



Report on the SDG Philanthropy Platform High-level Roundtable Meeting in India

Mumbai, 24th January 2017



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



Synthesis

- Organized through the combined efforts and outreach of several partners (logos above), whose combined networks are far stronger than those of our individual institutions.
- Attended by more than 30 senior representatives of the philanthropy sector in India, including private foundations, individual philanthropists, corporate philanthropy, and networks. International foundations in the minority (only Gates).
- Mixed levels of awareness of the SDGs at outset, with high enthusiasm for this framework by the end, illustrated by high level of commitment to staying involved in the months and years to come. Understanding of routes to scale this Platform can support – through government, through markets, through movements toward change.
- Appreciation of the framing we as organizers used in terms of the SDGs: a multi-goal approach with investing in women and girls as a crucial focus, while incorporating themed work in areas like employment/livelihoods and health.
- Considering that we want to scale solutions and approaches that work to meet the ambitious SDGs, many underscored the need to build on and learn from existing efforts – no reinventing the wheel. Yet there is not yet in India an efficient marketplace of ideas and exchange, and of funders and practitioners (just as it does not exist elsewhere, making the SDG taxonomy particularly useful). The Platform as an enabler of this resonated with participants.
- Appreciation of our Platform approaches to connecting the sectors of philanthropy and social impact investment to the government, UN, private sector and civil society efforts:
 - Leveraging our respective assets and resources
 - Blending our respective sources of capital
 - Combining our different data sets and knowledge
 - Focusing attention on the sub-national (state, city, panchayat) levels, not just the national level
- One former government official participated so that philanthropy's engagement could be the focus for discussion. That official referred to philanthropists in a very positive way as a 'magnet' for action.

Summary

The main objective of the event was to explore Indian philanthropists' interests in launching the SDG Philanthropy Platform as a vehicle for collaboration between philanthropy, the UN and the government on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in India. While the SDGs are a global and universal commitment to 17 Goals, success globally depends on whether and how India meets the Goals. And while governments are accountable for the Goals, they will not be achieved without every sector's involvement.

Participants were comprised of individuals with extensive experience in development and represented a diverse philanthropic field in India from traditional grantmaking foundations to social entrepreneurs and CSR programs from corporations.

The discussion raised questions about the usefulness and possible objectives of the Platform in India. The key challenges were found as well as possible and constructive ways these can be addressed, via the SDGPP.

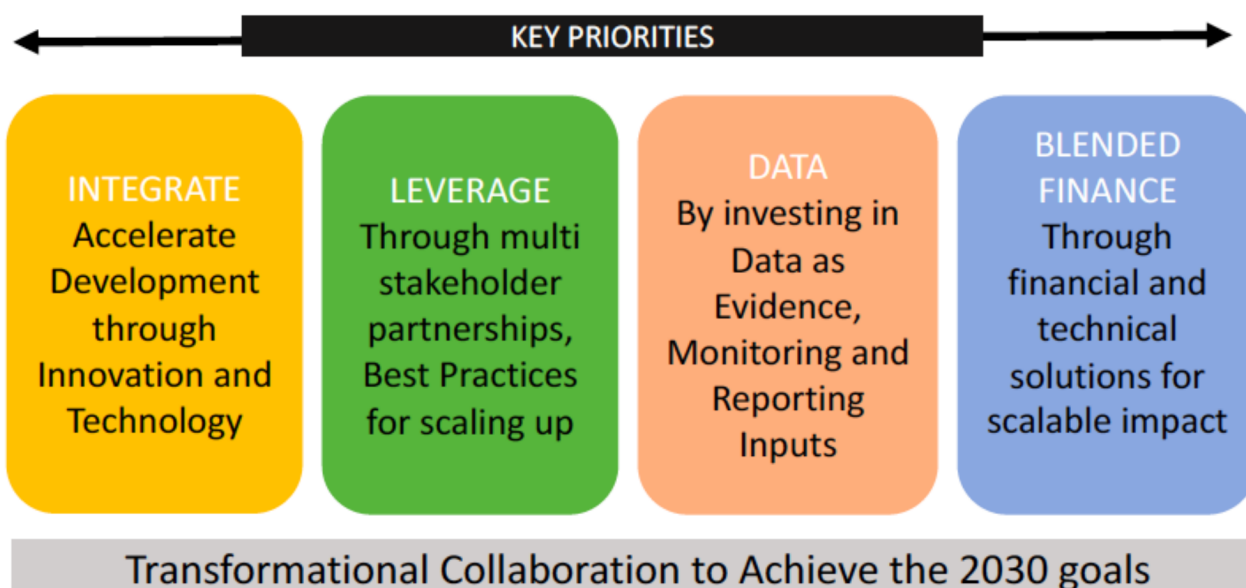
- The goals are very expensive costing trillions of dollars, however while increased funding is a necessary element of the global strategy and countries' strategies, funding alone is not enough unless effective, low cost solutions at scale are found and adopted.
- SDGs require "development multipliers" such as technology to enable these solutions. Through multiple examples ranging from financing to skills development and basic service provision, finding solutions which can be adopted at scale must follow a rigorous process of investing from research to prototyping and scaling. Blended and innovative financing is key in the value chain, and philanthropy including venture philanthropy and impact investing can significantly contribute.
- An enabling public policy is key. The government should drive policy solutions which encourage risks, investing in priority SDG sectors and considering a CSR law fund to support some of these solutions before markets can pick them up.
- Other impediments include lack of data and a marketplace connecting different actors whose efforts could and should be integrated.

