Incentivising and Regulating Multi-Actor Partnerships and Private-Sector Engagement in Development Cooperation

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Abstract

The inclusion of actors from the private sector is a central challenge for multi-actor partnerships (MAPs) and multi-stakeholder platforms in development cooperation. On the one side, the heterogeneity of approaches that shape development cooperation and rather abstract, long-term agendas (such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) make it difficult to incentivise the engagement of private-sector actors that typically prefer concrete and short-term activities with predictable outcomes. On the other side, the effectiveness of past development initiatives with actors from the private sector has often proven to be limited. In order to identify strategies to meet this challenge, this discussion paper investigates the case of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), a multi-actor partnership and platform striving for better inclusion of private-sector actors in development cooperation.

More generally, the paper contributes to the debates on how multi-stakeholder networks and platforms can support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by incentivising and regulating the collaboration of private-sector actors in MAPs. In addition, it also provides insights on the particularities of MAPs with private-sector actors in formats exemplifying so-called South-South cooperation. The latter have been widely neglected in the literature on networks and platforms so far but are important to consider, not least because of the growing significance of partners and alternative concepts from the "Global South" and the structural dynamics and changes they enhance in the field of development cooperation. In this regard, and under consideration of different conceptual perspectives, the paper examines how multi-stakeholder networks and platforms in general – and the GPEDC in particular – can provide a supporting structure that encourages the inclusion of private-sector actors and the effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives.

To achieve both – to enhance the engagement of private-sector actors and the effectiveness of MAPs in development cooperation – this paper concludes that initiatives such as the GPEDC need to:

i) strengthen the institutional oversight that they provide,

ii) support the formulation of explicit and case-specific incentivising- and regulating-strategies,

iii) give more weight to context-specific particularities of cooperation that apply, for example, in South-South cooperation.

Keywords: Multi-Actor Partnerships, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, Private-Sector Engagement, South-South Cooperation, Effectiveness

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Abbreviations

ABC	Brazilian Cooperation Agency
CSO	civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation
GPI	Global Partnership Initiative
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
JST	Joint Support Team
MAP	multi-actor partnership
MIC	middle-income country
NeST	Network of Southern Think Tanks
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	public–private partnership
PSE	private-sector engagement
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSC	South-South cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1   Introduction

Although the engagement of private-sector actors in development cooperation initiatives is considered more important than ever, it is still limited (OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development], 2018). It is a widespread conviction, however, that states alone are not able to address the complexity of sustainable development challenges. To implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), partnerships with sub-state, civil society and private-sector actors shall fill knowledge and financial gaps in particular (Adams & Martens, 2015; APCI [Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional], 2017; Klingebiel & Paulo, 2016; Watson, 2012). Over the past decades, such partnerships have increasingly been formed, but their effectiveness – their "output, outcome and impact" (Liese & Beisheim, 2014, p. 18) – has often been proven to be limited. To support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the purpose of this discussion paper is to outline avenues for enhancing both the engagement of private-sector actors in development cooperation and the effectiveness of partnerships with them. The paper thus relates to two connected debates: to the debate on the effectiveness of multi-actor partnerships (MAPs) and multi-stakeholder platforms,[1] and to the debate on including private-sector actors more generally in development-oriented partnerships.

For-profit actors, such as small and medium-sized enterprises, multi-national corporations, state-owned enterprises as well as business-related private foundations operating on a non-profit basis, are regarded as important partners who are able to provide much-needed knowledge, innovations and investments to implement the SDGs (Coppart & Lonsdale, 2015; Prescott & Stibbe, 2015; Seelos, 2008). Yet, partnerships with private-sector actors have often been criticised for causing unintended effects (i.a. Beisheim, 2011; Chan, 2014; Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014; Romero, 2015).[2] This is why research in the field of development cooperation increasingly investigates the supporting structure of multi-stakeholder networks and platforms that provide linkages among diverse actors, different issue areas and governance levels, and shall thus ensure better synergy and coherence (see, among others, Abdel-Malek, 2015; Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017; Paulo, 2014; Treichel, Höh, Biermann, & Conze, 2016). In addition, this paper concludes that multi-stakeholder networks and platforms are also more likely to enhance the engagement of private-sector actors if they provide institutional oversight to support the effective management of the different processes, instruments and models applied in sustainable development initiatives.

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1   Multi-actor partnerships are composed of actors from at least three different sectors (governmental, non-governmental, private). Multi-stakeholder platforms constitute one specific type of MAP: As a network, platforms are composed of different (individual) actors and MAPs, they address a problem shared by all collaborating partners and focus on the provision of services to support the endeavours of MAPs (e.g. monitoring, research and data-sharing, holding events, capacity-building). Similar to MAPs, multi-stakeholder platforms may differ with regards to the sectors and objectives they address, their management structure, the services they provide and their scope.

2   At the national level, particularly partnerships with corporate actors are often criticised as facilitating neoliberalisation in developing countries. Business and capital are believed as being more likely to be prioritised. At the same time, if driven by economic aims, there are worries that these partnerships do not counteract but rather support marginalising practices (i.a. Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014; Van der Wel, 2004).

Against this backdrop, this paper focusses on the following questions:

1. How are networks and platforms such as the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) able to incentivise the engagement of private-sector actors in development cooperation?

2. How are such networks and platforms able to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by improving the effectiveness of MAPs with private-sector actors?

Despite the GPEDC's young age (formed in 2012) and the early stage in which the GPEDC finds itself regarding its engagement with private-sector actors, for the implementation of the SDGs, it is a very relevant case to look at because it:

- operates as a multi-actor partnership and as a multi-stakeholder platform at the same time,

- intends to be global in scope,

- is driven by the objective to contribute to an improved effectiveness of development cooperation, and

- aims at scaling-up private-sector engagement (PSE).

The two questions sketched above are thus of particular relevance for the GPEDC. In this light, the paper outlines the GPEDC's limitations and avenues for improvement concerning the GPEDC's engagement with MAPs and private-sector actors also from emerging economies.

The uniqueness of partnerships generally limits the transfer of findings to other cases. Yet, the case of the GPEDC allows for a discussion of the potentials and limitations of strategies more generally promoted in debates on how multi-stakeholder networks and platforms can support the implementation of the SDGs by incentivising the collaboration of private-sector actors in MAPs. In addition, this paper provides insights on the particularities of MAPs with private-sector actors in formats exemplifying so-called South-South cooperation (SSC). The latter have been widely neglected in the literature on networks and platforms so far but are important to consider, not least because of the growing significance of partners and alternative concepts from the "Global South" and the structural dynamics and changes they enhance in the field of development cooperation. Moreover, their consideration matters greatly for platforms such as the GPEDC that intend to improve the effectiveness of MAPs on a global level, as partnerships are evaluated differently when examined in distinct localities and contexts (i.a. Beisheim, 2015a; Chan, 2014).

The objective of this paper is threefold: (i) It scrutinises lessons learnt, from which central incentivising- and regulating-actions for MAPs and multi-stakeholder platforms derive; (ii) from a conceptual perspective, this paper then discusses how these central actions can be implemented to enhance the effectiveness of MAPs and of PSE; (iii) in this regard, the paper outlines strategies and challenges for multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the GPEDC, that aim at increasing the effectiveness of MAPs and to enhance collaboration with private-sector actors and other actors from emerging economies.

These objectives provide a structure for the paper. Section 1.1 discusses the relevance of MAPs and of PSE in development cooperation and presents a brief summary of potentials and concerns ascribed to partnerships with private-sector actors that aim at implementing sustainable development objectives. Section 2 offers an overview of different platforms with

experiences in integrating private-sector actors and discusses the lessons already learnt in this respect. Based on the conceptual perspective developed in this section, the paper then examines central strategies and challenges that multi-stakeholder platforms face when aiming at enhancing the engagement of private-sector actors in sustainable development initiatives and the effectiveness of MAPs. Section 3 relates these insights and challenges to the case of the GPEDC and outlines different avenues for the GPEDC to enhance the engagement of private-sector actors (also in SSC) and the effectiveness of MAPs. The final section, Section 4, summarises the results and provides policy recommendations for multi-stakeholder initiatives more generally, and for the GPEDC in particular.

This paper is driven by the view that contextual factors play an important role in the evolution of development cooperation as a policy field, including the role of the GPEDC in that sense. Consequently, the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder networks and of development cooperation, more generally, are closely tied to each other. Moreover, there are various (dis-)entanglements between local and global levels that may encourage processes of convergence or divergence in development cooperation (see also Abdel-Malek, 2015; Busch, Gupta, & Falkner, 2012; Chan, 2014; Newell, 2005; Zelli, Gupta, & Asselt, 2012). Methodologically, I consider this viewpoint by taking diverse policy papers, reports and a large number of secondary literature into account. Moreover, the paper builds on information gained from interviews with researchers focussing on multi-stakeholder networks and from political practitioners engaged in the GPEDC and in SSC.[3] Although this paper cannot provide – and does not strive for – comprehensiveness, it follows the objective to provide a nuanced and balanced analysis and seeks to contribute to informed and differentiated discussions about MAPs and PSE in the field of development cooperation.

1.1 Relevance of multi-actor partnerships and of private-sector engagement in development cooperation

Over the last decades "international organizations have widely adopted a discourse that prefers partnerships" (Chan, 2014, p. 96; see also Adams & Martens, 2015). They regard MAPs "as important new mechanisms to help resolve a variety of current governance deficits" (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014, p. 9). Particularly in environmental and development governance, MAPs are considered to be solutions-oriented, "innovative arrangements" (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014, p. 16).

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3   The interviews are anonymised in this paper and were conducted individually and largely at the following venues: the Managing Global Governance Alumni Conference on "Global Justice and Social Cohesion: Key Challenges of the 2030 Agenda" and at the Global South-South Development Expo on "South-South Cooperation in the Era of Economic, Social and Environmental Transformation: Road to the 40th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action" (BAPA+40). Both events took place in November 2017. The Managing Global Governance network is considered a "platform for training, knowledge cooperation and policy dialogue" among governmental and non-governmental actors from "rising powers and Germany/Europe" (DIE, 2017). The Global South-South Development Expo, on the other side, is "a platform showcasing successful development examples selected from the UN system every year [that] represents the concerted efforts of governments, private sector and social organizations" and is organised by the UN Office for South-South Cooperation and a rotating host government (Finance Center for South-South Cooperation [FCSSC], 2017, p. 46).

Similarly, in the context of the 2030 Agenda, MAPs matter greatly. As Horner and Hulme point out, the global focus of the SDGs represents "a universalisation of the challenge of development" (Horner & Hulme, 2017, p. 3) because the SDGs promote a holistic understanding of development across several socio-economic spheres in both "the Global North and South" (see also UN [United Nations], 2015a). Instead of reproducing the traditional distinction between developing and developed countries, the SDGs acknowledge interlinkages, transformations and development challenges of global scope. Similarly, the 2030 Agenda encourages "North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation" as well as the formation of "multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries" (UN, 2015b).

In the 2030 Agenda, partnerships – including those with private-sector actors – are thus seen as crucial instruments[4] for implementing the SDGs that build "on the reality that governments do not address global problems alone" (Adams & Martens, 2015, p. 73). In practice, however, these partnerships are "variously understood and defined" (Biekart & Fowler, 2016, p. 3). By drawing on the definitions that exist, the following box classifies partnerships and multi-stakeholder platforms such as the GPEDC.

Box 1: Definition of partnerships and platforms

Partnerships

Partnerships are generally understood as "cooperation projects between actors from the public sector, the private sector and civil society in which the organisations involved cooperate transparently and as equals, in order to achieve a joint objective for sustainable development. To this end the partners use their complementary competencies and resources, and agree to share the risks and the benefits of the joint project" (BMZ [Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung], 2011, p. 4). Formats in which "partners" are not treated as equals and that are determined by hierarchical constellations are thus not considered partnerships (see i.a. Bella, Grant, Kindornay, & Tissot, 2013, p. 4).

Partnerships for Sustainable Development/ Partnerships for the SDGs

The "Partnerships for Sustainable Development" were defined more specifically as "voluntary initiatives undertaken by Governments and relevant stakeholders" to supplement the implementation of Agenda 21 (UN, 2003). Researchers also relate to these partnerships as Johannesburg partnerships or Type II partnerships (see Bäckstrand, Campe, Chan, Mert, & Schäferhoff, 2012; Partzsch, 2009). After the World Summit on Sustainable Development, such partnerships that were formed in accordance with an agreed set of criteria and guidelines (i.a. the Bali Guiding Principles; UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 2003) could voluntarily register with the Commission on Sustainable Development Secretariat. Since the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Summit, Partnerships for Sustainable Development became "Partnerships for the SDGs", following the purpose to implement the 2030 Agenda. These partnerships are registered with the online platform of the same name (UN, 2018).

Exemplary Partnerships for Sustainable Development and Partnerships for the SDGs:

Asia Forest Partnership; SEED Initiative: Supporting Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development; Batumi Initiative on Green Economy.

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4   Indicator 17 of SDG 17 defines MAPs as instruments to "[e]ncourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships" (UN, 2015b).

Public–private partnerships (PPPs)

The concept PPP relates to contractual arrangements between the state and a private-sector company. These arrangements define how the private sector participates in the supply of goods, assets and services normally provided by the public sector and how risks are shared (following Ion, Beyard, & Sedaca, 2014; Romero, 2015, p. 4).

Exemplary PPPs:

Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America; Uganda Value Added Maize Alliance Project.

Multi-actor partnerships/ multi-stakeholder partnerships

MAPs and multi-stakeholder partnerships are often used synonymously. In contrast to PPPs, not only governmental and private-sector actors may collaborate in these formats but also non-governmental organisations. Accordingly, in most definitions, partnerships are only considered to be a MAP/multi-stakeholder partnership if actors from at least three sectors (governmental, non-governmental, private) collaborate (Partnerships 2030, 2017). MAPs/ multi-stakeholder partnerships are mostly based on agreements and not on contracts.

In the literature, MAPs are classified differently and take the following into consideration:

- the target groups they address (Biekart & Fowler, 2016),
- their mandates and objectives (e.g. setting of standards, knowledge-sharing, provision of services; Beisheim, Liese, Janetschek, & Sarre, 2014; Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014),
- their structures, such as the levels (local, global) at which they primarily operate (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017; Treichel et al., 2016, p. 13).

Exemplary MAPs:

Alliance for Integrity; Garment Industries Transparency Initiatives.

Multi-stakeholder platform

Multi-stakeholder platforms constitute a specific type of MAP, oftentimes used synonymously with "relationships of this nature", such as initiatives, coalitions, networks and alliances (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, pp. 8-9). In contrast to MAPs, however, a multi-stakeholder platform is not only a network of different (individual) actors but of different MAPs. Although similar to a MAP, a multi-stakeholder platform generally addresses a problem/objective shared by all collaborating partners and focusses particularly on the provision of services to support the endeavours of MAPs (e.g. monitoring, research and data sharing, holding of events, capacity-building).

