minimising risks to business continuity and reputation arising from conflict. The Marikana incident in South Africa in 2012, when 34 people lost their lives through clashes between strikers and security forces, is a tragic reminder of the consequences of not paying sufficient attention to the issue.

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPs), adopted in 2000, are a set of principles designed specifically for natural resources industries to guide companies in maintaining the safety and security of their operations within an operating framework that encourages respect for human rights. The initiative is supported by governments, business and civil society. The VPs align closely with SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

Advocacy goals

International Alert, an international peace building NGO which has worked in the conflict resolution space for over thirty years, and Anglo American, a leading global mining company and signatory to the VPs, have come together as part of a long-term strategic partnership to ensure their effective implementation across the company's business operations.

Joint advocacy by both organisations plays a key role in ensuring that the VPs are effectively embedded and operationalised across Anglo American's operations, and that the company is able to manage security and human rights issues in ways that are consistent with its public support for the VPs. Anglo American submits an annual report on progress and actions to the VPs secretariat, which is reviewed and approved by International Alert.

Joint advocacy by the two organisations is also aimed at encouraging national governments to adopt and integrate the VPs into their national policy frameworks.

Advocacy approach

Joint advocacy between International Alert and Anglo American takes place at three different levels:

- **Internal:** Joint advocacy activity is primarily focused internally on engaging and building the capacity of managers within business units to integrate the VPs into everyday business practices and ensure an effective cross-functional approach. At the site level, International Alert has worked with senior managers to expand their understanding of human rights and conflict and how they connect to the business. International Alert also provides VPs training to site-level private security providers.
- **Sector level:** At an industry sector level, Anglo American has helped to inform International Alert's expertise on conflict-sensitive business practice (CSBP) and to develop International Alert's recently published Human Rights Due Diligence in Conflict-Affected Settings toolkit. By sharing its practical experience, Anglo American has helped other mining companies to understand and apply the key concepts to their operating environments.

- **National policy level:** At a national level, Anglo American and International Alert have worked together to encourage government adoption of the VPs. In South Africa, for example, the two organisations collectively engaged with their respective national stakeholders in an effort to persuade the government to adopt the VPs following the Marikana incident, albeit unsuccessfully in the end. Anglo American in Peru, with International Alert's accompaniment, has also been active participant in a national level multi-stakeholder platform focused on the VPs.

Results to date

Since Anglo American and International Alert started working together on implementing the VPs, there have been no significant security and human rights incidents impacting Anglo American's operations.

The collaboration has helped to redefine how Anglo American personnel – from the site to global level – understand how human rights connect to the business and security, and has changed mindsets and behaviours by building a more nuanced understanding of the root causes of conflict. It has also informed changes to internal management processes and procedures related to the VPs, human rights and community engagement.

Moreover, the partnership has built management capacity and confidence to engage more proactively and openly with local communities, government and security forces, including in new areas of operation, on a wide range of human rights and security issues and to advancing good practice.

Benefits and challenges

As it is seen as an external expert, International Alert has been critical to Anglo American's ability to give credence to the subject of human rights, and to engage operational managers, including in business units not directly engaged with human rights and/or corporate responsibility.

By building a trusted long-term strategic relationship with Anglo American, International Alert has had a major influence on the company's culture, policies and practice in relation to conflict, human rights and security. Its work with Anglo American has also generated insights and learnings that it has been able to apply to other projects with the private sector.

The collaboration has also highlighted the challenge of implementing a global-level policy locally, and the need for cultural sensitivity and local interpretation in its implementation. In each country context, careful attention needs to be paid to understanding what the term "human rights" means to people, especially in countries with a legacy of human rights abuses. Often it is important to start to engage communities with a broad definition of human rights, rather than a specific focus on security, to help surface underlying issues that may be a source of conflict in the future, for example access to water.

Another challenge for International Alert, as a relatively small organisation, has been managing capacity constraints and its ability to respond to Anglo American's requests for support within the company's desired timeframes. Anglo American has had to adjust its expectations on International Alert's capacity to deliver within its timeframes.

Both partners also recognise the need to invest more time in measuring and evaluating the impact, both direct and indirect, of their joint activities. Identifying impact can be difficult given the complex nature of the subject matter, and the size of the company.

Key takeaway

The success of International Alert and Anglo American's joint advocacy work has been underpinned by a long-term strategic partnership that has enabled both organisations to build the trust necessary to address a complex and challenging issue.

Oxfam and Unilever – Advocating together for greater recognition of unpaid care work and women’s empowerment



Policy context

In some parts of the world, women and girls currently spend as many as six hours each day on unpaid care and domestic work (UCDW), which includes tasks like laundry, cooking, cleaning, collecting water and caring for dependants. Despite its vital contribution to families and communities, unpaid care and domestic work often goes un-recognised. It affects women and girls disproportionately, with women around the world spending two to ten times more hours than men on care⁹, limiting their opportunities to learn and work.