Further remarks from some of the speakers

Mr. Jaco Cilliers, UNDP India Country Director, opened the meeting introducing the Goals and observing that about half of the world's achievement of the Goals will depend on how India does. The SDGs 17 goals and 169 targets offer a vision based on 4Ps: people, planet, prosperity and partnerships. The ambitious and comprehensive agenda calls for all hands on deck - achieving the goals will require unprecedented investments, innovations, collaboration and new forms of leadership.



Sustainable Development Goals Philanthropy Platform



Mr. Anurag Goel, Former Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Former Member, Competition Commission of India, and Adviser to the Government of Assam on SDGs, said that the national government of India will present the vision of how to integrate the SDGs into the national development plans by end of 1st quarter of this year [and report to the UN at the High Level Political Forum in New York in July]. The government has sought inputs from all the states. The governor of Assam State has led the process of developing the strategy which includes stakeholders from the private sector, NGOs, philanthropy, academia and others in consultations and the implementation. While the government has prioritized policy coherence and coordination, other players from the private sector, foundations and NGOs have been recognized as playing an important role in leveraging financing and disrupting through innovations.

Paula Mariwala, Managing Director of Seedfund, Director of Hindutron, a philanthropist and impact investor herself, has agreed to be a pro bono Advisor for Platform in India. She observed that technology has radicalized and has been an equalizer and an immense accelerator for development. Proliferation of development actors requires synergies to increase impact. Disruptions in development can be fostered by collaboration and sharing various perspectives, from CSR through to impact investing and core investments.

Private companies have important lessons to share from achieving scale, especially when they combine the core business needs and CSR investment. Such an example has been shared by Dr. Pragnya Ram from Aditya Birla Group which runs a massive skilling programme for women which also considers issues such as transport and childcare. Yes Bank offers credit enhancements for groups such as poor women to help them replace diesel run to solar batteries with a longer term and capacity building.

Radhika Shah, Co-President of Stanford Angels & Entrepreneurs and Advisor to the global Platform, shared a summary of the how the Platform works globally and why we decided to launch in India. She emphasized the added value of the Platform in other countries in bringing philanthropy to the SDGs table.

An interactive discussion focused on 5 questions: 1) How could we better integrate our efforts to have not just greater coordination, but synergy, between different sectors of society who are independently contributing to these 17 goals? 2) How do we blend our finance in order to stack together government resources with those of philanthropy and impact investors? What are gaps and opportunities? 3) What are the most promising routes to scaling partnerships including philanthropy and social investment that can scale up our solutions, whether through government, markets, or movements [e.g., awareness and behavior change]? 4) When it comes to the 169 Targets of the SDGs that the world's best minds have put together, how can government, academia, philanthropy, business and civil society combine their data, knowledge, and evidence? 5) How do we ensure that we are creating partnerships at the sub-national level, all the way from the state to the community level, which is after all where we need real positive impact to happen?