Similar to MAPs, multi-stakeholder platforms may also differ when considering the following:

- the sectors and objectives they address,
- their governance and operational management structures,
- their membership and partnership cultures,
- the services they provide and their competences,
- their scope (e.g. local, in-country or global platforms; following Reid, Hayes, & Stibbe, 2014).

Exemplary multi-stakeholder platforms:

GPEDC; African Marine Waste Network.

Figure 1: Relationships between multi-stakeholder platforms and MAPs

Source: Author
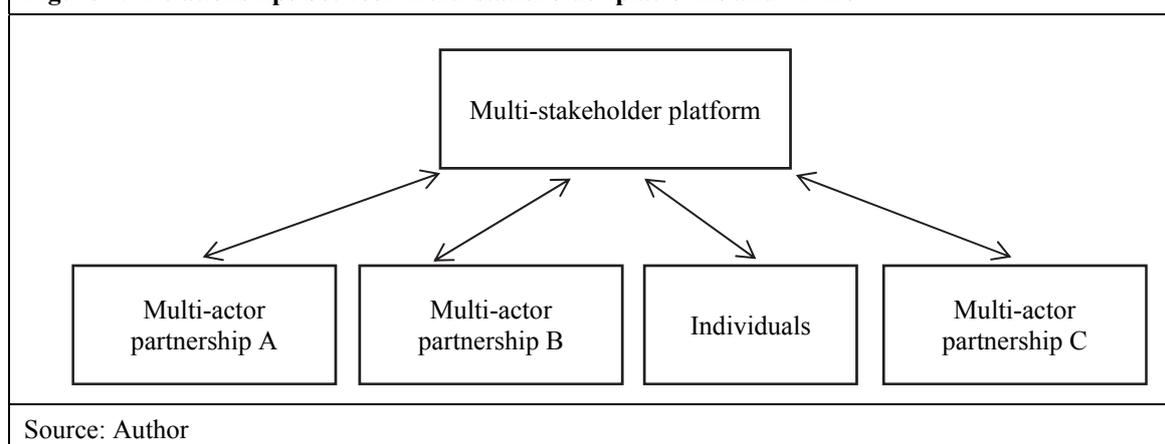
1.2 Experiences with multi-actor partnerships and private-sector engagement in development cooperation

The interest to collaborate with private- and civil society actors to implement sustainable development objectives is nothing new (see also Pérez Pineda, 2017). MAPs have often been seen as complementing official development assistance. For example, 10 years after the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development – at which Agenda 21, with its special focus on sustainable development, was adopted – the launching of "more than 200" Partnerships for Sustainable Development was considered a major outcome of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (UN, 2003).[5] These were "seen as an instrument to achieve better implementation of internationally agreed outcomes" (Chan, 2014, p. 175) and thus mirror the understanding of partnerships also promoted a decade later in the 2030 Agenda (see SDG 17).

Like other Partnerships for Sustainable Development – which were not registered with the Commission on Sustainable Development Secretariat and do not refer to internationally agreed outcomes – these partnerships have been perceived as encouraging transnational collaboration between national and/or sub-national governments, private-sector actors and civil society actors to implement sustainable development objectives. From an institutionalist perspective, the former can accordingly be regarded as a universal instrument, whereas from a transnational perspective, the latter is a mode of governance (Chan, 2014). Thus, also when intended to fulfil the same purpose – to implement sustainable development objectives – the roles and meaning ascribed to these MAPs differ. Similarly, the advantages often ascribed to them are mirrored in the "enormous heterogeneity" of MAPs existing today (Byiers, Guadagno, & Karaki, 2015) that provide collective goods and enhance the sharing of resources, competences, risks and responsibilities (Bäckstrand et al., 2012; Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014; Thorpe & Maestre, 2015).

Consequently, partnerships are embedded in different contexts and in networks that require a close analysis of the political intentions linked to them and of their specificities.

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5   This number of partnerships has rapidly grown since. As of May 2018, for example, 3,828 "Partnerships for the SDGs" are registered with the UN (2018).

Independent of their understanding as instruments or modes of governance, these elaborations further imply that evaluations of the effectiveness of partnerships that are based on comparisons are difficult: Aside from the various contexts in which partnerships are formed and operate, different partnerships have different functions and relate to different sectors of significance for sustainable development approaches. More generally, it is also problematic to measure the impacts of partnerships, as governmental changes are usually not exclusively attributed to specific interventions and vice versa; varied domestic and local settings may also influence how partnerships operate (Chan, 2014). To deal with this problem, some scholars, such as Beisheim and Liese (2014), focus in their studies on the objectives set by the partnerships themselves. However, as Pattberg and Widerberg (2014, p. 14) point out, often "multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development have vague and diffuse goals and lack appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms"; also in the case of the Johannesburg partnerships, which rely on voluntary action, no benchmarks for goal attainment were given (Bäckstrand et al., 2012).

Despite these limitations for comparisons, scholars focussing specifically on registered Partnerships for Sustainable Development evaluated the effectiveness of these partnerships to be "mixed at best" (Beisheim, 2012; Beisheim & Liese, 2014; Chan, 2014; Kindornay & Reilly-King, 2013; Loveridge & Wilson, 2017; Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014). Aside from a few exceptions, in many cases, self-defined objectives were not met (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014), and often partnerships "hardly improved" the problems they were supposed to address (Biermann & Pattberg, 2012b, p. 11). Instead, they are seen as having "opened a space for some countries to avoid new binding agreements" and as having often mirrored preferences of the more powerful (leading) actors, particularly in contexts with weak regulation (Chan, 2014, p. 290).[6] Hence, partnerships also give rise to the risks of reproducing patterns of domination, exclusion and the geographical asymmetry in global governance (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014).

Even though individual performance levels differ, in the field of development cooperation, the debates on MAPs and on the inclusion of private-sector actors encouraged the formation of polarised perspectives. This is why in the debate on multi-stakeholder networks, it is particularly researchers from the field of global governance who often argue that the picture of whether partnerships with private-sector actors succeed or not should not be "painted with a broad brush". Instead, they demand a differentiated consideration of the layers and multiple factors that determine the outcome of partnership initiatives (i.a. Beisheim & Simon, 2017; Treichel et al., 2016).

It is further often argued that institutional oversight provided by a "proper meta-governance" – for example by multi-stakeholder platforms – improves the accountability and effectiveness of MAPs with private-sector actors in development cooperation (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014, p. 37; also Heinrich, 2013, and Newell, 2005): Partnerships usually do

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6   Various studies have shown that, depending on the sectors MAPs address, the actor constellations (few or many collaborating partners, homogenous or heterogeneous group) and the governance structures of MAPs, collaborating actors exercise their roles differently (see i.a. Treichel et al., 2016, p. 24). In this respect, some studies have found that, for some MAPs, "local authorities are crucial players" (Beisheim, Liese, & Vosseler, 2014, p. 121), while others point out examples in which a financially powerful actor "took the lead and crucially influenced [the MAP's] institutional design in line with its own preferences" (Beisheim, Liese, & Vosseler, 2014, p. 114; Roemer-Mahler, 2014).

not exist in isolation, and if they are active in the same issue and geographic areas, they "may compete for dominance, or partnerships adopt collaborative strategies" (Chan, 2014, p. 99). In this regard, platforms that pool and assess information on actors collaborating in MAPs and on their practices to reach shared objectives support the latter and limit the risk of competing and duplicating efforts.[7] This is why platforms are seen as "form[ing] an essential part of the 'infrastructure' that is necessary to scale-up post-2015 development" (Reid et al., 2014, p. 4). Indeed, experiences indicate that multi-stakeholder platforms support the coherence of different strategies and policies across actors and sectors, and that initiatives turn out to be more effective (Adams & Martens, 2015). But how can platforms incentivise and regulate MAPs and private-sector actors in practice?

2 Lessons learnt and conceptual considerations

MAPs and multi-stakeholder platforms are based on the premise that the problems they address cannot be solved using unilateral actions and interventions (Treichel et al., 2016). Similar to MAPs, however, the organisational structures, objectives and membership of multi-stakeholder platforms vary. This heterogeneity also determines the success of strategies[8] to incentivise and regulate multi-actor partnerships and PSE in development cooperation. In order to structure the heterogeneous field of multi-stakeholder platforms engaged in development cooperation, in this discussion paper platforms are categorised under consideration of two dimensions that correspond to the research questions[9] raised in the beginning: (i) their affiliation with international organisations and (ii) their regional scope.

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7   Such meta-governance could also avoid a problem already learnt of from evaluations of the Partnerships for Sustainable Development: the registration of "empty shell" partnerships, which do not actively contribute to sustainable development objectives or the overlapping of memberships and functions and the double-counting of impacts ascribed to different initiatives (Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014).

8   "Incentivising strategies" are based on the understanding that certain structural factors as well as individual interests can enhance collaboration among different actor groups. In contrast, the term "regulating strategies" expresses the need to secure the effectiveness of the modes of cooperation that collaborating actors commit to.

9   How are networks and platforms such as the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation able to incentivise the engagement of private-sector actors in development cooperation? How are such networks and platforms able to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by improving the effectiveness of MAPs with private-sector actors?

Figure 2:	Exemplary multi-stakeholder platforms		
	Platforms under the auspices of international organisations	**Independent platforms**	
	Example: The United Nations Global Compact	*Example:* Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance	*Examples:* GPEDC, African Marine Waste Network, Alianza por la Sostenibilidad
	The Global Compact is a much-discussed example of a multi-stakeholder platform supporting the implementation of the SDGs under the auspices of the UN. It is known as "the world's largest global corporate sustainability initiative, with over 8,000 companies and 4,000 non-business participants based in over 160 countries" (UNGC, 2014, p. 7).	**Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, received much attention as a platform that was created outside the UN system "because of the dissatisfaction of some of the major donors (primarily the USA) with the supposedly poor performance of the UN development organizations" even though the platform is "now using UNDP and other UN institutions as their main implementing agencies" (Adams & Martens, 2015, p. 48; see i.a. Beisheim & Liese, 2014; Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014).	The **GPEDC** was formed to complement the international aid-effectiveness agenda. However, it is not only composed of states but also of non-state actors. The **African Marine Waste Network** is a platform for resource- and knowledge-sharing that concentrates specifically on the African region. **Alianza por la Sostenibilidad** operates under the auspices of the Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarollo. It is an example for initiatives explicitly aiming at encouraging dialogue with actors from the private sector.
Global, regional, national, local platforms	The United Nations Global Compact addresses the *global* level.	Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance operates at the *global* level.	The GPEDC considers itself a *global* platform. The African Marine Waste Network addresses the *regional* level. Alianza por la Sostenibilidad operates at the *national* level.

Source: Author

Other typologies distinguish platforms according to their core functions when examining whether they encourage actors to finance or transfer knowledge in sustainable development initiatives (Romero, 2015; Vervynckt & Romero, 2017). Similar to their functions, also the modalities of cooperation and engagement (for private-sector actors) differ. They may include technical and financial assistance, capacity development, information-sharing and policy dialogue. Furthermore, depending on the institutional set-up of platforms and their

focus areas, collaborating individuals and multi-actor partnerships are also reviewed differently. In particular, multi-actor partnerships that are linked to the United Nations (UN) and include actors from UN agencies, for example, are reviewed in relation to the SDGs they address (UNOSSC [United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation], 2016) but do not necessarily consider the effectiveness of MAPs.

Figure 3: Exemplary MAPs in SSC and triangular cooperation that collaborate with UN agencies


Source: Author, based on UNOSSC (2016)
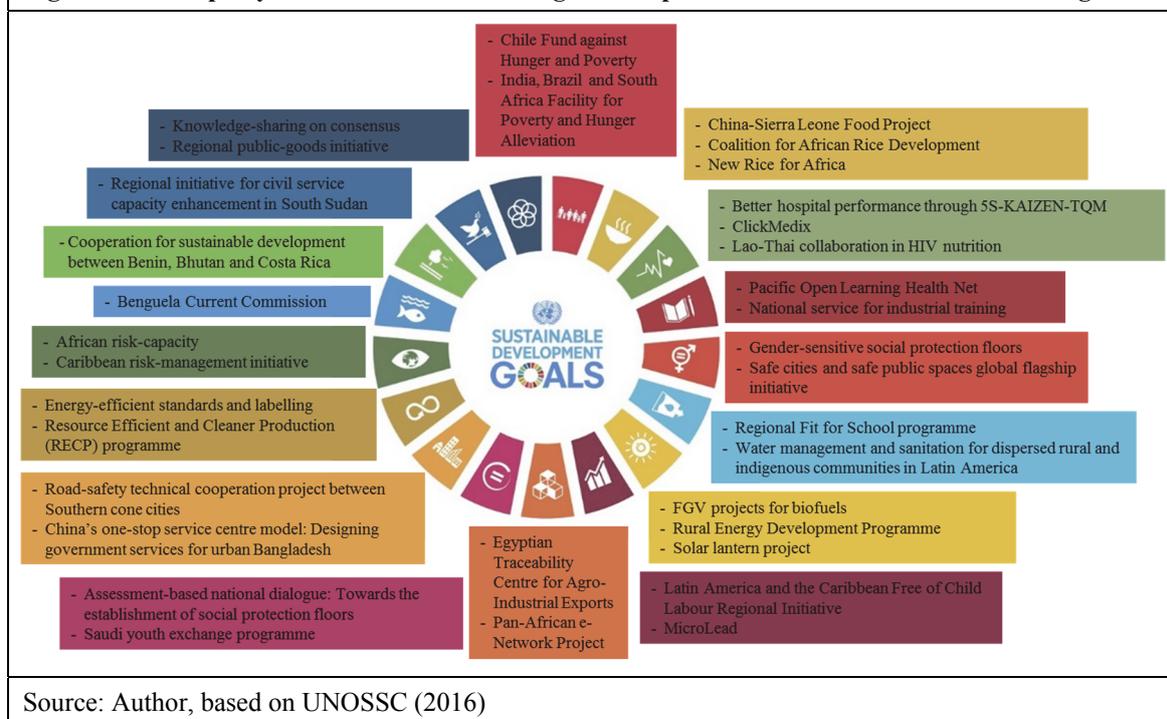
Figure 3 is based on a report published by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (2016), in which exemplary MAPs for "South-South and triangular cooperation" are grouped according to the SDGs to which they relate. These MAPs can, of course, also be classified according to other typologies of MAPs, for example, when emphasising different modalities of cooperation.[10]

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10 The use of a similar typology that reflects the main parameters of MAPs globally agreed on allows for a better comparison and supports the identification of gaps and potentials that are of significance for the formation of new MAP initiatives to avoid the duplication of efforts and enhance the use of synergies. As Table 4 shows, for example, none of the MAPs considered in the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation report put a particular focus on standard-setting, which thus seems to be a niche for MAPs in SSC and triangular cooperation. However, similar to the plethora of definitions used for actors, MAPs, and South-South and triangular cooperation, all these categories serve the purpose of highlighting priorities that collaborating partners agree on. As negotiations on these priorities are always context-related, unified categorisations will likely fail to mirror the respective heterogeneities and, similarly, the evolution of priorities pursued by MAPs. Although unified categorisations of MAPs may thus support snapshot comparisons, they will most likely fail to mirror the negotiation processes that are of significance for the development of scenarios concerning their change over time.