The effects of unpaid and domestic care work are felt most in poor communities, where limited access to time-saving equipment and poor public infrastructure and services makes the situation worse. As a barrier to women’s empowerment, the need to recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work is reflected in a specific target under SDG 5.4 under the Gender Equality target SDG 5.

From a policy perspective, investments in public services and time-saving equipment by governments, civil society and businesses can play an important role in reducing the burden of unpaid care and domestic work. But policies are not enough. For lasting change, there needs to be a fundamental shift in social attitudes, with unpaid work more greatly valued and recognised to be everyone’s responsibility, not just that of women and girls.

Advocacy goals

Oxfam, Unilever and their laundry brand Surf have combined their voices to advocate for public policies that recognise the burden of unpaid care and domestic work, reduce and redistribute the time spent on unpaid care and domestic work by girls and women, through better access to public services, infrastructure and social protection policies.

Beyond policy change, they are also seeking to challenge and change public attitudes and behaviour in relation to unpaid care and domestic work and promote shared responsibility with boys and men.

Joint advocacy activity on the issue directly supports Unilever’s Sustainable Living Plan, which aims to increase opportunities for women, and aligns with Surf’s brand purpose, and builds brand equity with consumers.

It also aligns closely with the goals of WE-Care¹⁰ (Women’s Economic Empowerment and Care), Oxfam’s initiative to make care work more visible as a key issue in achieving gender equality and overcoming poverty.

Advocacy approach

Since 2016, Oxfam, Unilever and its homeware brand Surf have combined their resources, reach and influence at a global level to address the challenge of unpaid care work in two pilot countries, Zimbabwe and the Philippines. Both countries face significant unpaid care and domestic work challenges and are strategically important to Unilever. The programme aims to support over 250,000 individuals directly and indirectly (60% of whom will be women and girls), 12 million through a public communications plan and over 100,000 people indirectly through policy influencing.

- **At the global level:** Joint advocacy activity aims to keep the issue of unpaid care and domestic work high on the global agenda, leveraging Oxfam’s and Unilever’s convening power in global fora. Both organisations emphasised the need to tackle unpaid care and domestic work in submissions made to the High-Level Commission on Women Economic Empowerment, which were included in the commission’s final recommendations.

9. https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid_care_work.pdf

10. More information on this on-going initiative can be found here: wee.oxfam.org/we-care

In December 2017, both organisations agreed to explore joining forces more broadly to advocate on unpaid care and domestic work. Together they plan to co-create key deliverables, based on evidence generated by the programme to date, to engage Unilever homecare brands beyond Surf and to encourage global business leaders and governments to take action to recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work.

The process will inform the design of an advocacy approach including opportunities for example to accelerate the #unstereotype commitment in advertising on household care, to create thought leadership outputs to draw more attention to unpaid care and domestic work, and to identify further scope to leverage Unilever’s commitment to ‘enhance opportunities for women’. Finally, the intention is to explore the development of a multi-stakeholder platform to accelerate progress on various public policy, corporate policy and practice fronts.

- **At the pilot country level:** Joint advocacy activity aims to reach policy makers and opinion leaders at the national and local levels, and consumers directly:

Oxfam is leveraging its research and evidence¹¹ on the impacts of unpaid care and domestic work to engage national and local government policy makers on the issue, and to encourage policies that improve the siting of safe water access points and introduce communal laundry areas for example.

At the community level, activity is focused on working through schools and with cultural opinion leaders and faith groups to change social attitudes and drive behaviour change in relation to unpaid care and domestic work. Efforts are also being made to build the capacity of women’s groups to advocate on the issue.

Results to date

The programme partners are currently developing a detailed measurement and evaluation framework to assess results, and a joint advocacy plan and enabling strategy to inform how best to engage the Unilever business beyond the Surf brand.

Benefits and challenges

The impact and reach of advocacy activity has been amplified by combining Oxfam’s insights, evidence and community reach with Unilever’s convening power and Surf’s media reach and touch points with consumers. The opportunity is to harness collective advocacy to drive concrete action on the ground. The biggest challenge is to create holistic partnerships that embrace the social and business case for change.

Given the complex and systemic nature of the unpaid care and domestic work issue and the long-term challenge of driving behaviour change, it will take time to demonstrate results and attribute them to campaign activity.

Key takeaway

Being clear on each other’s drivers and objectives before entering an advocacy partnership, identifying the “sweet spot” that motivates both parties to take action, and utilising evidence-based insights to inform the advocacy approach have been key to success of the partnership.

11. Care work matters – public services and infrastructure can make a difference (2018), Oxfam, Thalia Kidder and Claudia Canepa

Additional brief examples of delivery partnerships featuring joint advocacy:

Transparency International and Thomson Reuters:

In 2016, Transparency International and Thomson Reuters teamed up to shine a light on overseas ownership of London property by companies registered in secrecy jurisdictions to highlight concerns over transparency and corruption, and to push the UK Government to honour its commitment to introduce a public register of the real owners of overseas companies that own UK property.