- Abhijit Prabhugate from Ambuja Foundation contributed to creating 1300 self-help women's groups and identified that sustainable livelihoods are a key bottleneck in moving the needle on other development fronts such as health and education.
- Entrepreneur and technologist Ravi Mariwala noted that access to safe drinking water faces significant challenges ranging from lack of data to lack of low cost solutions which can be adopted by communities to lack of financing. There is little money for applied research which would certainly push the field forward. For Smart water, which is working on human designed innovations for water solutions at the community level, the key challenge is to find investors to test these prototypes on markets and bring to scale. Once such promising investments are innovations in purifying rain water, however the scale in India requires many different approaches to respond to people's needs.
- Team from Swades Foundation highlighted their work on access to water and sanitation, education and health and livelihoods at the community levels. Swades Foundation underscored that human-centered design solutions are key for building long term sustainability because they allow buy-in from communities as well as build in capacity building. The Platform will have an important role to spread knowledge about challenges and facilitate collaboration to identify solutions.
- Amit Bhatia from Aspire urged the Platform to incorporate more from the investment community and suggested prioritizing SDG-related sectors to receive various forms of financing, provided that low income solutions are developed.
- Deepika Mogilishetty from EkStep foundation shared their experiences of developing a web-based education Platform that serves as a case that technology is a great multiplier and equalizer. One challenge needs multiple, configurable solutions, and web-powered platforms are low cost enablers.
- Somi from Dasra called for shifting the mindset, moving from trying to replicate pilots to creating good blueprints which allow for an alignment around values and joint outcomes.
- Gayatri Oleti from L&T observed that effective community solutions need civil society. Moving forward, NGOs should be involved in the work of the Platform to build on their skills and build trust.
- Tasqueen Macchiwalla from Azim Premji Foundation noted that they grow through continuous learning. Their experiences point to using systems thinking and approaches in finding solutions at scale. Exercises such as comprehensive mappings of the ecosystems with players, initiatives, and policies are important building blocks. A success in cutting stunting by half was enabled by early government involvement, who assumed the prototype solutions thanks to collaboration.
- Gayatri Divecha from HSBC reminded participants that one of the challenges is little understanding among grantees about the SDGs: to expand understanding and alignment the bank requested that all CSR grants are mapped against the SDGs. The Platform can help as a hub for learning and solutions.

Ruchi Mohanty of UNDP shared next steps. There will be a UN public private forum for the SDGs on 22 March. It will be a high-level platform for business and philanthropists to find solutions and encourage investments in key areas relevant to the SDGs such as poverty (e.g., water and sanitation), women's economic empowerment, improving health systems, off-grid energy, and skills enhancement. Ruchi added that the UN will find synergies between the SDGPP and the Forum and she would seek inputs from today's group to the UN Forum programme.

In his closing remarks, Jaco emphasized that the Platform in India will work at three levels: around specific on the ground collaboration to find solutions to common challenges which the group support; through ongoing exchange of knowledge and learning about how philanthropy can leverage its resources by collaborating on the SDGs; and finally through international collaboration with other SDGPP countries.

List of Participants

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| Ravi | Mariwala | Smart Water |
| Tasqeen | Macchiwalla | General Manager, Azimji Premji Philanthropic Initiative |
| Namita | Vikas | Group President/Sustainability - Yes Bank Foundation |
| Deepika | Mogilishetty | Chief of Policy and Partnerships, Ekstep |
| Sanvar | Oberoi | Social Entrepreneur, Boheco |
| Somi | | Team Lead, Dasra |
| Apoorva | Oza | CEO Aga Khan Rural Development Initiative, India |
| Gayatri | Oleti | L&T |
| Ram | Deshpande | L&T |
| Shipra | Sharma | General Manager, Rizwan Foundation |
| Abhijeet | Prabhughate | Manager - Programme Research Ambuja Cement |
| Paresh S. | Parasnis | Head Piramal Foundation |
| Amit | Bhatia | CEO, Aspire |
| Mangesh | Wange | Swades Foundation |
| Tushar | Sud | Swades Foundation |
| Sanika | Sidhaye | Swades Foundation |
| Ankita | | Asset Manager, Swades Foundation |
| Rati | Godrej | Godrej |
| Paula | Mariwala | SeedFund |
| | Ram | |
| Gopal | Kumar | Sr Chief Manager,& Head CSR, Aditya Birla Financial Services |
| Baijool | Desai | Manager, Kotak Education Foundation' |
| Anurag | Goel | ex - IAS officer |
| Adil | Ghadiali | Vice President- Corporate Sustainability, HSBC |
| Gayatri | Divecha | Vice President - Corporate Sustainability |
| Dr. Tamali | Sen Gupta | T.Sen Gupta & Associates |
| Sachi | Bhalla | Gates Foundation |