Table 1: **Regrouping of exemplary MAPs in SSC and triangular cooperation that collaborate with UN agencies**

| Main focus	MAP	Private-sector actors	Target groups	Level
Service provision	Coalition for African Rice Development	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa	Households, agri-culture initiatives at the national and regional levels	Regional (sub-Saharan Africa)
Knowledge-exchange	Chile Fund against Hunger and Poverty			Regional (Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific)
Policy dialogue	New Rice for Africa	African Development Bank, the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research, the Rockefeller Foundation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development	Farmers, communities, research institutions, NGOs	Regional (Africa)
Financing partnerships	ClickMedix (also technical support)	Medtronic, Ashoka, Western Diabetes Institute, Tata Trust, Cartier, Toyota, Grameen	Healthcare providers	Global
Source: Author				

When considering the MAPs that are linked to platforms from the UN system, it should be noted that the literature on MAPs argues more often in favour of in-country platforms to tackle context-specific problems hindering sustainable development and to enhance policy coherence at the country level (i.a. FCSSC, 2017). Ideally, such in-country platforms should reflect the Busan principle of "country ownership", and their implementation should be supported by "the national government and all relevant stakeholders" (Freeman, Wisheart, Hester, Prescott, & Stibbe, 2016, p. 34). Although different examples for in-country platforms that intend "to broker and support" multi-actor Partnerships for Sustainable Development can be found (Reid et al., 2014, p. 13), systematic research on such in-country platforms (and their relevance for SSC) is basically non-existent.[11]

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11 ALIARSE (La Fundación para la Sostenibilidad y la Equidad, formed in Costa Rica), which aims at enhancing knowledge-creation and -sharing to improve projects devoted to education, health, environmental concerns and local development, is a platform that supports collaboration among (domestic and foreign) actors from public and private sectors as well as civil society organisations (CSOs). In general, in-country platforms may contribute to – but are not always explicitly devoted to – implementing the SDGs. They may also focus primarily on providing services of use for private-sector actors and, thus, support instead private-sector development rather than private-sector engagement in development cooperation. An example of this is the "Business Partners for Development Facility Hubs" programme, which supports the formation of in-country "hubs" or platforms in, among other places, Zambia and Colombia. The programme was initiated by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Department for International Development (UK) and The Partnering Initiative. The platforms are hosted by ANDI, the national association of businesses in Colombia, and by African Management Services Company, "a pan-African private-sector development Group that provides bespoke human capital solutions" (African Management Services Company, 2017). Thus, also with regards to in-country platforms in SSC, further research needs to differentiate between private-sector development initiatives and partnerships for sustainable development cooperation that include private-sector actors.

2.1 Global governance and multi-actor partnerships: central lessons learnt

For all platforms mentioned above, the development of regulating- and incentivising-strategies is shaped by the following dilemma: Although strong regulatory frameworks are more likely to diminish the interests of actors to participate, weak regulation may, in turn, facilitate abuse that can result in the failure of MAPs to meet their sustainable development objectives (Beisheim & Ellersiek, 2017; Davis, 2011). Finding the "right balance" in PSE is a challenging undertaking, in particular, because of the different (and sometimes opposite) logic of actions and related views that determine business contexts and the policy field of development cooperation (see also Heinrich-Fernandes, 2017). The understanding of the concept "sustainability" is a notable example of this problem, which also relates to the ontological differences of the business context and the field of development cooperation: In the business context, private-sector actors are responsible to their shareholders, who relate sustainability primarily to the economic growth of (their) corporations (Davis, 2011). Therefore, investments are mostly made in areas that are expected to be profitable (as profitable as possible) in order to remain competitive – when taking other corporate actors into consideration – and secure the "sustainable development" of the corporation itself. In contrast, in the field of development cooperation – and specifically in the context of the 2030 Agenda – sustainability relates to the combination of social, economic and environmental dimensions and to different actors (or actor groups) and countries located in the "Global South and North". Accordingly, and as the SDGs exemplify, a holistic understanding of sustainability not only includes actors from the private sector but also encompasses a much greater number of factors to be considered in MAP initiatives aimed at implementing sustainable development objectives.

To integrate and bridge these different perspectives, the more policy-oriented research on multi-stakeholder networks offers various "guidelines", "handbooks", "guidebooks" as well as "tools" and/or "toolkits" that suggest other steps for MAPs and multi-stakeholder platforms to generally enhance the inclusion of private-sector actors and their effectiveness, irrespective of their affiliations and regional scope (i.a. Brouwer, Woodhill, Hemmati, Verhoosel, & Vugt, 2015; Prescott & Stibbe, 2017; Tennyson, 2011; UNGC, 2013). In contrast to researchers who argue in favour of incentivising- and regulating-strategies that derive from context-specific, case-by-case assessments, these studies repeatedly recommend the following central actions:

Figure 4: Central actions to incentivise and regulate PSE

Clarify the **roles private-sector actors** are expected to perform

Encourage **transparent** and **inclusive dialogues**

Select the most **suitable private-sector actors** considering objectives of MAPs

Clarify and specify **regulating frameworks** early on

Source: Author
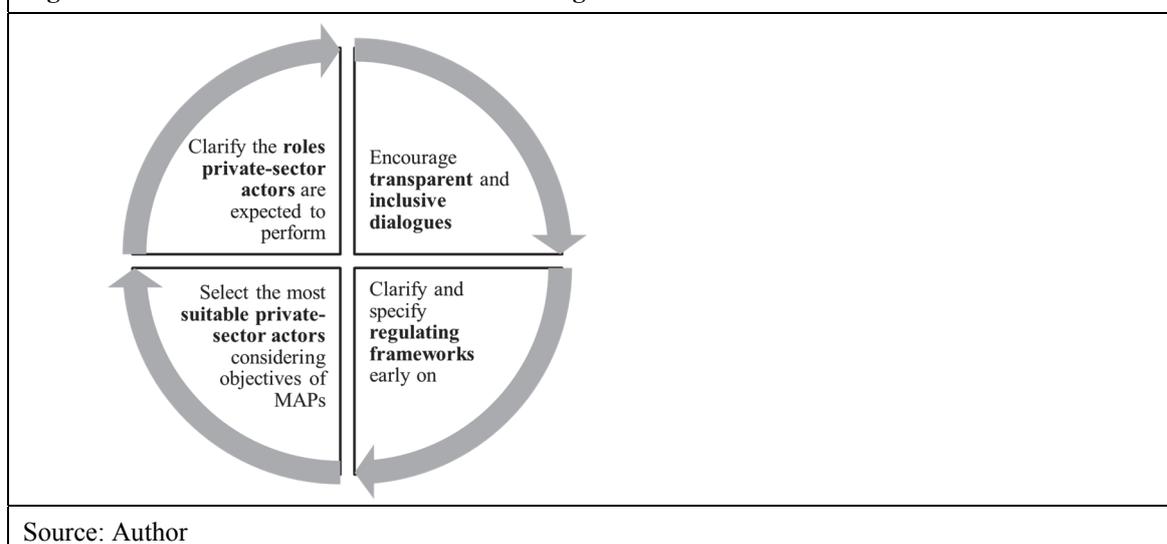
Although the recommended actions seem to be clear-cut suggestions at first glance, they are connected to more complex questions that platforms need to answer when trying to pursue them (see Table 2). Both the implementation of strategies deriving from case-by-case assessments and of these central actions thus requires institutional oversight, which is why, regardless of the perspective, also more policy-oriented researchers demand "a proper" meta-governance. Such meta-governance is important for reflecting on how different actors pursue the implementation of these strategies and how, in this regard, MAPs integrate and balance different approaches and conditions. By pooling and assessing such information, a functioning meta-governance shall improve the accountability and the effectiveness of MAPs.

Table 2: Central actions and related conceptual questions	
Central actions	**Conceptual questions**
Clarify the roles private-sector actors are expected to perform	Who is involved in deciding the roles private-sector actors shall perform?
Encourage transparent and inclusive dialogues	How can platforms encourage transparent and inclusive dialogues that are based on trust and respect if relationships among actors are shaped by power asymmetries, if actors have "a shared history", and if interests and possibilities of influence differ?
Clarify and specify regulating frameworks early on	How are negotiations on the regulating framework conducted? How can regulating frameworks be clarified and specified early on when actors are encouraged to join at a later stage and when conditions change?
Select the most suitable private-sector actors when considering the objectives of MAPs	How is the "most suitable partner" selected? What are the criteria, if objectives of MAPs linked to a platform differ, as well as the meaning and priority ascribed to concepts such as sustainability?
Source: Author	

2.2 Conceptual considerations to support multi-actor partnerships and private-sector engagement in development cooperation

But what might such meta-governance look like? Of the different approaches discussed in the field of international relations – and specifically in the context of global governance research – the concept of orchestration, in particular, has gained prominence. Orchestration:

- addresses the dimension of leadership that transnational, multi-stakeholder networks may provide,

- considers functional differentiation across a multi-actor system (Búrca, Keohane, & Sabel, 2013), and in this regard

- corresponds to the universalist framing of the 2030 Agenda because of the pluralist global governance view that the concept of orchestration is bound to.

The concept of orchestration, as promoted by Abbott et al., is a model of indirect governance (Abbott, Genschel, Snidal, & Zangl, 2016), according to which orchestrators (e.g. multi-stakeholder platforms) provide ideational and material support to like-minded intermediaries (e.g. MAPs), who then address individual targets or target groups (e.g. private-sector actors). In general, orchestrators and intermediaries cooperate to achieve a

shared goal that they are unable to achieve on their own. Orchestrators benefit from collaborating with intermediaries who may provide direct access to targets, material resources, information and technical expertise and who already have strong relationships, with states and private actors for example, that are shaped by trust in, and respect for, the "targets" (Abbott, Genschel, Snidal, & Zangl, 2012, p. 3). Intermediaries, on the other hand, are able to take advantage of the exchange of information and cooperation with other intermediaries involved that are also of potential interest to the targets or target groups they wish to engage with (e.g. concerning the technical expertise of other actors from the business sector). Under the auspices of an international organisation or platform, intermediaries thus receive access to a network of intermediaries and may further influence discourses within the network (e.g. by shaping the language of high-level documents to transmit norms and policy ideas; Pegram, 2014, p. 4; VanDeveer, 2005).

Platforms providing orchestration further contribute to a balancing of interests – a typical challenge ascribed to multi-stakeholder cooperative models (Sahan, Tanburn, Heinrich-Fernandes, & Loveridge, 2016). Instead of determining one strategy shared by all collaborating partners, the concept of orchestration supports the integration of different approaches and processes to achieve a shared goal (Caplan, 2013). In line with researchers demanding the consideration of context-specific particularities, the concept thus recognises that partners have different visions and means of how to reach a common goal. As it is up to the orchestrators to set the goal and the related agenda, however, orchestrators are not apolitical or impartial and obtain more powerful positions when compared to the individual and collaborating intermediaries.

When transferring the concept of orchestration to the conceptual questions connected with the recommended "central actions" outlined below, as "orchestrators", multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the GPEDC, may encourage dialogue among different actors or groups by bringing together intermediaries operating across various (global, national, sub-national) levels. In this regard, platforms applying orchestration take advantage of the relationships that intermediaries have with targets and of their experiences with them in different contexts, and they thereby overcome gaps of trust[12] and respect between a platform and the targets they intend to address. Intermediaries, on the other side, are able to influence platforms and targets and use their knowledge to inform, for instance, negotiations on an "ideal regulatory framework" that may be more effective in the sense "that all partners are accountable without over-regulating them" (OECD, 2008, p. 125). Platforms applying orchestration may thus increase the effectiveness of MAPs (as intermediaries)[13] by

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12 Gaps of trust not only relate to the intentions of private-sector actors – whose collaboration in development cooperation is often considered a method to "greenwash" harmful business practices or to "bluewash" partnerships under the auspices of UN programmes (Beisheim & Liese, 2014) – but also apply to other governmental and non-governmental actors. In the past, it has been pointed out, for instance, that "[d]eveloping countries, in particular, often object to increases in the influence of nongovernmental organizations in international fora because they view these groups as being more favourable to Northern agendas, perspectives, and interests" (Biermann & Pattberg, 2012a, p. 268).

13 Particularly when considering collaborations with private-sector actors, researchers have pointed out that platforms can be "an efficient shortcut to talk with business, rather than trying to talk to different businesses individually". They can help non-corporate actors to improve "their knowledge about businesses and business issues", also beyond the context of development cooperation (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, p. 26). At the same time, platforms provide private-sector actors other possibilities to address and solve problems "affecting their businesses" (Loveridge & Wilson, 2017, p. 26).

assessing processes in which MAPs are involved that relate, among other things, to agreeing on shared goals, the distribution of funds and the overall management (such as monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning; see Pattberg & Widerberg, 2014, p. 26).