Their combined research found no data available on the real owners of more than half of the 44,022 land titles owned by overseas companies in London, whilst nine out of ten of these properties were bought via secrecy jurisdictions. A lack of data means it is extremely difficult to scrutinise links between these companies and any individuals with political influence, who Transparency International believe cause the greatest corruption risk.

HelpAge International and Pfizer:

Pfizer works with HelpAge International to help older people in developing countries to gain access to healthcare. One reason promising pilot programme interventions focused on the health of older people have not been able to scale is a lack of robust data to highlight to governments the scale of the issue and the potential benefits demonstrated through pilot projects. Through their partnership, Pfizer and HelpAge International focused on finding new ways to collect and share data to help inform policy and programming to address the health needs of older people.

Save the Children and Pearson:

Through their partnership to help child refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict access a quality education, both organisations are working together to raise awareness among employees, political leaders, and the public of the urgency around improving education for children affected or displaced by conflict. In March 2017, Pearson joined forces with Save the Children and UNHCR for the Promising Practices in refugee education initiative, designed to source, identify, document and promote existing innovative practices, which if scaled up could help close the education gap for refugees around the world.

Partners In Health and Abbott in Haiti:

In Haiti, Abbott and Partners In Health (PIH) are working together to combine their expertise and resources to tackle malnutrition by expanding access to a locally produced nutritional product for thousands of children, while also creating economic opportunities and improving livelihoods for local farmers. They have established a production facility in Haiti's Central Plateau to produce a peanut-based therapeutic food – with the peanuts being produced by Haitian farmers and the product being provided free for children in need through PIH's clinics, alongside the longer-term aim of developing a commercial strategy to support financial sustainability.

The partners have also joined forces to engage in public advocacy on a number of issues. They are engaging with government, research partners and the media to highlight the importance of nutrition as a cornerstone to health, as well as making a policy case for increasing local economic opportunity and market access for smallholder farmers, and the value of donors and development partners supporting investment activities in addition to more traditional aid programmes.

World Vision and the Philippines Sugarcane Industry:¹²

National laws in the Philippines clearly prohibit the employment of children younger than 15 years of age. Despite this, it is estimated that approximately 5.5 million children under 15 are working, nearly 3 million of them in hazardous labour. In response, from 2011 to 2016 World Vision has been part of a collaborative, multi-stakeholder initiative with government, schooling bodies, community groups and sugar industry representatives to find policy-based solutions to keep children out of the workforce and increase their enrolment at both primary and high school levels. Strategic partnerships within the sugar industry, in particular with the Sugar Industry Foundation and the Sugar Regulatory Administration, have resulted in the adoption of voluntary codes of conduct covering business operations of sugarcane producers in three provinces.

Fund for Peace and Chevron:

In 2010, Chevron established the Niger Delta Partnership Initiative (NDPI) and the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) in Nigeria to drive a series of interconnected economic development, peace building, advocacy and capacity building activities across the region. A flagship initiative has been Partners for Peace (P4P), which was launched in 2012 to enable citizens, businesses and civil society to collaborate in peace building efforts as a cornerstone of wider socio-economic development efforts across the Niger Delta.

P4P has partnered with the U.S. based Fund for Peace, a civil society organisation that works to prevent violent conflict and promote sustainable security, on advocacy initiatives to promote peace building. Activities have included supporting grassroots initiatives designed to mobilise peace builder volunteers and to train them in the use of social media and the use of information technology. At a more strategic public policy level, joint advocacy has developed into the Peace and Security Working Group, which brings together peace building experts across Nigeria and internationally on a regular basis, alongside ongoing collaboration to collect, analyze and share data and to build awareness of peace building as a core component of sustained economic development.

Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) and AbbVie:

Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) was created in 2003 as one of the first product development partnerships to bring together public and private research institutions with the goal of developing safe, affordable and effective treatments for patients suffering from Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in countries with some of the most limited healthcare systems. DNDi is partnering with leading pharmaceutical companies on both product development and advocacy initiatives to promote public awareness and increase public policy and financial support for NTDs.

AbbVie is one of the companies working with DNDi through the company's Neglected Diseases Initiative. Their partnership has a particular focus on onchocerciasis (river blindness), an infection caused by a parasitic worm and which the WHO estimates at least 25 million people are infected and 123 million people live in areas that put them at risk of infection.¹³

Both AbbVie and DNDi were among some eighty organisations including companies, donors, health NGOs and foundations that have joined forces as signatories to the London Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases, a global multi-stakeholder platform that campaigns for the elimination or control of 10 NTDs by 2020.¹⁴ They are also engaging with other partners and health ministries in selected countries to strengthen local health systems and support national health policies.

12. World Vision International (2017). The Case for Business Action to End Violence against Children. <https://www.wvi.org/publication/case-business-action-end-violence-against-children>

13. https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/onchocerciasis/gen_info/faqs.html

14. The London Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases. <http://unitingtocombatntds.org/london-declaration-neglected-tropical-diseases/>

2 Influencing the policy agenda around a specific policy threat, opportunity or milestone

Mars, CARE USA and a wider coalition of companies – Advocating together to promote U.S. overseas development assistance



Policy context

CARE USA and Mars have a long-standing relationship, which includes partnering on cocoa farmer livelihood initiatives in West Africa. In addition to working together to implement initiatives on the ground, both organisations have joined forces to help inform and influence U.S. development policy, for example contributing to the shaping of the Global Food Security Act passed in 2016. This ensured that the Obama administration's *Feed the Future* initiative, which greatly ramped up U.S. spending on strengthening food and nutrition security in a range of developing countries, would continue on after the end of the administration.

With FY17 and FY 18 budgets going through the U.S. Congress for review and approval, the new U.S. administration had proposed significant funding cuts to U.S. overseas development assistance, the State Department and the United Nations. If agreed, the cuts would have a significant impact on U.S. aid programmes supporting food and nutrition security, human rights and labour protections amongst others in developing countries.

Advocacy goals

Both CARE USA and Mars again joined forces to advocate jointly to policy makers in the U.S. Congress to make the case at a broad level for U.S. government aid spending to be maintained at current levels, and more specifically to ensure financial support would be maintained for the *Feed the Future* initiative. They also assembled a broader informal coalition of other companies concerned about the impact of funding cuts to make the case to policy makers.

For Mars, it was important that the U.S. government continues to support development programmes like *Feed the Future* in places that overlap with its business interests and social priorities. In regions like West Africa, UN support and U.S. government aid spending plays a key role in supporting the stability, health and prosperity of communities that Mars relies on to produce high quality raw materials like the cocoa that go into its products. For CARE, the cuts threatened to undermine food and nutrition security policies and programmes which the organisation helped to establish and grow.

Advocacy approach

Through a tightly targeted advocacy strategy, CARE, Mars and a wider group of companies undertook a series of face to face briefings with key congressional representatives.

Central to the approach was adding a business / economic argument to the social / moral case for maintaining development assistance funding, both directly and through the UN, and, in the process, reframing a development and foreign policy issue into an economic issue with direct implications for the U.S. economy. Alongside CARE USA, Mars explained to policy makers how aid spending cuts could impact its global supply chain, with potential knock effects for the business and jobs in districts and states in the U.S. where it is a major employer. The novelty of highly respected global companies coming together with civil society organisations to make the case for aid in itself had an impact on the way policy makers engaged with the issue.

Results to date

Both House and Senate Appropriations Committees passed FY17 overall spending budgets significantly higher than the administration originally proposed. Although the FY18 budget process is still on-going and the outcome remains uncertain, the signs are that development spending will emerge relatively unscathed.

Benefits and challenges

In the course of the campaign, joint advocacy strengthened the credibility of both organisations amongst policy makers. CARE USA has benefited from its close association with some of the country's most respected companies, and Mars has benefited from CARE USA's expertise and leadership on development issues. Mars' support has also enabled CARE USA to recruit other companies to join the campaign and build a wider coalition of supportive businesses.

Advocacy coalition partners managed to construct a powerful combined "heart and head" economic and social case for U.S. aid spending, in particular continued support for the USAID *Feed the Future* initiative. By working together, both organisations were able to pool insights, demonstrate a greater shared understanding of the issues and make a more robust and credible case.

Partners were also able to pool their collective congressional insights, intelligence and relationships to build a tightly targeted and effective advocacy strategy.

Ensuring strong co-ordination and alignment between subject experts in programmatic roles in both organisations and their government affairs colleagues, who developed and implemented the advocacy strategy and activity, was also critical to success. A broad challenge for companies looking to advocate on development issues is ensuring government affairs teams, who are responsible for the direct engagement with policy makers, commit resources and time alongside their other priorities.

For CARE USA, joint advocacy activity has created an opportunity to broaden its relationship with Mars beyond programmatic activity. CARE is actively interested in designing more advocacy related activities into existing workstreams to strengthen the policy environment in support of programmatic goals at the country level. Already Mars and CARE are also working together to build the capacity of cooperatives in Cote d'Ivoire to help them to advocate their interests.

Key takeaway

The ability to construct and combine a persuasive social and economic case to underpin joint advocacy is a key benefit of advocacy collaboration and was a crucial factor in the success of CARE USA's and Mars' joint advocacy. This points to the need for civil society to do more to understand and address the economic dimension in its advocacy activity and for business to better understand and factor in the social dimension. Through a deeper understanding of the issues and each other's perspectives, business and civil society will be better placed to develop and advocate credible and effective solutions.