Figure 5:   Concept of orchestration
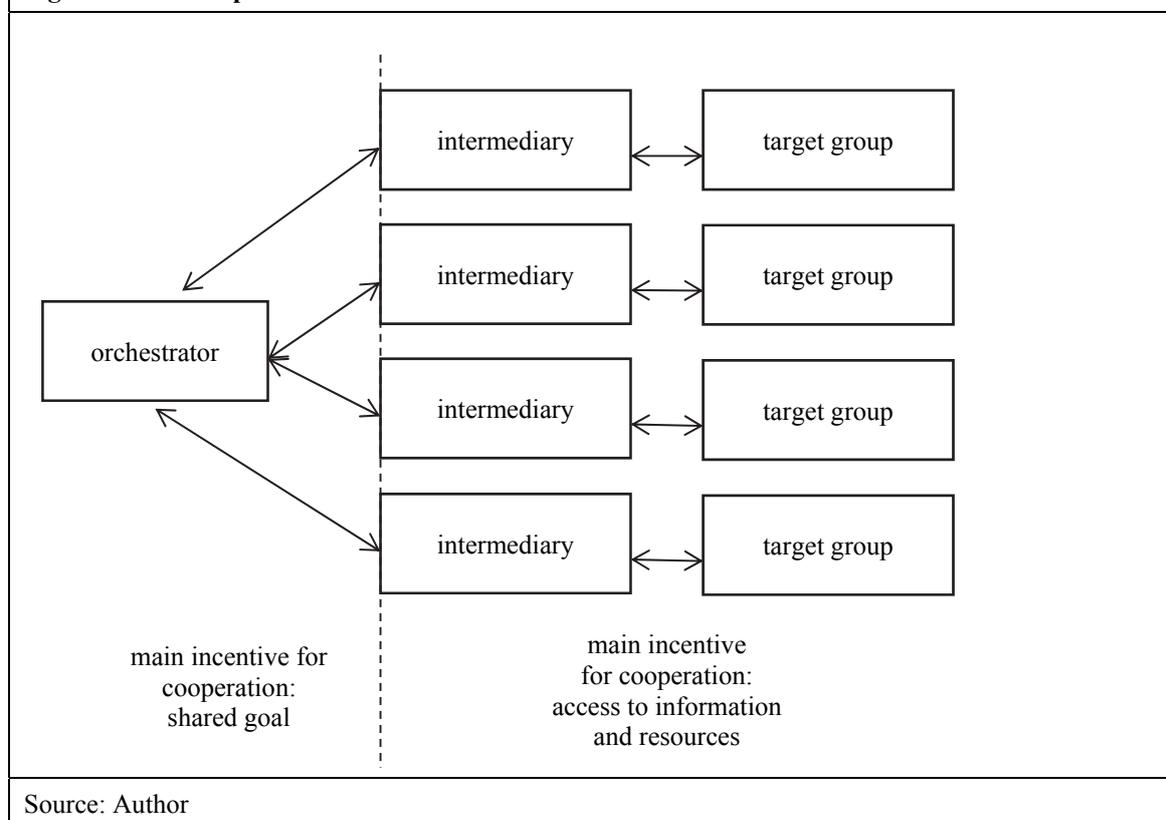
Source: Author

Overall, the concept of orchestration has been reviewed as an approach "to foster global networks" (Klingebiel & Paulo, 2015) and as a concept that is particularly "associated with activities by international organisations" (Chan & Pauw, 2014, p. 6). In the context of development cooperation, and concerning the implementation of the SDGs, orchestration provided by platforms is seen as an instrument to mobilise contributions to global sustainable development, such as the co-creation of knowledge (Klingebiel & Paulo, 2015). Specifically when considering MAPs with middle-income countries (MICs), it has further been argued that orchestration "could strengthen integrated problem-solving at the interface of domestic challenges in MICs and transboundary or global challenges" (Klingebiel & Paulo, 2016, p. 10). In development cooperation – and in contrast to sector-specific and bi-lateral cooperation – such an approach is thus expected to contribute to "a *global* and comprehensive outlook on sustainable development" (Klingebiel & Paulo, 2016, p. 9, emphasis added).[14]

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14 More precisely, the authors argue that orchestration "can be used to broker collective action in and with MICs to support domestic reforms and global engagement in view of implementing the Agenda 2030" (Klingebiel & Paulo, 2016).

Yet, the concept of orchestration also has its limitations. For example, it does not address challenges for MAPs and platforms arising from conflicting ownership:[15] MAPs are based on the principle that "actors from the public sector, the private sector and civil society […] cooperate transparently and *as equals*" (BMZ, 2011, p. 4; emphasis added). In development cooperation more generally, and specifically in the context of the 2030 Agenda, states – as signatories of international agreements – are understood, in particular, as obtaining ownership as actors that are accountable and have "the authority and mandate to establish country development policy and plans, albeit with multi-stakeholder consultation" (Freeman et al., 2016, p. 12). In this regard, also an enabling environment for PSE is believed to depend on "an active state" providing adequate incentives and regulation (Freeman et al., 2016, p. 12). Consequently, the legitimacy of platforms that operate as orchestrating entities beyond the national level can be challenged (also because they are not bound to a coherent demos; Bäckstrand et al., 2012) if they do not offer a "shared leadership with a *central role for government*" (Freeman et al., 2016, pp. 11-12; emphasis added). This practice, though, goes along with the provision of collaborating actors having an unequal say, which likely results in the domination of one set of priorities and interests over the other. Thus, this creates additional challenges in ensuring a commitment (particularly of non-state actors) for interventions proposed by platforms. To overcome this problem in partnerships with private-sector actors, a political commitment "at a high level" is regarded "crucial for assuring private actors that commitment remains over the long run and that political risks will be minimised" (OECD, 2008, pp. 13-14).

3 Potentials and challenges for enhancing partnerships with private-sector actors and their effectiveness: the case of the GPEDC

How can multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the GPEDC, enhance partnerships with private-sector actors and their effectiveness in practice?

First of all, if the concept of orchestration is transferred to the case of the GPEDC, the GPEDC needs to be considered both an intermediary and an orchestrator. In the global architecture of development cooperation, for example, the GPEDC takes the role of an intermediary. Although the GPEDC does not operate under the auspices of any international organisation or platform such as the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the GPEDC is widely perceived as contributing to the work of the HLPF on sustainable

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15 Ownership addresses two (connected) dimensions, in particular: "commitment to policies" and the "control over the process and outcome of choosing policies" (Whitfield, 2009, p. 5), which can be related to different actor groups, states and businesses as much as to multi-stakeholder formats in general. In its definition of country ownership, the World Bank states, for example: "Country ownership means that there is sufficient political support within a country to implement its developmental strategy, including the projects, programmes, and policies for which external partners provide assistance" (World Bank, 2008). For actors from the private sector, on the other hand, ownership means obtaining the decision-making power concerning businesses' processes and profit-sharing, which vary, depending on the structure of private-sector actors (e.g. in contrast to state-owned business cooperatives or employee-owned businesses, which are based on stakeholder ownership).

development governance[16] – "the main platform for follow-up action on the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development" (in which, for example, findings from the GPEDC's monitoring round feed into; Klingebiel & Xiaoyun, 2016; UN, 2015a). Moreover, the GPEDC benefits from ideational and material support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which offer strategic advice for the secretariat of the GPEDC. The states contributing to UNDP and the OECD also provide most of the GPEDC's funding. Furthermore, the GPEDC replaced the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (hosted by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC); Abdel-Malek, 2014), and it is committed to international frameworks such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and to the principles adopted in the Paris Declaration (i.a. to country-ownership and mutual accountability). As an orchestrator, on the other side, the GPEDC provides a platform for knowledge-exchange and learning that individuals and MAPs (such as the Global Partnership Initiatives – GPIs) can use on a voluntary basis. To achieve the shared goal of advancing the effectiveness of development efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, the GPEDC adopted a monitoring framework that intends to hold partnering governments accountable and shall also mirror the existing environment for inclusive development partnerships.

This double-role also influences the GPEDC's scope of action. Its commitment to international frameworks and the respective principles, for example, requires the GPEDC to prioritise the say of governmental actors over non-state actors. In other words: Despite its integrative order, as an orchestrating multi-stakeholder platform, the GPEDC is also bound, among other things, to the principle of country ownership. Consequently:

1. as a multi-stakeholder platform, the GPEDC does not have any legally binding force (which also explains the voluntary format of its monitoring framework);

2. only governmental representatives – no (intermediary) individual or multi-actor partnership – can become an executive Co-Chair and represent the GPEDC (even though the implementation of a non-executive Co-Chair representing non-state actors is currently being discussed).

Governmental representatives further form the majority of the Steering Committee, the GPEDC's main decision-making body, which identifies the strategic priorities (its agenda/programme of work) and coordinates the GPEDC. Because of this unequal representation of different constituencies – and in addition to the political power that orchestrators have per se – the work of the Steering Committee is shaped in particular by the interests and priorities of governmental representatives, or, in other words: The GPEDC follows a "country heavy, global light" approach (Abdel-Malek, 2014).

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16 The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development and is considered "a key body for sustainable development governance" (Beisheim, 2015b). According to Resolution 67/290, the HLPF is responsible for providing "political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development, follow[ing] up and review[ing] progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, enhanc[ing] the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels and hav[ing] a focused, dynamic and action-oriented agenda, ensuring the appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges" (UN General Assembly, 2013, p. 3). Overall, the HLPF can be considered the central organ for 2030 Agenda accountability (Mahn Jones, 2017, p. 23).

Box 2:   What is the GPEDC?

The GPEDC as a multi-stakeholder platform

The GPEDC is a multi-actor partnership and multi-stakeholder platform initiated at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to implement the actions and commitments adopted in "The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation" agreement. The GPEDC generally aims at advancing "the effectiveness of development efforts" (GPEDC, 2017a). Mirroring its understanding of effectiveness,[17] collaboration between the different actors engaged in the GPEDC is based on the principles of "country ownership of development priorities by partner countries; a focus on results; inclusive development partnerships; and transparency and mutual accountability" (GPEDC, 2016a, p. 5).

Mandate of the GPEDC as a multi-actor partnership

The GPEDC has the mandate to:

> [...] contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and regional strategies for sustainable development by promoting effective development cooperation geared towards ending all forms of poverty and reducing inequality, advancing sustainable development and ensuring that no-one is left behind. (GPEDC, 2016a, 27; emphasis added; Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, 2012)

To fulfil this mandate, the GPEDC operates as a platform focussing on knowledge-exchange and learning that specifically promotes "action-oriented dialogue among relevant stakeholders" (GPEDC, 2016a).

Governance of the GPEDC
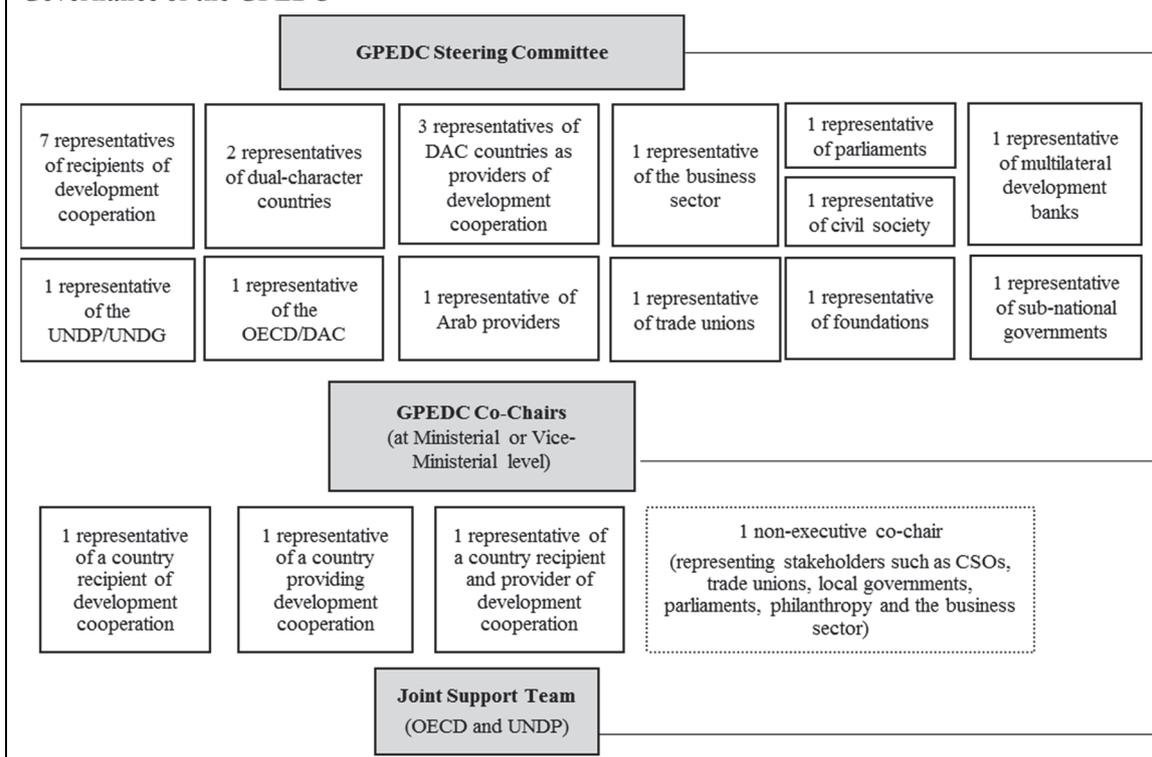
"Effective development co-operation, as a term, goes beyond ODA and captures aid and development effectiveness issues related to all types of development co-operation–financial and non-financial, public and private. It relates directly to the development cooperation effectiveness principles included in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in OP 58" (GPEDC, 2015).

German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

The GPEDC is composed of three central governing bodies: The GPEDC Steering Committee, the GPEDC Co-Chairs (who also contribute to the Steering Committee) and the Joint Support Team (JST). Although the *Steering Committee* is the GPEDC's main decision-making body (members are nominated by the respective constituencies) that provides "the strategic leadership and co-ordination" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 27), identifies strategic priorities, sets the agenda and meets twice a year to discuss the implementation of the agreed Programme of Work, also the Co-Chairs and the JST have core governing functions. The *Co-Chairs*, for example, represent the GPEDC and "ensure that momentum for implementing agreed effective development cooperation commitments is accelerated at the highest political levels among all stakeholder groups" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 27). The *Joint Support Team* (sourced by the OECD and UNDP) has the primary function to support the GPEDC by implementing its commitments and to contribute "to the substance of the Global Partnership's work" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 29). More specifically, it is the responsibility of the JST to "develop, refine and implement the global methodology for monitoring the implementation of the agreed commitments" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 29). The central concepts on which the work of the GPEDC is grounded are thus selected, evaluated and developed by the JST, which obtains an important *Deutungsmacht*. Even though its reports and analytical work are also discussed with, and by, the GPEDC Steering Committee, the work conducted by the JST is used as a basis to "inform political dialogue" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 29).
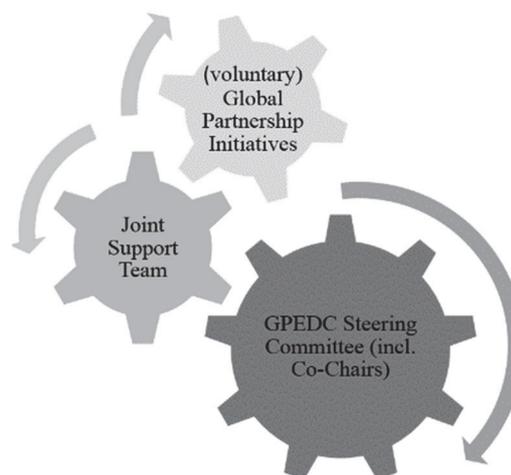
Members of the GPEDC

Aside from the 20-member Steering Committee, the three Co-Chairs and the staff of the JST, 161 countries and 56 international organisations "have endorsed the Global Partnership" (as of November 2017) and the Second High-Level Meeting of the GPEDC was attended by "over 4,500 diverse stakeholders from 154 countries" (GPEDC, 2017a). The membership of the Steering Committee shall mirror the inclusive approach of the GPEDC; in particular, the proposal of a fourth, non-executive Co-Chair from the group of non-state stakeholders builds on the idea to "amplify the true multi-stakeholder nature of the Global Partnership" (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 27).