Ethical Trading Initiative – Advocating with business, civil society and trade unions to improve the labour rights and conditions of workers in Myanmar, Cambodia and Turkey



Policy context

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is an alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the world. Ethical trade means that retailers, brands and their suppliers take responsibility for improving the working conditions of the people who make the products they sell.

ETI retailers and brands committed to ethical trade adopt a code of labour practice that they expect all their suppliers to work towards and use their buying power to influence their suppliers' employment practices. Such codes address issues like worker wages, hours of work, health and safety and the right to freedom of association.

Most workers employed by supplier companies are based in poor countries where laws designed to protect workers' rights are often inadequate or not enforced. Examples include:

Myanmar: In 2015, Myanmar's government announced a new minimum wage of 3,600 Kyat (approx \$3.21/day), following a year of consultation with unions and employers. However, Myanmar's garment factory owners unanimously voted against the proposed minimum wage, which has been broadly welcomed by trade unions, arguing that such a step would put off international investors. They called for an opt out for the garment industry.

Cambodia: In 2013-2014 Cambodia experienced industrial unrest due to workers' concerns such as pay, hours and better benefits in the garment sector. The contested result of a national election in late 2013 provided a tense political backdrop to industrial relations issues leading to arrests of demonstrating workers.

Turkey: Following the start of the Syrian conflict, ETI member companies have identified undocumented Syrian refugees working in their supply chains in Turkey. A lack of legislation permitting work permits for Syrian refugees has meant that many have been working informally and have been vulnerable to exploitation.

Advocacy goals

Advocacy is a key pillar of ETI's 2020 strategy. Through government engagement, participation in high level events, research and the development of concrete policy proposals, advocacy aims to build awareness and understanding of the role governments, employers, trade unions, consumers and the media can play in protecting workers' rights.

ETI works closely with national governments and international labour agencies to influence policy and legislation, drawing on its tripartite membership of brands, trades unions and civil society, who add their voice and influence to advocacy efforts.

Advocacy approach

Historically, much of ETI's advocacy has been ad hoc and reactive, responding for example to a change in the law or the emergence of a new issue. The organisation is now moving to a more strategic advocacy approach in key countries, recognising the importance of advocacy as a tool to prevent serious violations of workers' rights, and the need to sustain advocacy over the long-term, to ensure new laws aimed at protecting workers' rights translate into real change in attitudes, policies, practices and accountability.

When a labour rights issue arises, ETI typically brings together its tripartite membership in a coalition to advocate together, with business members often visibly in the forefront of advocacy. Through a letter and delegation visits co-ordinated by ETI, business members make clear their concerns, emphasise the business case for protection of workers' rights and use their position as major investors in the country to rebut claims that strengthening workplace rights would deter foreign investment.

ETI also mobilises its trade union and civil society partners globally and at the national level to add their voice. Being able to harness these organisations at the country level is critical to building understanding of the issue and the credibility of advocacy activity.

In the case of Myanmar, prompted by Oxfam's research into working conditions in the country's garment sector, and with leadership from ETI and the Fair Labor Association in the US, thirty European and U.S. brands (including Tesco, Marks and Spencer, Primark and GAP) wrote to the Myanmar government to argue that a minimum wage negotiated by all parties would attract rather than deter international companies from buying garments from Myanmar. The letter was followed by a delegation visit to meet with government officials.

A similar approach has been applied with the Government of Cambodia following concerns about worker unrest and new laws restricting workplace freedoms. A private letter sent to the government argued for the need for better conditions for workers, including the right to negotiate wages collectively and for workers to be able to associate freely. It also reiterated the message that a growing and flourishing garment sector in Cambodia could only be sustained through decent employment conditions for Cambodian garment workers.

In the case of undocumented Syrian refugees working in ETI member supply chains in Turkey, ETI developed a policy position and letter on behalf of forty business members to call on the Turkish government to legislate for the introduction of work permits for Syrian refugees. Following a conference in Istanbul in 2015 and subsequent meetings with the Ministry of Labour, the Turkish government introduced legislation enabling Syrian refugees to obtain work permits in 2016. Through the process, ETI developed a strong relationship with the Ministry of Labour, with both organisations working together on a subsequent communications campaign to raise awareness amongst Syrian refugees of the new work permit system and their rights as workers.

Results to date

ETI's advocacy coalition approach has resulted in tangible near-term policy change, which has directly impacted the livelihoods and welfare of workers.

The call for an opt out from the minimum wage for the Myanmar garment sector was rejected and the new minimum wage was confirmed with effect from 1 September 2015. It is estimated that 260,000 workers received a 40% pay rise.

In Cambodia, as a result of working closely with local experts, ETI has helped convene conversations between some 30 international brands and global trade unions, led by IndustriALL and has facilitated engagement with the Cambodian government, employer associations and labour representatives. This led to a release of 23 detained workers and an agreement on the development of a process of establishing a wage mechanism.

In Turkey 15,000 Syrian refugees have obtained work permits and entered the formal economy to date.

Benefits and challenges

By working with an existing group of like-minded companies, union and civil society organisations, ETI has managed to mobilise advocacy coalitions quickly, and ensure messaging and activity could be developed and implemented efficiently.

Key takeaway

Progressive international businesses can be a powerful influencer of government policy on worker rights, alongside local civil society and union organisations who provide vital local knowledge, insights and credibility. Their presence in specific countries also enables access to country specific knowledge, contacts, supplier relationships and government stakeholders.

We Are Still In – Advocating continued U.S. commitment to and support for the Paris Climate Agreement



Policy context

In December 2015, the world's nations approved the Paris Agreement to tackle climate change within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, covering greenhouse gas emissions, mitigation, adaptation and financing. The main areas of the agreements are:

- To keep global temperatures “well below” 2.0C (3.6F) above pre-industrial times and “endeavour to limit” them even more, to 1.5C
- To limit the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the same levels that trees, soil and oceans can absorb naturally, beginning at some point between 2050 and 2100
- To review each country's contribution to cutting emissions every five years
- For rich countries to help poorer nations by providing “climate finance” to adapt to climate change and switch to renewable energy.

In June 2017, President Donald Trump announced the decision to unilaterally withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement.

Advocacy goals

In response to this announcement, the We Are Still In coalition was formed, championed initially by California Governor Jerry Brown. It comprises more than 2,500 leaders from state and local government, cities, businesses, civil society and faith groups who signed the We Are Still In declaration, stating their continued commitment to uphold the Paris Agreement. It is estimated that the coalition represents more than 127 million Americans and \$6.2 trillion of the U.S. economy and is the largest cross-section of local leaders in support of climate action in the United States.

We Are Still In is a network of networks and is coordinated by The American Sustainable Business Council, B Team, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Center for American Progress, Ceres, CDP, Climate Mayors, Climate Nexus, C40, C2ES, Environmental Defence Fund, Environmental Entrepreneurs, Georgetown Climate Center, ICLEI, National League of Cities, Rocky Mountain Institute, Second Nature, Sierra Club, The Climate Group, We Mean Business, and World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Alongside We Are Still In, a separate initiative spearheaded by Former New York Mayor and UN Special Envoy Michael Bloomberg is “America's Pledge”, which reiterates the U.S.'s non federal government commitment to the Paris Agreement and brings together and aggregates the climate actions of states, cities, colleges, businesses, and other local actors across the entire U.S. economy.

Advocacy approach

The advocacy approach taken by We Are Still In (WASI) combines commitments to action, made by participating state and city governments, companies and civil society organisations, with data collection and analysis to demonstrate the progress being made. This approach aims to provide evidence of and advocacy for ongoing American leadership in the global climate agenda. During its first year, the coalition and its signatories were also actively engaged in key climate conferences and events, including the COP23 meeting in Bonn in November 2017.

At COP23, for example, a U.S. Climate Action Centre was established to provide a focal point for the America's Pledge campaign during the conference. This was important positioning in the absence of an official U.S. government pavilion and was one of the largest official side events ever at a COP meeting. WASI, in coordination with more than 30 organisations, operated the Action Center and hosted 44 events.

The America's Pledge initiative also launched a Phase 1 report in 2017, which sets out the scope and scale of non-federal climate action in the United States following the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. It captures and quantifies the public support for the agreement since the withdrawal announcement, finding that cities, states and businesses representing more than half the U.S. economy and population have declared their support for the Paris Agreement, including more than 2,500 signatories to the "We Are Still In" declaration.

In addition, the report found that a total of 20 U.S. states, 110 U.S. cities, and over 1,400 businesses with U.S. operations representing USD \$25 trillion in market capitalisation and nearly 1.0 gigatons of GHG emissions per year, have adopted quantified emissions reduction targets. The America's Pledge report also examines current and potential future opportunities for non-federal actors in the U.S. to deepen and strengthen their role in meeting the U.S. commitment under the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions by 26-28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

Although initiated by separate sources of leadership and support, We Are Still In and America's Pledge are now working together as part of a combined effort. The former operates as the multi-stakeholder movement representing the actors and institutions involved with the commitment to support the goals of Paris, and the latter represents the data-driven effort to keep score on how America, outside the federal government, is doing in terms of delivering on the commitments made in the U.S. Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Their commitment to speak with a common voice is further demonstrated by the fact that in the Fall of 2018, Governor Jerry Brown and Michael Bloomberg will serve as Co-Chairs of the Global Climate Action Summit in California, which will bring together the wide range of networks and participants that are supporting the We Are Still In campaign.