Source for figures: Author

3.1 Significance of development effectiveness, MAPs, PSE and SSC for the GPEDC

Due to its unique focus on effectiveness (GPEDC, 2017c, p. 5) and the partnership approach that includes non-state actors, the GPEDC – as a global platform in development cooperation – is perceived as having "started promisingly" (Bracho, 2017, p. 5). The GPEDC's monitoring framework, in particular, is considered to be a "jewel in the crown" (Bhattacharya, in press): Despite all criticism of the framework (DIE, BMZ, & GPEDC, 2017), the GPEDC is the only entity that tries to hold the different actors engaged in development cooperation accountable on a global scale.

More recently, however, the GPEDC has been reviewed and found to be not meeting its ambitions, specifically with regards to its inclusive and effectiveness approaches. It is perceived as "being largely shaped by an OECD-DAC led process" that lacks "political legitimacy" due, in fact, to the low level of engagement of non-state actors (DIE et al., 2017, p. 4) and because it "has largely failed to integrate the 'Southern providers'" (Bracho, 2017,

p. 5). One reason for this criticism relates to structural challenges that the GPEDC and similar platforms face when intending to include private-sector actors and partners from the "Global South" on an equal basis, which is discussed in detail below in Section 3.2. Another reason for this criticism is the young age of the GPEDC and the early stage at which the GPEDC finds itself concerning its contributions to an enhanced PSE in development cooperation and to South-South cooperation: In April 2017, the Steering Committee endorsed, for the first time, a Programme of Work that specified the targets and responsibilities for the 2017-2018 timeframe.[18] Among the six "Strategic Outputs", which are interrelated when considering the GPEDC's overall effectiveness objective, Strategic Output 4 ("Scaling-up private-sector engagement leveraged through development co-operation") explicitly addresses private-sector actors,[19] whereas Strategic Output 5 ("Learning from different modalities of development co-operation") also includes SSC (GPEDC, 2017b, p. 5). Although both workstreams are based on different objectives, they overlap regarding their intention to enhance the inclusiveness of the GPEDC concerning different actors and principles of significance in development cooperation. To meet its objectives and respond to the aforementioned criticism in this regard, the GPEDC needs to strengthen three particular self-defined advantages (outlined i.a. in the Nairobi Outcome Document) in the future.

First, by following a global approach, the GPEDC considers itself as providing unique access to (state and non-state) partners. However, to many, the GPEDC is still unknown (DIE et al., 2017). This is enforced by the high number of multi-stakeholder platforms and MAPs that already exist (Treichel et al., 2016, p. 19) and by the missing legitimacy ascribed to the GPEDC, among others, by actors from the emerging economies. As the Co-Chairs are tasked to lead outreach and to ensure political commitments at the highest levels, the approval of a non-executive and non-state Co-Chair likely supports the GPEDC's visibility and engagement with private-sector actors, whereas from the viewpoint of emerging economies, the executive Co-Chairs would need to increase their efforts to engage with high-level officials in these countries (Interview, November 2017).

The GPEDC may also enhance its visibility by specifying its unique organisational structure and objectives in comparison to other platforms and partnerships and by clarifying how the GPEDC explicitly enhances the formation and effectiveness of MAPs. For example, how does it contribute towards enhancing MAPs with private-sector actors at a global scale and in MAPs that focus on specific thematic contexts? What sectors do these MAPs relate to, and what are the modalities of cooperation that MAPs collaborating with the GPEDC are bound to (knowledge- and resource-sharing, policymaking, etc.)? What is the GPEDC's value added in comparison to other multi-stakeholder platforms (e.g. provided by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the World Bank, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development)? Particularly those researchers from think tanks based in countries from the

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18 Researchers from emerging economies reviewed the Programme of Work as mostly representing the interests of the DAC. They argue that the Programme of Work "is based on rules, regulations and ethics set by OECD-DAC donor" and, thus, underpins the impression that the GPEDC is instead a "DAC Global Partnership" (DIE et al., 2017, p. 3).

19 Specifically with regards to private-sector engagement, the GPEDC has the ambition "to support responsible, inclusive and sustainable business practices; and support structured dialogue and partnership to promote these approaches […] support the business sector to adopt transparent and accountable management systems of public and private funds, and to account for the social, environmental and economic impacts of its value chain" (GPEDC, 2016a).

"Global South" criticised that the GPEDC seems to duplicate efforts, for example, those of the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DIE et al., 2017, p. 1).

To highlight its differences in comparison to the Development Cooperation Forum, the GPEDC could point, for example,

- to its monitoring framework, which can also function as a strong element to incentivise the collaboration of private-sector actors that may find the GPEDC's assessment helpful to identify the most suitable MAP to partner within the growing "jungle of MAPs";
- to the inclusive and non-bureaucratic format for collaboration in GPIs (GPEDC, 2017d; Mahn Jones, 2017); and
- to the still flexible and adaptable structure of the GPEDC (Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1870f.).

Second, although the GPEDC is one of the very few platforms focussing on effectiveness in development cooperation, this advantage has not really materialised in practice until now. This is illustrated by the widespread criticism of (a) the GPEDC's monitoring framework, and (b) the lack of effectiveness concerning the GPEDC's internal processes.

Regarding the former: The GPEDC needs to refine its monitoring framework (as it is currently doing) and include indicators that are more adaptable to realities in different contexts.[20] Specifically, the different principles and development philosophies that collaborating actors follow in SSC need to be considered in this regard.[21] Moreover, the various meanings ascribed to terms such as "private-sector engagement" and "multi-actor partnership" should be recognised (on PPPs see e.g. Romero, 2015, p. 5); these meanings determine how national laws and policies are framed and which are of particular significance for actors willing to engage in MAPs in – and with – other countries.

With regards to the latter: The GPEDC itself is not subject to systematic monitoring, which is why the risk of duplicating efforts and not using synergies is high (e.g. not considering the reports already published under its auspices and shared objectives among the GPIs). The JST oversees all central processes in the GPEDC. It should thus be supported to provide regular evaluation reports on the GPEDC's work, which could then be used to enhance the effectiveness of the GPEDC itself and its use for other platforms (such as the HLPF and UN Office for South-South Cooperation and for national platforms).

Third, its intended inclusiveness resulting from the approach to "leave no one behind" and the diversity of topics that the GPEDC wishes to address are of great potential. These are still mostly ambitions, as the limited engagement with private-sector actors exemplifies. However, the GPEDC is currently striving to implement a business-leaders caucus to advise on guidelines for PSE. Furthermore, it is in the process of organising and conducting four

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20 Many countries had difficulties applying the framework because they were not able to access or survey the data required, which is also mirrored in the 2016 monitoring round, to which not all partner countries submitted reports (GPEDC, 2016b).

21 For example, in the case of Thailand, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, which builds on the components of "reasonableness (or wisdom), moderation and prudence" and is enshrined in Thailand's constitution, to which national development plans have to correspond (Royal Thai Government and UNOSSC, 2016, p. 26).

country-level workshops in Bangladesh, Egypt, El Salvador and Uganda – guided by country-studies developed under the auspices of the GPEDC – to enhance multi-stakeholder dialogues at the country level. Particularly with regards to the formation of MAPs with emerging economies, the GPEDC has much to offer as a platform that:

- supports the co-ordination of multi-stakeholder initiatives (as has also been demanded by Southern providers);

- facilitates dialogue, knowledge-exchange and learning (helps in discussing and specifying initiatives from Southern providers);

- enhances transparency, and thus advances the overall effectiveness of MAPs with actors from emerging economies.

3.2 Strategies and challenges for orchestrating platforms such as the GPEDC to support MAPs and PSE

But do these advantages, once fully developed, "weigh enough" to incentivise the engagement of private-sector actors in sustainable development initiatives when considering the numerous dis-incentives, such as the following?

1. It is often stated that the field of development cooperation – in particular, partnerships with actors from emerging economies – offers avenues for private-sector actors to enter new markets. However, committing to the implementation of the SDGs, which are based on a long-term agenda, limits the amount of oversight of the costs and effects of such cooperation initiatives, and thus conflicts with the responsibilities of business shareholders.

2. Similarly, collaborating in MAPs and multi-stakeholder platforms – in which actors from the private sector need to respect the interests of others and to align their agendas – requires private-sector actors to give away some of their agenda-shaping power and independence. It very much depends on the business needs of private-sector actors as to whether the access to information (such as technologies) and distribution channels provided by new partnerships "weighs heavier" than the resulting obligations.

3. It is in the interest of private-sector actors to operate cost-effectively; accordingly, information about the means to improve the effectiveness of their work matters greatly (e.g. about the effects of their work as well as the models and tools used to measure effectiveness). In development cooperation, platforms that do not provide a functioning meta-governance, however, cannot guarantee access to such information, nor avoid that some collaborating partners operate as "free riders" or against the shared objectives, thereby endangering the reputations of the partnership and of other collaborating partners as well.

Although the central actions to regulate and enhance the engagement of private-sector actors in MAPs outlined in the previous section shall help to reduce these dis-incentives, the orchestration of platforms such as the GPEDC involves additional challenges when implementing them. However, in the case of the GPEDC, its flexible structure, in particular, provides many possibilities for adaptation that facilitate the implementation of these central actions.

The following paragraphs outline its limitations, potentials and challenges in this regard.

Firstly, it is important to recall that the roles which private-sector actors are expected to perform in any format of multi-actor collaboration differ due to the heterogeneity, the specific functions and the structures of MAPs. When operating as an orchestrating platform, the GPEDC is not in the position to assign whether private-sector actors shall contribute, for example, as resource- or knowledge providers to MAPs. However, it can contribute to the suggested clarification in this regard by enhancing the transparency of the structures and needs of collaborating MAPs.

To do so, platforms such as the GPEDC would have to:

(i) specify their understanding of "the business sector", and

(ii) identify those involved in deciding about the roles of private-sector actors in MAPs.

Considering the first point, official GPEDC documents, such as the Nairobi Outcome Document or the 2017-2018 Programme of Work, currently do not clarify whether "the business sector" includes only private-sector actors or also state-owned companies. In its publications (i.a. Coppard & Harding, 2015) and the four country studies that are currently being developed, the GPEDC further discusses philanthropies, small and medium-sized enterprises and multi-national corporations. However, as the GPIs exemplify, not all collaborating MAPs cooperate with the same "type" of actor from "the business sector". In addition to a general definition summarising the actors from "the business sector" that the GPEDC partners with, the GPEDC thus also needs to reflect the respective differences when collaborating in MAPs. This requires all partnering MAPs to provide information in this regard.

With regards to the second point – and under consideration of the different settings in which the partnering actors operate – the GPEDC should provide an overview of those involved in deciding about the roles of private-sector actors in MAPs. Are these decisions based on a multi-stakeholder dialogue that includes the perspectives of civil society or instead is generated by governmental agencies? Such information could be included in the GPEDC's monitoring report and would thus help to hold the actors involved accountable (e.g. in cases in which actors are accused of corruption or of undermining national development programmes). Moreover, such an overview would enhance a more specific knowledge-exchange among those MAPs engaged in the GPEDC that aim to collaborate with the same types of actors from "the business sector", which then allows them to adapt and improve incentivising strategies.

A central challenge that the GPEDC faces derives from its commitment to the principle of country ownership. According to this principle, states, in particular, should manage sensitive multi-stakeholder processes and thus decide on the roles that private-sector actors are expected to perform; only states are accountable to national and international frameworks and are regarded as being able to secure political commitments. However, as was pointed out in studies demanding context-specific, case-by-case assessments, to enhance the effectiveness of incentivising- and regulating-strategies, it is necessary to adapt them to contextual challenges that states alone are not able to identify. To address both aspects, as an orchestrating platform, the GPEDC should thus support inclusive dialogues at the country level and motivate state actors to contribute to and consider these dialogues when deciding about the roles of private-sector actors in the multi-actor formats they collaborate with.

Secondly, transparent and inclusive dialogues help to clarify expectations and aid discussions on potential challenges in MAPs early on.[22] Ideally, such dialogues thus allow collaborating partners to adapt and balance priorities. Especially for private-sector actors, these dialogues are important to better classify the potentials and risks that may also arise from the various meanings ascribed to the objectives of MAPs targeted towards enhancing sustainable development. If such dialogues take place, as an orchestrating platform, the GPEDC cannot interfere in these dialogues, but it can address the lack of respect and trust that may result from power asymmetries among partners engaged in MAPs.

In practice, by providing a meta-governance, the GPEDC can demand that intermediaries (MAPs and individuals) provide transparency concerning the operating principles of MAPs and the inclusion of the partnering actors in deliberations. The GPEDC's monitoring framework and its refinement are central elements in this regard. However, the framework has often been criticised for not reflecting the realities in which the GPEDC's partnering actors operate (GPEDC, 2016b). In addition, the monitoring framework currently only considers information provided by governmental partners (the degree of consideration of information provided by non-state actors in voluntary monitoring exercises at the country level differs) and does not include any reflections on MAPs affiliated with the GPEDC, such as the GPIs. The GPEDC thus gives away much of its orchestrating potential and does not actively enhance transparent and inclusive dialogues in – nor the knowledge-exchange among – the GPIs (even though their focus areas are often interconnected and their work contributes substantially to the GPEDC's endeavours, as has also been pointed out by the GPEDC and representatives of the GPIs).[23] Moreover, neither the GPEDC nor the GPIs themselves have formalised the duration of GPIs, their output nor to what degree the work of these initiatives is taken into consideration by other GPEDC bodies (including other GPIs). Information on the partners collaborating in the GPIs and their efforts are only available upon request because, for example, most GPIs do not have a website that is linked with the GPEDC. Voluntary (not systematic) information on their work is considered in biannual updates shared by the GPEDC. From the perspective of the GPEDC and the GPIs (see i.a. the Global Partnership Initiatives Engagement Workshop, 2018), more institutional oversight could accordingly improve the effectiveness of the GPIs (BMZ, 2018).[24]

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22 Particularly when considering the SDGs, opportunities for dialogue are also in the interest of private-sector actors: "It is important that the governments open spaces where the SDGs are discussed, that they include private sector actors in these discussions to allow them to learn about their long-term aims, their agendas and to get engaged" (Mustafa Osman Turan, at the Global South-South Development Expo 2017).