Results to date

In less than a year of existence, We Are Still In, working with America's Pledge and through its supporting coalitions and institutions, has galvanised a diverse and large group of leaders throughout the United States. As the America's Pledge Phase 1 report estimated, "If it were its own country, the coalition would be the world's third-largest economy."¹⁵

Benefits and challenges

The initial group of participating states, cities, companies and civil society organisations were mobilised within a week of the President's announcement of the United States withdrawing from the Paris Agreement. This was possible due to the fact that many of the networks that are helping to coordinate the effort had already worked together on other joint advocacy initiatives. They had built sufficient trust and shared understanding to be able to move rapidly and decisively when the need arose for collective action to address a specific and urgent policy challenge.

To-date the coalition has been highly effective in speaking with a common voice despite representing a diverse range of networks and organisations, all of which have their own priorities, constraints and interests. It will be important to sustain this momentum, while at the same time continuing to advocate for re-engagement and renewed leadership by the U.S. Federal Government.

Key takeaway

Existing coalitions with diverse memberships and participants can come together quickly and effectively to address a specific policy issue if sufficient trust and shared understanding has been built in advance. This points to the value of NGOs and companies mapping the ecosystem that they are operating in, so that they can identify and build relationships with potential advocacy allies on an ongoing basis, even before a specific need for collaboration arises.

15. America's Pledge, "America's Pledge Phase 1 Report: States, Cities, and Businesses in the United States Are Stepping Up on Climate Action," November 2017

3 Addressing a complex systemic challenge to achieve transformational policy change over the long-term

2030 Water Resources Group multi-stakeholder platforms – Advocating together for policies to ensure a more water secure world



Policy context

Water is critical to sustainable economic growth and human development. Ensuring access to water and sanitation for all is recognised in Goal 6 of the SDGs.

By 2030, demand for water is expected to exceed supply by 40% - reducing water available to consumers, causing shortfalls in agricultural production, and imposing limits on economic growth. The global population is growing and urbanising, increasing demand for water across the economy and straining the capacity of municipal water systems. Incomes are rising and supporting more water-intensive lifestyle choices, from using more energy to eating more meat.

Water governance is often weak and water prices are often so low that companies struggle to make the business case for using water wisely. It is also difficult to attract private sector investment into water infrastructure and other solutions.

Water scarcity is a challenge that effects all sectors of society and all stakeholders have a role to play in tackling it. Strong government leadership is essential in creating an enabling environment in which stakeholders have the incentives to conserve water. Governments also need to make tough choices about how limited water resources should be allocated among different uses and users – and to do it fairly and effectively.

Advocacy goals

The 2030 Water Resources Group (2030 WRG¹⁶) is a global partnership that supports country-level collaboration by government, business and civil society to achieve water security.

2030 WRG cultivates multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) at the country and local levels that bring stakeholders together to find solutions to water scarcity.

Policy advocacy by 2030 WRG, which acts as the backbone co-ordinating organisation, plays an integral role during the establishment of MSPs. Advocacy by 2030 WRG, often drawing on evidence built through in-depth hydro- economic studies, helps to build awareness and understanding amongst stakeholders of the shared water challenges they face and brings them to the table.

Once the MSP is established, stakeholders from civil society and business work closely together with government to identify new and better ways of implementing existing policies and developing new ones. In the process, they build the political capital that change requires.

16. Collaboration and Country Leadership to Strengthen Water Security (2017). Beth Jenkins, Richard Gilbert, Jane Nelson. Corporate Responsibility Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School

Advocacy approach

Through the MSP, stakeholders representing a wide spectrum of viewpoints, including urban and farming communities, civil society, industrial users, government and academia actively work together to shape water policy.

Common themes include advocating for policies that encourage agricultural water use efficiency, industrial water use efficiency, and wastewater treatment and reuse.

For example, in Karnataka state in India, 2030 WRG stakeholders have worked together on the development of a Wastewater Reuse Policy, which has identified how urban wastewater can be reused by different sectors and established a comprehensive incentive framework with a focus on industrial reuse.

In Peru, stakeholders have helped to shape new regulations to manage groundwater, including through the Groundwater Management and Monitoring Tariff, a new levy being raised by utilities in Lima and Trujillo from industrial groundwater users. The levy is now being extended to other regions.

In Mongolia for example, Polluter Pays principles have been incorporated into law in consultation with industry and have been widely accepted as a result. Leveraging 2030 WRG's technical expertise, stakeholders have also contributed to the development of a nationally-recognised methodology for valuing water, which they are now using to inform new water efficiency initiatives.

Results to date

In 14 countries and states, 600 organizations – including 160 from the public sector, 240 from the private sector, and 200 from civil society – are now working together on projects and policy reforms with support from 2030 WRG.

Benefits and challenges

The primary benefits of advocacy collaboration are that all stakeholders become aligned with and united behind the policy priorities and actions required to drive change. They also have ownership of the process. And with the leadership and participation of government alongside other stakeholders, policies can be translated into action quickly and effectively.

A key challenge for 2030 WRG is bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders with competing interests and often with a significant distrust of each other's motivations, and uniting them around a shared vision for a more water secure country.