23 Moreover, neither the GPEDC nor the GPIs themselves have formalised the duration of GPIs, their output nor to what degree the work of these initiatives is taken into consideration by other GPEDC bodies (including other GPIs). Information on the partners collaborating in the GPIs and their efforts are only available by request. This is because, for example, most GPIs do not have a website presence that is linked with the GPEDC, nor does the GPEDC regularly collect and distribute reports on their engagement.

24 The Working Group on Knowledge-Sharing for Increased Development Effectiveness has been focussing on this problem in the past months and developed terms of reference for the implementation of a Knowledge-Sharing Platform, a "meta-platform", which essentially draws information from other existing platforms and includes the GPIs (GPEDC, 2018).

Box 3: Global Partnership Initiatives

Of the currently 28 GPIs, 12 initiatives address the area of work "Building Inclusive Partnerships", of which three initiatives focus specifically on the inclusion of the "business sector":
- Business Partnership Action
- Guidelines for Effective Philanthropic Engagement
- Better Than Cash Alliance

Two GPIs relate specifically to SSC and triangular cooperation:
- Promoting effective triangular cooperation
- Future International Co-operation Policy Network

Three GPIs focus on MAPs:
- Promoting Effective Partnering
- Social Dialogue in Development
- Together for 2030: Partnering to Deliver a Sustainable Future for All (GPEDC, 2017d; more information is available in the Appendix)

Transfer of knowledge: GPIs and the GPEDC

The GPI Guidelines for Effective Philanthropic Engagement, for instance, applies voluntary guidelines for foundations in country pilots in Mexico, Myanmar and Kenya. The knowledge gained from these country pilots can be of significance for "partnership catalysing platforms on a country level" whose development the GPI Business Partnership Action wishes to support. Similarly, the GPI Better Than Cash Alliance, which already engages with business actors following the aim of reducing poverty, can offer insights on actors willing to engage in sustainable development and on challenges for incentivising and regulating them. The GPI Future International Co-operation Policy Network, on the other hand, interacts with governments and non-state actors specifically from the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and other MICs to systematise and disseminate existing knowledge. Their work can help to align concepts and the analytical language that are ideally shared by all actors collaborating under the auspices of the GPEDC and in other initiatives that the GPEDC encourages.

When intending to enhance transparent and inclusive dialogues via its monitoring framework, a central challenge that the GPEDC would have to address concerns the varied financial and human resources of MAPs and individual intermediaries. Not least, these resources determine whether or not partnering actors are able, for example, to collect all the information required for the monitoring process or to participate in meetings, workshops and conferences organised under the auspices of the GPEDC to contribute to the envisioned knowledge-exchange. Furthermore, although the indicators used in the GPEDC's monitoring framework need to better mirror the complexities that shape development cooperation, if these indicators are too broad or too narrow – and thus not of significance to the majority of collaborating partners – the monitoring framework will fail to allow for comparisons and to demand commitment. To address both aspects, the GPEDC should thus provide support to initiatives that aim at a better understanding of the different modalities in development cooperation. It should include the knowledge gained from these initiatives to adapt its monitoring framework by following the objective of keeping it as specific as possible and as broad as necessary.

Thirdly, private-sector actors are more likely to contribute to MAPs in development cooperation if regulating frameworks are clarified and specified early on. This allows them to develop avenues for balancing the different priorities in their endeavours and to justify their collaborations to their shareholders. Although it is equally important that the GPEDC clarifies and specifies its monitoring framework to avoid any misunderstandings, it is not up to an orchestrating platform to clarify and specify regulating frameworks, which falls under the responsibility of its intermediaries. Thus, the GPEDC cannot determine the conditions under

which its partnering actors collaborate with private-sector actors. However, it can demand and provide transparency concerning the different regulating frameworks to which state actors and affiliated MAPs apply and are bound to in their cooperation.

The monitoring framework of the GPEDC could serve this purpose by including country-specific regulations in its Indicator 3 on the "Engagement and Contribution of the Private Sector to Development" and by encouraging the GPIs to include "terms and conditions for collaboration" on their websites. In both cases, it is crucial that this information is constantly updated and accessible to all interested actors. However, even if both are "clarified and specified early on", in a dynamic context, regulating frameworks are never constant pillars but are most often adapted to changing conditions and needs.

A central challenge deriving therefrom is the risk of undermining advantages arising from the (monitoring) meta-governance that the GPEDC provides, which requires the GPEDC to offer regularly updated and comprehensive information on the regulating frameworks that apply. To address this challenge, the GPEDC should incentivise all actors collaborating in MAPs to become engaged in systematic dialogues in which they are informed early on if regulations change. This would allow them to adapt their objectives and the various strategies they use to reach these objectives. Such regular dialogues further enhance the likelihood that the GPEDC would receive information on changing regulating frameworks.

Fourthly, strategies to incentivise private-sector engagement in MAPs are more successful if they are adapted to the specific actor being sought to take part in the partnership. Particularly in consideration of the objectives of MAPs, it is thus important to first identify the most suitable private-sector actor and to revise incentivising-strategies. It is beyond the scope of the GPEDC to develop such individualised strategies due to the different contexts, the heterogeneity of its partners and the specific functions that private-sector actors may have (e.g. of for-profit and state-owned companies). Furthermore, the GPEDC does not obtain the authority to develop such strategies because of the principles to which it is committed. However, the GPEDC can contribute to the selection process by developing recommendations and non-binding guidelines based on experiences from collaborating partners.

In addition to the promotion of inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogues at the country level, and a more detailed reflection on multi-stakeholder collaboration in its monitoring framework, the GPEDC could thus provide additional space to exchange experiences with private-sector actors among affiliated partners, for example by offering side events or workshops back-to-back with the GPEDC Steering Committee and High-Level Meetings. Based on these experiences, guidelines for use by other actors could be developed (e.g. by the GPIs).

Due to the heterogeneity of MAPs and of private-sector actors whose roles are also influenced by the actor constellation in which they operate, similar to the monitoring framework, such guidelines may either remain too vague to be effective or run the risk of not being applicable when being too specific. To address this challenge, the GPEDC should use such guidelines and recommendations to draw attention to the different factors that influence the behaviour and practices of private-sector actors. Although it is often argued that MAPs should collaborate with "like-minded" private-sector actors to contribute towards sustainable development, it should be emphasised that it is highly unlikely that private-sector actors will collaborate on an altruistic basis. As the concept of social business

illustrates,[25] even private-sector actors pursuing social goals such as the implementation of the SDGs are determined by (and determine) the economic systems in which they operate.

3.3   Limitations, potentials and challenges in the context of South-South cooperation

Similar to these limitations, potentials and challenges that apply to the implementation of the central actions recommended by more policy-oriented research – also for the implementation of strategies deriving from case-by-case assessments – the GPEDC can only share insights gained from their partners but does not obtain any enforcement power. However, official documents such as the Nairobi Outcome Document may raise different expectations when outlining the various advantages that the GPEDC expects from the inclusion of "the business sector".[26] When relating more specifically to *limitations* in this regard, this discussion paper illustrates that context-specific particularities that apply at the national levels, for instance in the BRICS countries,[27] complicate the formulation (and effectiveness) of any generalised hopes and strategies (see Appendix: Particularities that determine the BRICS' engagement in SSC).[28] However, particularly in the context of SSC, the existing literature does not offer many insights that allow for drawing conclusions about the roles of private-sector actors in MAPs or help to discuss incentivising- and regulating-strategies.

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25 Both social businesses and profit-maximising businesses are diverse "in the way they are owned and governed" and "there are also likely to be trade-offs between a pure profit maximisation focus and social objectives" (Sahan et al., 2016, p. 2). The concept of social business is most often related to the economist Muhammad Yunus, who defined a social business as "a company that is cause-driven rather than profit-driven, with the potential to act as a change agent for the world" (Yunus, 2008, p. 9). Although this type of business is sometimes described as a business that "is simply defined as 'selfless'" (Raham & Khan, 2016, p. 6), for Yunus' concept, this does not hold true. He emphasises himself that "[a] social business is not charity. It is business in every sense. It has to recover its full costs while achieving its social objective" (Yunus, 2008, p. 9). Social businesses differ from non-profits and CSOs, which primarily concentrate on creating social benefits and often do not recover their costs, whereas social businesses operate under similar conditions as business enterprises (i.e. they compete with other social businesses for investments). Social businesses also differ from other businesses because they concentrate "on creating products or services that provide a social benefit" instead of maximising their profits (Yunus, 2008, p. 10). Exceptions are, however, those businesses "that are owned by the poor or disadvantaged" (Yunus, 2008, p. 13), which Yunus also describes as social businesses, even though they explicitly aim at maximising profits. They are still perceived as creating a social benefit because "dividends and equity growth […] will go to benefit the poor" (Yunus, 2008, p. 13).

26 The GPEDC expects "the business sector" to engage in partnerships to implement the SDGs based on the "shared value" model (GPEDC, 2017c, p. 1). The "shared value" model reproduces the hope that PSE "contribute[s] to the formalisation and growth of the domestic private sector", helps "national governments leverage development co-operation" and thereby "contributes to business profit and the realisation of development goals" (Steering Committee GPEDC, 2017). Previous research commissioned under the auspices of the GPEDC, however, indicated the need to lower these general hopes and expectations by emphasising the context-specific complexities and restrictions that determine whether or not partnerships are successful (Coppard & Harding, 2015, p. 5).

27 The BRICS belong to the group of emerging economies and are, thus, central actors in SSC.

28 It should be noted that information on development cooperation with actors from the Russian Federation is limited and often not translated, which is why, under consideration of secondary literature in this paper, Russia can only be touched upon slightly.

A better understanding of MAPs in SSC is of particular relevance in the context of the SDGs: Similar to businesses and foundations, emerging economies[29] are widely perceived as emerging actors in development cooperation.[30] These emerging actors are regarded as having contributed to a "paradigm shift", resulting in a change whereby development cooperation is "no longer the exclusive domain of governments, NGOs, multilateral organisations and donors" (Lucci, 2012, p. 2; see also Kindornay & Reilly-King, 2013, p. 1; Adams & Martens, 2015, p. 114). Consequently, emerging economies are partnering more often as "donors" in development initiatives and similarly engaging their own private sectors (Kindornay & Reilly-King, 2013, p. 7). Knowing about the particularities of MAPs in SSC is thus of crucial significance for multi-stakeholder platforms that envision their inclusion – such as the GPEDC.

When considering the different formats of cooperation that are summarised under the umbrella of SSC, however, it becomes clear that neither political practitioners nor researchers share a similar understanding of what SSC actually encompasses, or could potentially encompass (Fues, 2016; Renzio & Seifert, 2014).[31] Yet, similar to collaboration also among other partners, so-called SSC is motivated by the sharing of similar concerns and by the prior experience of having had previous attempts to address these concerns unilaterally fail (Prescott & Stibbe, 2017). The need to collaborate in order to better address complexities resulting from the growing interconnectedness of actors and approaches to implement the SDGs enhances collaboration with and beyond partners "from the South" (FCSSC, 2017).

Specifically when considering *potentials* for the engagement of private-sector actors, emerging economies are believed to attract (or "pull") MAPs because they "present significant business opportunities, thanks to their growing integration within the global economy and increasing openness to other markets" (Zhang et al., 2007, in Argente-Linares,

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29 Depending on the definition considered, different countries are classified as emerging "markets" or "developing economies" (International Monetary Fund, 2015); similar to studies focussing on "emerging economies", the countries considered differ. Prominent abbreviations such as the BRICS include Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, whereas Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey are known as MINT states. Although some studies align their investigations with these definitions (e.g. Kateja, 2012), others relate specifically to "emerging economies in the South" (Fues, 2016), to countries that are not DAC members but have an active development cooperation programme (Manning, 2006, in Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1864), or include "the transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe, Asian Nations (China, India, Vietnam, and others) that are increasing their free-market systems, countries in Central and South America, and finally countries in Africa" (Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies, 2017). In some studies, the different categories are also mixed (see FCSSC, 2017; Renzio & Seifert, 2014). The countries referred to in studies on emerging economies depend very much on the research questions investigated. As a consequence, in some cases, even the distinction between the concepts of emerging and developing countries (and economies) is set aside "for practical purposes" (Hardy, 2013, p. 55).

30 The number of regional trade agreements among developing countries; the formation of banks initiated by BRICS countries (the New Development Bank in 2014 and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in 2015); and the general significance ascribed to SSC "as a development catalyst" in global discussions illustrate that, in development cooperation, the significance of SSC is growing (Chahoud, 2007; FCSSC, 2017, p. 4; Renzio & Seifert, 2014).

31 This also complicates the formulation of, agreement upon and comparative research of explicit policies among the partners involved (FCSSC, 2017, p. 178). Some note, however, that among the group of Southern providers, a "common agenda does seem to be evolving" (Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1870). This differs from the past, when the heterogeneity of governments collaborating in SSC, their distinct interests and economic backgrounds often impaired aligning efforts. This resulted in only a limited number of countries agreeing on a shared agenda or manifestations (FCSSC, 2017; Fues, 2017; IBON International, 2015; Renzio & Seifert, 2014).

López-Pérez, & Rodríguez-Ariza, 2013, p. 500).[32] Similar also to other countries, emerging economies collaborating with private-sector actors are perceived as benefiting from new opportunities to mobilise funds: accessing technical knowledge (and new technologies), sharing costs and risks as well as benefiting from the expected efficiency increases in public-sector service delivery (Hilmarsson, 2017; Kateja, 2012). Moreover, receiving access to distribution channels of companies that "governments and donors can piggy back on", especially in rural areas (Davis, 2011, p. 14), is considered an important incentive for CSOs and governments to collaborate with private-sector actors, also in emerging economies.

In practice, however, actors from emerging economies are still significantly under-represented in MAPs for sustainable development, and the clear majority of MAPs have been formed in collaboration with actors from the Global North (see also Treichel et al., 2016). Often these MAPs are established and supported by international organisations, in particular under the auspices of the UN, which provides institutional oversight and thus represents triangular cooperation[33] rather than exemplifying SSC.[34] When considering the engagement of private-sector actors from the South, an interviewee explained this tendency by recalling the example of a Mexican foundation that only agreed to engage in a MAP dedicated to sustainable development under the condition that this MAP be coordinated under the auspices of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and not by the Mexican government. Mirroring the significance of the degree of institutionalisation that researchers pointed out as determining the effectiveness of MAPs, in this example the IDB was believed to be providing additional securities in order to collaborate with non-governmental partners with regards to its institutional oversight. At the Global South-South Development Expo, this reasoning was also reproduced by private-sector representatives, who often demanded a clear legal framework that business can rely on in SSC (see Anuj Mehra, on behalf of the Mahandra Housing Finance Company). Small business actors, on the other hand, usually lack the capacity to engage in development cooperation at all (Interview, February 2018).

Overall, MAPs that include CSOs and private-sector actors are rather new in the context of SSC. Although civil society engagement has generally expanded, most often SSC is still shaped by government-to-government collaborations and not by MAPs (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2016).[35] With regards to disaster management, Peréz

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32 Also research conducted on behalf of the GPEDC has pointed out that, particularly when focussing on emerging economies, a main incentive for "the business sector" to engage in development cooperation is "the realisation that developing country markets are essential to the future of businesses seeking international opportunities" (GPEDC, 2017c, p. 2).

33 UNDP cites a UN working definition, according to which triangular cooperation is "Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries, supported by a developed country(ies) or multilateral organization(s), to implement development cooperation programmes and projects" (United Nations Development Programme, 2016).

34 Also when approaching reports from development banks, the MAPs considered most often include public- and private-sector actors "from the North" (including multi-national corporations, such as Danone, Unilever, PepsiCo) or relate to their bilateral partnerships with countries "from the South" (see e.g. IDB reports and similar reports provided by the African Development Bank (2016; IDB [Inter-American Development Bank], 2016). One of the few exceptions mentioned by the IDB is the Regional Inclusive Recycling Initiative (IDB, 2016, p. 17), which was established in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in collaboration with nine companies and 39 municipalities.

35 As Sachin Chaturvedi points out, this is also the case with regards to development cooperation that concerns the sector of health, which the BICS increasingly aim to approach via SSC (Chaturvedi, 2016b, p. 47).

Pineda outlined, for example, that "La Alianza México por Haití", which was formed after the 2010 earthquake, was the first (!) transnational PPP realised by the Mexican government (Pérez Pineda, 2017).[36] Even though they often emphasise the "evolving role of the private sector" (ADB [Asian Development Bank], 2016, p. xv), reports from regional development banks based in the "Global South" also illustrate that the overall number of partnerships with private-sector actors is rather small. However, this number often significantly exceeds those of partnerships with CSOs (see the following overview based on ADB, 2016, p. 12).[37]

Table 3: Non-state actors collaborating in Asian Development Bank partnerships				
Collaborating partners in ADB partnerships	Coordination partnerships	Knowledge partnerships	Financing partnerships	Partnerships (total)
Think tank, research or academic institution	6	63	0	69 (15%)
Private sector	3	9	0	12 (3%)
Foundation	1	6	4	11 (2%)
Civil society organisation	0	4	0	4 (1%)

Despite this still limited engagement in different formats of multi-stakeholder collaboration, the collaboration in MAPs and with private-sector actors is increasingly relevant for emerging economies. This trend is motivated by two factors: On the one hand, the amount of official development assistance that "emerging" and "promising" economies (both are often also summarised under the umbrella of MICs) received over the past decades has decreased (APCI, 2017, p. 6). This decrease particularly affects emerging economies that, "in the wake of high growth", need investments and increasingly prefer PPPs as a mode of financing infrastructure and energy projects (Hilmarsson, 2017; Kateja, 2012, pp. 369-370; Romero, 2015). On the other hand, and particularly in emerging economies, the growing institutionalisation of national development agencies[38] – more often with an explicit mandate to foster and coordinate collaboration in MAPs – has "pushed" the formation of MAPs in SSC (Pérez Pineda, 2017; Renzio & Seifert, 2014). For the Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional (formed in 2002 and subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Relations), for example, a main objective is to establish more multi-stakeholder cooperation initiatives (APCI, 2017).

As development cooperation among partners "from the South" is still mostly based on government-to-government engagement, it is no surprise that different formats to enhance multi-stakeholder dialogue either do not exist or are often not used by Southern providers. Consequently, for private-sector actors interested in collaborating with MAPs "from the South", these MAPs are often invisible because they are not linked to a systematic database for MAPs, which could similarly monitor the effectiveness of these MAPs. Particularly SSC can thus be considered a niche for initiatives intending to enhance the effectiveness of multi-

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36 More recently, Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (more commonly known as AMEXCID) also founded "La Alianza por la Sostenibilidad", a MAP that also seeks to enhance private-sector engagement in development cooperation and operates mainly in Mexico.

37 The report recognises that, although the participation of CSOs has grown in Asian Development Bank activities, they are mostly engaged as contractors – if at all – and collaborate only in very few knowledge partnerships (ADB, 2016, p. xi).

38 For example, AMEXCID and the South African Development Partnership Agency were both formed in 2011.

stakeholder collaboration and incentivise PSE, such as the GPEDC, which has already initiated research on a new conceptual framework for PSE from the perspective of "Southern partners". Against this backdrop, platforms such as the GPEDC may support the formation of MAPs in SSC by addressing three central *challenges*: (i) enhance transparent and more effective development cooperation, (ii) establish inclusive dialogues between partners that are understood as being equals, despite their different backgrounds and (iii) encourage knowledge-exchange and mutual learning.

3.3.1 Transparent and more effective development cooperation

In technical terms, data on the different development initiatives that actors from the countries grouped as BRICS are engaged in, or that they support, are often incomplete and not systematised (also because they are distributed by different agencies). In some cases, they are not available, and often the figures are outdated. Furthermore, official data are not always translated into other languages, nor compared under consideration of similar measures and concepts, and (as is the case in Brazil) terminology, criteria and norms purposely differ from those "related to OECD's DAC" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 311; Renzio & Seifert, 2014). Thus, platforms that regularly collect and distribute standardised country reports (also on MAPs) are able to contribute towards more transparency. They likely support actors involved in SSC, such as those from the BRICS, in their considerations on whether or not they share interests and wish to align their efforts in joint initiatives with other partners. The comparison of initiatives and the distribution of reports also provide more comprehensive evaluations that help to measure different formats of collaboration in SSC, hold all actors involved accountable and, thus, improve the effectiveness of SSC (Li, Li, Liang, & Lee, 2016, p. 263). In other words, such platforms may become "communication platforms for South-South development assistance providers" that help to establish "regular aid communication mechanism" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 185).

3.3.2 Inclusive dialogues between equals

Multi-stakeholder platforms are also of use to strengthen collaboration, not only among actors engaged in SSC but also beyond, among actors from both "the South and the North" that are regarded as equal partners. Ideally, particularly in the latter case, they support the representation and introduction of different and conflicting perspectives to develop a shared agenda and to pool knowledge and resources. This requires, of course, that those contributing to multi-stakeholder platforms are willing to include and respect different perspectives and principles (in the case of SSC, e.g. the Bandung principles) and to align their concepts, terminologies and their foci in statistics with others to avoid the "knowledge of development" from continuing to be dominated by actors "from the North".

Specifically concerning the inclusion of concepts of significance in SSC, it is necessary that partners from "the South" agree on them in the first place. To spur this development, different endeavours have already been realised. The Network of Southern Think Tanks (NeST), for example, was formed in 2014 on the sidelines of the first High-Level Meeting of the GPEDC and has the purpose "to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks to collaboratively generate, systematise, consolidate and share knowledge on SSC approaches in international development" (Network of Southern Think Tanks, 2016). Thus, NeST is an important initiative to align different SSC concepts and methodologies (Fues,

2016). However, NeST also illustrates that it is an ongoing process to develop, agree on and apply models to evaluate and monitor the diverse range of projects and programmes in SSC (Fues, 2017). In this process, it is necessary that governments involved in SSC institutionalise mechanisms to guarantee transparency, accountability and knowledge-exchange, and on the other side invest in research to create more knowledge about experiences and strategies to improve development cooperation that considers the particularities of each country (see also Fues, 2016). A platform that provides and updates a standardised and systematised "knowledge system of South-South Cooperation" on a regular basis could stand at the end of this process (see also FCSSC, 2017, p. 67). A standard system, for instance for collecting statistics, will also help to assess (factors hindering) the effectiveness of methodologies. In that sense, the first Steering Committee meeting of the "South-South Global Thinkers" initiative took place (in which NeST is also engaged) at the Global South-South Development Expo 2017, which "will connect think tank networks from across all regions to exchange, share knowledge and collaborate on joint research" via an online platform (UN News Centre, 2017).

3.3.3   Knowledge-exchange and mutual learning

To implement the 2030 Agenda, and with regards to the growing engagement of actors from "the South" in MAPs and with multi-stakeholder platforms, the creation of a "knowledge system of SSC" is ever-more important to allow for the consideration of systematised information that will help to limit unintended side effects and improve the effectiveness of projects and programmes. Moreover, as the countries engaged in SSC are particularly experienced in bilateral cooperation (FCSSC, 2017, p. 67), such a knowledge system will also help platforms to support the formation of MAPs with actors "from the South" and put central actions into practice to achieve the SDGs (as outlined in the previous section). On the other hand – particularly when considering the many reports on PPPs providing evidence that these kind of partnerships are "in most cases, the most expensive method of financing" of development cooperation (Romero, 2015, p. 6) – "Southern partners" that collaborate with platforms can take advantage of the governance structures that they provide for MAPs. More explicitly, governmental actors from "the South", such as the BRICS, may benefit from the knowledge shared at these platforms to help sharpen their policies and identify "like-minded" partners. "Safeguards" provided by platforms may further prevent the abuse of finance provided by public and private-sector actors and contribute to trust-building in MAPs and collaborating partners.

Considering these challenges, can the GPEDC be considered a positive example for how multi-stakeholder platforms may improve the effectiveness of MAPs with actors from emerging economies and the private sector to advance the implementation of the SDGs?

The answer to this question is "Yes" and "No": Theoretically, the GPEDC's main advantages correspond to central actions that need to be approached for advancing PSE and the inclusion of actors from emerging economies in development cooperation. However, these advantages ascribed to the GPEDC build on premises that, until now, have not been established in many cases, such as:

1. the development of in-country platforms for dialogue and institutional oversight;

2. a monitoring framework that adequately mirrors the differences and respective challenges of partnering countries; and

3. a platform that is truly "global" and includes also partners from emerging economies such as Brazil, China and India.

Against this backdrop, some may argue that, instead of aiming to enhance PSE, the GPEDC should try to realise these premises first. However, as was shown in Section 2, if, in the long term, PSE shall be advanced under the auspices of the GPEDC, these premises can best be achieved if private-sector actors are included in dialogues early on. The GPEDC may then take the role of an orchestrator that coordinates the different "gear wheels" in such dialogues. However, fulfilling its mandate and advancing the effectiveness of MAPs with private-sector actors in development cooperation requires that all collaborating actors a) consider the GPEDC the legitimate forum to do so, and b) are willing and able to engage in such dialogues, directly or indirectly, via intermediaries. These are probably the most important obstacles that the GPEDC urgently needs to address in order to answer the question raised above with a clear "Yes".

4 Conclusions and policy recommendations

Research on the effectiveness of development cooperation is often divided with regards to the questions of whether the positive effects of programmes in development cooperation outweigh the negative ones, and whether or not international institutions are capable of controlling their effects (see e.g. Whaites, 2017). Due to the relevance of context-specific factors, such research is often inconclusive. Similarly, the research presented in this paper does not provide clear-cut answers to such questions. This also applies to the following policy recommendations, which derive from the main results of this paper. Overall, it is a hope that this paper contributes to informed discussions on: multi-stakeholder platforms and their significance, PSE in development cooperation and the challenges in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Policy recommendations

This paper concludes by providing three policy recommendations that not only contribute to the general debate on MAPs but are also of relevance for the specific case of the GPEDC.

First, for actors that seek to enhance private-sector engagement and the effectiveness of MAPs in development cooperation, the paper recommends the establishment of a functioning meta-governance to:

1. incentivise the specification of goals and related strategies pursued by MAPs and other intermediaries

   ➢ the GPEDC may, for example, establish a database to pool and disseminate information provided by partners in this regard, which enhances their visibility, facilitates knowledge-exchange and, thus, reduces the duplication of efforts;

2. make the development of MAPs and other collaborating initiatives transparent

   ➢ for the GPEDC, this implies, among other things, systematically evaluating the work conducted by the GPIs and adapting its monitoring framework;

3. develop a flexible monitoring framework that takes context-specific particularities into consideration

  ➢ to better understand the reasons behind successes, challenges and potentials for improving the effectiveness of MAPs, the GPEDC should include more open questions in its monitoring framework, and different principles and philosophies should be shared, for example, among the diverse group of actors from the "Global South".

Trade-offs resulting from a flexible monitoring framework are reduced levels of comparability among MAPs and less accountability of collaborating partners. Moreover, it increases the risk that established norms and standards, for example for PSE in development cooperation, are undermined. The respective "politics of difference", which reduces reputational risks, will, however, likely enhance the engagement of private-sector actors with the GPEDC and contribute to the identification of individual challenges.

Second, the discussion paper strengthens the often-stated assessment that incentivising- and regulating-strategies need to be case-specific in order to be successful. In this regard, it is suggested to:

1. encourage the formation and evaluation of in-country platforms

  ➢ in this regard, the GPEDC may extend the number of country-specific workshops that are organised under its auspices (such as the 2018 Technical Workshop on Private Sector Engagement in Bangladesh) – particularly in countries in which the quality of public–private dialogues has been assessed as low – to also facilitate cross-sector dialogues needed for the implementation of the SDGs;

2. adapt strategies to local contexts

  ➢ for the GPEDC, this means that, instead of working specifically on general strategies to incentivise PSE (e.g. by developing a business leaders' caucus exclusively at the global level), it should contribute to a better understanding of country-specific particularities and guidelines for PSE, for example by encouraging stakeholder dialogues at the local level and by supporting country-specific formats for multi-stakeholder exchanges (e.g. a GPEDC at the country level and the formation of a business leaders' caucus at the national level).

These dialogues support the consideration of different perspectives, a better classification of the potentials and risks for the many stakeholders engaged, and the development of case-specific incentivising- and regulating-strategies.

Third, the paper demands a better understanding of – and more differentiation concerning – approaches that are summarised under the umbrella of SSC. These approaches are too diverse to make general suggestions about ways to enhance the formation of MAPs and the engagement of private-sector actors. Accordingly, this paper recommends:

1. clarifying what SSC can be

  ➢ meeting the GPEDC's ambition of enhancing PSE in development cooperation – particularly the different roles and functions that state-owned companies may obtain – matters greatly;

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2. enhancing dialogue with SSC providers to identify shared topics of interests, potentials and difficulties for collaboration

   ➢ the GPEDC may put this into practice by establishing and strengthening contacts with think tanks and national development agencies. Such dialogues are of particular use to the GPEDC, as they contribute to the identification and inclusion of topics of interest for partners from the "Global South" and to the consideration of South-South principles and methodologies in the work of the GPEDC.