Key takeaway

Key learnings from the 2030 WRG experience include the importance of government taking the lead, as well as, the need to establish local ownership of the agenda, foster collaboration between civil society and business, and ensure a combined focus on data and analysis as well as stakeholder dynamics and the political economy of change. The support of a backbone organisation to keep the process on track and the role of individual champions are also key factors for success.

U.S. Global Leadership Coalition – Advocating for America’s continued commitment to international development assistance

Policy context

The International Affairs Budget in the U.S. covers the U.S. Government’s spending on aid and overseas development. In recent years, efforts have been made to cut spending. The Trump Administration’s federal budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), proposed deep cuts, including plans to cut State Department and USAID funding by 31 percent.

The U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) was established in 1995 as a broad-based influential network of businesses and NGOs; national security and foreign policy experts; and business, faith-based, academic, and community leaders across the U.S. who support a smart power approach of elevating development and diplomacy alongside defence to build a better, safer world.

Advocacy goals

The USGLC works in Washington and across the country to strengthen America’s civilian-led tools — development and diplomacy — alongside defence. USGLC believes that development assistance and diplomacy are key to:

- Protecting national security by fighting terrorism, stabilising weak and fragile states, combating weapons proliferation, and promoting global stability
- Building economic prosperity by developing international markets, driving economic development, creating American jobs, and expanding exports
- Strengthening humanitarian values by saving lives, alleviating global poverty and hunger, fighting HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, and expanding educational opportunities for women and girls.

USGLC advocates for a strong International Affairs Budget to ensure U.S. diplomacy and development work is adequately funded and resourced to achieve these goals.

The USGLC does not directly engage in the political process around the International Affairs Budget. Rather its approach is to educate and inspire support from the American public and policymakers on the importance of America’s civilian-led tools of development and diplomacy.

Advocacy approach

The USGLC brings together more than 500 businesses and non-profits from across the country. By advocating for a strong and effective International Affairs Budget, the USGLC is working to make development and diplomacy a keystone of America’s engagement with the world.

The USGLC’s National Advisory Council brings together distinguished leaders including former Cabinet officials, members of Congress, and every living Secretary of State. The National Security Advisory Council includes more than 180 retired three- and four-star generals and admirals among its ranks. The USGLC’s two boards bring together executives from some of the nation’s top businesses and non-profits who support strengthening America’s international affairs programmes.

The USGLC advocates through a variety of platforms and programmes:

- The Center for U.S. Global Leadership – the educational arm of the USGLC – educates and engages the American public and opinion leaders across the country.
- Over 30,000 U.S. military veterans from all branches and ranks share the commitment to elevate America’s civilian tools alongside a strong defence to prevent conflict and maintain national security.
- The USGLC works across the country in partnership with State Advisory Committees and supporters to educate community leaders and members of Congress on the positive impact that U.S. international affairs programmes have on a local, state, and nationwide level.

The USGLC uses a number of advocacy tactics.

It seeks to influence the debate on overseas aid spending by promoting bipartisan support for the U.S. International Affairs Budget, providing up-to-date resources, analysis, and information to opinion leaders and policy makers, mobilising diverse, influential networks of business, faith-based, military, non-profit, and community leaders across the country, engaging national security and military experts on the importance of development and diplomacy alongside defense, and hosting national policy forums to elevate the conversation about America’s role in the world.

It seeks to educate the American public about the importance of development and diplomacy by engaging with members of Congress about key foreign policy issues and convening innovative forums in states to engage community leaders and advance its message.

USGLC also engages through the media, acting as a valued evidence-based resource to national, regional, and state media, publishing opinion editorials and participating in television and radio interviews, showcasing its network of foreign policy, military, and community leaders at the local and national level and expanding the foreign assistance conversation through the latest digital and social media tools.

Benefits and challenges

The USGLC experience demonstrates the scope to drive long-term policy change while delivering short-term wins on specific policy milestones or issues.

USGLC has also been effective at mobilising both individual champions – well-known business, civic and military leaders - while also harnessing institutional platforms and local chapters to increase its outreach and the scale of support.

Key takeaway

The scope to replicate and scale the approach is demonstrated through the recent establishment of The Coalition for Global Prosperity in the UK, which is directly modelled on the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition.

APPENDIX

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Corporate Responsibility Initiative (CRI)

The Corporate Responsibility Initiative (CRI) at the Harvard Kennedy School's Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government (M-RCBG) is a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder program that seeks to study and enhance the public contributions of private enterprise. The initiative explores the intersection of corporate responsibility, corporate governance, and public policy, with a focus on analysing institutional innovations that help to implement the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, enhance governance and accountability and achieve key international development goals.

CRInitiative.org

www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/programs/cri

Business Fights Poverty

With its origins dating back to 2005, Business Fights Poverty has grown into one of the world's largest business-led collaboration networks focused on social impact. Business Fights Poverty has launched a wide variety of Challenge-based collaborations with many of the world's leading companies, civil society organisations and development agencies.

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