A possible trade-off arising from the different priorities ascribed to topics of interest can be the formation of more subsidiary bodies under the auspices of the GPEDC, which would require the provision of more resources to maintain these bodies and the strengthening of the Joint Support Team to oversee and report on them. Both the need to further include Southern partners and strengthen the role of the JST as a connector has also been emphasised by representatives of the GPIs, for example at the 2018 Global Partnership Initiatives Engagement Workshop.

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Appendix: Particularities that determine the BRICS' engagement in SSC

Previous studies – also beyond the field of development cooperation – have outlined various differences among the countries grouped as BRICS. Among the various (and complex) factors that are believed to contribute towards their distinct foci and practices in SSC are:

i)   institutional arrangements

ii) sectors of interest

iii) preferred countries and regions

iv) relationships with partners.

i)   Institutional arrangements

In the case of **Brazil**, a number of agencies are involved in development cooperation, but the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the Ministry of Education are central actors. Whereas technical cooperation is mainly executed under the auspices of the ABC, the Ministry of Education is engaged in the implementation of scholarship and international exchange programmes to provide higher education and exchange "experiences and knowledge" on matters that Brazil's development cooperation is concentrating (97 per cent of all official expenditures were invested in academic cooperation in 2010; Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2017). Even though Brazil was already engaging as a donor in development cooperation in the 1970s, previous studies found that, particularly since 2003, the government (and CSOs) has put a stronger political emphasis on SSC (FCSSC, 2017, p. 302). In the **Russian Federation** – and in line with the objectives, principles and priorities defined in the Concept of Russia's State Policy, which also relates to "criteria for providing assistance to partner countries" (OECD, 2017) – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance are engaged with the formulation and implementation of Russia's development cooperation policy. As an accession country, the Russian Federation is the only country of the BRICS group with closer relations to the OECD to which none of the BRICS holds membership. Similar to Russia, development cooperation in India and China is embedded in foreign, economic and security policies (Chahoud, 2007, p. 3). In **India** "development cooperation is implemented by various ministries and institutions, with the Ministry of External Affairs as the leading ministry" (Katti, Chahoud, & Kaushik, 2009). A special development partnership division subordinated to the Ministry of External Affairs was established in 2005 that focusses explicitly on the implementation of development cooperation projects (FCSSC, 2017, p. 342). Moreover, the engagement of India's governmental institutions in SSC has a tradition and dates back to the first half of the 20th century, when India offered specialised training programmes, to which agriculture scientists from China and Indonesia were invited (FCSSC, 2017, p. 341). In **China,** partnerships for development cooperation are mostly formed with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. Although also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance are engaged in China's development cooperation, the Ministry of Commerce is the main agency that is "authorized by the State Council to oversee development co-operation" (UNDP China, 2015, p. 14). Particularly China's Belt and Road Initiative is expected to enhance SSC. Moreover, in 2015, President Xi Jinping promised to support "other developing countries to implement their post-2015 development agenda" with the help of a South-South Co-operation Assistance Fund (FCSSC, 2017, p. 47). In **South Africa** development cooperation is mostly provided under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs, for instance via

the African Renaissance Fund, but also other government departments are engaged, particularly "Defence, Education, South African Police Services […], Minerals and Energy, and Trade and Industry" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 364). The fragmentation of the various government institutions involved in the funding and implementation of South Africa's assistance programmes has been regarded as problematic, which is why the creation of a "South African Development Partnership Agency" was initiated in 2007 but not implemented until now (FCSSC, 2017, p. 364).

As these elaborations show, the formulation of governmental approaches for development cooperation is shaped by different actors and institutions in the countries grouped as BRICS, beyond their distinct governmental constellations. The many sets of actors engaged in these institutional arrangements also influence the policies and principles applied in MAPs. Even though it is specialised development agencies that have been formed more often in emerging economies, the institutional diversity and the different priorities that collaborating actors set accordingly also explain the often asserted "[l]ack of clear development assistance ideas, policies and guidance for practice" shared by the countries engaged in SSC. Despite this, the BRICS have maintained their ambitions "to form a collective identity in order to tackle the various challenges at the global level" (FCSSC, 2017, pp. 178 and 269). This lack of a shared agenda can also be explained by the many sectors of interest, which is touched upon in the following.

ii)   Sectors of interest

Previous research already emphasised that "most South-South Development Assistance Providers […] have huge difference in their sector distribution" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 158). The BRICS countries are no exception in this regard. Although **Brazil's** development cooperation clearly concentrates on the sector of education, its technical assistance also relates to the sectors of agriculture and health. **India** also provides grants to the sectors of education and health, but its technical cooperation focusses predominantly on rural development and the sector of infrastructure. Similarly, **China's** development assistance concentrates on infrastructure, energy and agriculture, which are also understood as the sectors that "have often received less attention from 'traditional' donors" (Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1866). Thus, although Brazil, India and China focus partly on the same sectors, these sectors are not only prioritised differently in their development cooperation, but the programmes they conduct in these sectors also differ. Under consideration of bilateral cooperation with African countries, for instance, it was argued that China "appears to bring comparative strengths in infrastructure development [and constructed, for instance, railways, airport terminals and ports in African countries], India in learning and services [e.g. the construction of IT network and facilities], and Brazil in agriculture and agro processing" (FCSSC, 2017; Stijns, 2011). The **Russian Federation**, on the other hand, is said to prioritise "health, public finance, food security, nutrition and education" and to support in this regard "technical assistance projects, capacity building and scholarships, as well as budget support and debt relief" (OECD, 2017).

As these elaborations show, the BRICS countries prioritise different sectors in their development cooperation with other Southern partners, and the programmes supported in these sectors often have different foci. These differences can be explained by, among other things, the special competences that some BRICS have in certain sectors (e.g. Brazil in education; FCSSC, 2017), with strategic considerations that either relate to the aim of not

competing with other Southern or "traditional" partners (e.g. China and India; Hardy, 2013) or to the special needs of longstanding partner countries and related (geostrategic) interests. The latter are discussed in the following.

iii)   Preferred countries and regions

Although it is generally argued that, in SSC, "development assistance providers tend to take neighbouring countries and countries whose economic development is similar to that of their own, as their priority regions" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 157), the BRICS illustrate that also other factors determine preferences in their focus areas for development cooperation, such as cultural links. **Brazil**, for instance, prioritises Portuguese-speaking countries in its foreign policy. African Portuguese-speaking countries are also the focal partner countries in technical cooperation (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2017), even though the largest portion of the ABC's budget has been invested in programmes conducted in Latin America. It has been argued that this "concentration in Latin America and Africa stems from the historical formation of Brazil's own society, its culture, and more recently some identity changes in foreign policy" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 308). The **Russian Federation**, on the other hand, focussed mainly on "the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as Syria, Serbia and Guinea" (OECD, 2017), whereas **India** has been engaged in its neighbouring countries Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam and Myanmar (Chaturvedi, 2016a, p. 11), as well as in "Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Afghanistan" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 55). However, India has also invested in African countries such as Ethiopia and Mozambique, relationships with whom have evolved over many decades. Although India's partnerships with these countries have been explained with the aim of making "solar energy an integral part of the development strategy of the partner countries from Africa" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 352), aside from these economic interests, India's development cooperation has also concentrated on peace-building and provided, for instance, training to African peacekeepers. **China** has invested similar amounts in development cooperation with countries in Africa and Asia (FCSSC, 2017, p. 54). However, as its Belt and Road Initiative mostly focusses on countries in Asia, it is very likely that investments in partnerships with these countries will grow. In contrast to other development assistance providers in SSC (e.g. Turkey; Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1868), with this initiative, China is shifting policies towards regionalism, "considering the regional scale as the main units for intervention and key for economic development underpinned by regional collaboration" (Li et al., 2016, p. 263). **South Africa** is also focussing specifically on "cooperation to strengthen African development". However, in order to achieve this, it has followed a different strategy and engaged in bilateral and trilateral cooperation with partners (more often than not from the African continent) in the Group of 77, the Group of 20 and the BRICS (FCSSC, 2017, p. 363).

In sum, as this brief overview shows, the interests in countries and regions with whom BRICS countries collaborate often differ. Although the relationships with neighbouring countries illustrate that these interests are still often determined by the location of the BRICS member, cultural links and the possibilities to spread special competences and knowledge also matter. With a growing focus on global concerns (e.g. China's engagement in climate change programmes), the geographic and thematic scope of development assistance is likely to be extended, not only by the BRICS but also by other development assistance providers in SSC.

iv)   Relationships with partners

Not only the countries and regions that the BRICS focus on in their development cooperation but also the concentration on specific sectors and support of related programmes are, to varying degrees, influenced by their relationships with partners. In this regard, and aside from the initiatives in which (some of) the BRICS countries collaborate (e.g. in the India–Brazil–South Africa Poverty Alleviation Fund or in the New Development Bank), also their engagement with other partners has an impact on their priorities in development cooperation. In other words, instead of "reinventing the wheel", it is more likely that partners use synergies to address a shared problem and consequently prioritise this problem. **Brazil's** main focus on education, for example, corresponds with its engagement in MERCOSUR's Regional Academic Mobility Programme. Its collaboration with other partners from Latin America in this programme likely encourages collaborative initiatives beyond this programme (Perrotta, 2015).

Particularly when considering international forums and initiatives, however, previous research already found that "SSC providers are highly heterogeneous in terms of […] engagement with international forums and initiatives" (Renzio & Seifert, 2014, p. 1860). Some BRICS countries, such as Brazil, India and China, are said to "deliver development assistance mainly in the forms of bilateral aid", whereas others, such as South Africa, are perceived as engaging more often through the platforms of international multilateral institutions (FCSSC, 2017, p. 160). Among the BRICS, as an accession country, **Russia** has relations with the OECD. Because of their geographic locations, most BRICS countries are members of different regional organisations (such as the Organisation of American States, the Organisation of African Unity or the Asian Council). **China's** Development Research Centre of the State Council, the China International Development Research Network and newly formed institutions affiliated with universities such as the Centre for New Structural Economics, on the other hand, encourage international dialogue among researchers and show that international forums and initiatives as well as national initiatives may bring varied international organisations, private-sector actors and government agencies together to develop new programmes to implement the SDGs (FCSSC, 2017, pp. 83 and 411). **India's** approach in development cooperation, on the other side, is said to be particularly shaped by the concept of the new "development compact" (Chaturvedi, 2016a; FCSSC, 2017), which reflects the principles and growing significance of SSC, promotes partnerships with actors from the South and is "rooted in the soil of cohesive and comprehensive development policies adopted by developing countries" (Chaturvedi, 2016a, p. 7). By emphasising specifically the principles of SSC, the evolution of this concept is also based on experiences with "Northern donors" and the "traditional development aid" against which it is directed.

Aside from international organisations and initiatives, also partners at the national level are influenced and, vice versa, influence the prioritisation of sectors and regions in development cooperation – such as sub-national governments, CSOs and private-sector actors. Specifically with regards to private-sector actors, in all BRICS countries, state-owned companies are (to varying degrees) engaged in development cooperation. In the case of China, it was, for example, found that government-to-government negotiations often "result in package deals, including some aid measures, some commercial loans and some support for strategic investments by key Chinese enterprises" (Grimm, 2014, p. 1002). More generally, in contrast to other private-sector actors, the interests of state-owned companies in sustainable development initiatives are not only based on economic but also political

motives (Chahoud, 2007, p. 3). Although systematic and in-depth research on the operations of state-owned companies in sustainable development and SSC initiatives is still missing (see also FCSSC, 2017, p. 285), it has been argued that "emerging markets companies" instead prioritise strategies on "how investments contribute to the capability-building process of the firm [rather] than by calculations of short-term returns" (Roemer-Mahler, 2014, p. 914). As the prioritisation of such strategies also enhances private-sector development, which is often considered an engine towards contributing to poverty reduction and sustainable growth (Adams & Martens, 2015, p. 7), it is no surprise that SSC is also described as having been "historically sympathetic to public entrepreneurship" (FCSSC, 2017, pp. 88-89). The Belt and Road Initiative also aims at promoting "regional economic development through a win-win cooperation approach", which includes private-sector actors (FCSSC, 2017, p. 235). Whether it is the "mutual benefits" that are emphasised in SSC or the "win-win cooperation", the significance of these "floating signifiers" differs in practice and within the specific contexts of the BRICS (and beyond). Chinese companies, for instance, are often seen as benefitting from PPPs in China's development cooperation initiatives, among others, because of the access to markets, as "African countries have various preferential trade agreements with the US and the EU" (FCSSC, 2017, p. 273). On the other hand, for instance, an improvement of the local industrial capacity is outlined as the purpose of training centres established by Huawei in Nigeria, Angola, Kenya, South Africa, Egypt and Tunisia.

To sum up: Numerous differences (partly) explain the varying foci and practices in SSC, particularly in development cooperation initiatives pursued by the BRICS, which also determine their engagement in MAPs. In order to improve the effectiveness of incentivising- and regulating-strategies for MAPs and multi-stakeholder platforms with actors from "the South", these differences should be considered. Concerning institutional arrangements, it was shown that very different actors and institutions contribute to the formulation of governmental approaches for development cooperation in the BRICS. Even though specialised development agencies are formed more often due to the institutional diversity and the different priorities of the collaborating actors, development assistance ideas are often not very specific. Against this backdrop, MAPs and platforms likely benefit from individualised correspondences with governmental representatives involved in development cooperation to clarify strategic guidelines. With regards to sectors and regions of interest, it was also shown that the development programmes conducted under the auspices of the BRICS countries differ greatly. MAPs and platforms interested in engaging with actors from BRICS countries should accordingly distinguish between the many sectors and regions of interest for the countries grouped as BRICS and might offer support in the respective areas of interest. In order to complement and avoid the duplication of efforts, MAPs and platforms should also consider the different relationships with other partners and collaborations in other initiatives of actors from "the South" at the local, national, regional and international levels. Thereby, awareness should also be paid to past (positive and negative) experiences among different actors or groups that might hinder collaboration in MAPs if they are not taken into consideration or remain unaddressed.

Overall, it needs to be emphasised that, although the factors explained above may help to identify trends regarding the prioritisation of the BRICS' interests in development cooperation that also affect MAPs and the private-sector actors engaged therein, these interests are never permanent and change over time. Moreover, this state of flux does not occur at a similar speed in the BRICS, because in-country changes and global processes

affect the BRICS countries (as much as any country) differently. Further research that investigates discourses in "emerging" economies (e.g. under consideration of speeches) can help to better grasp these trends (also in advance) and to adapt incentivising- and regulating-strategies accordingly.

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