Welcome to the first ever Special Event on Philanthropy and the SDGs!

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by Heads of State and Government in 2015 represent an unprecedented global consensus on our shared responsibility in global development.

This is a collective journey towards ending poverty and hunger everywhere, towards combating inequalities within and among countries, towards peaceful, just and inclusive societies, towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, towards lasting protection of the planet, its biodiversity and natural resources, towards shared prosperity and decent work for all, towards a future with no one left behind.

Philanthropy has long been supporting many of these good causes, with significant impact around the world. Many of you are also among the early embracers of the SDGs. We are excited to have created a dedicated space in the margins of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development this year to highlight philanthropic engagement in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

We hope to recognize the many ways that philanthropy is contributing to global development. As advocates, philanthropy can support awareness raising through the integration of the SDGs into programming efforts and through thought leadership of collective platforms. As impact drivers, philanthropy can catalyze change and generate impact through big bets, collective action, cross-SDG partnerships. As innovators, philanthropy exhibits a great willingness to test new ideas, adopt innovative approaches, forge new coalitions and help de-risk investments. We also hope that together we can identify opportunities to further scale up philanthropic leadership and transformational action to accelerate SDG implementation in the next decade.

Finally, we would like to thank the SDG Philanthropy Platform (Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors), the European Foundation Centre, Synergos and the United Nations Foundation for their close collaboration on this Special Event. Without their support, we will not be able to bring such a diverse group of movers and shakers from around the world.

Alexander Trepelkov
Officer-in-Charge
Division for Sustainable Development Goals
UN DESA

Robert Lawrence Skinner
Executive Director
UN Office for Partnerships
Special Event | High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

Philanthropy & the SDGs

ECOSOC CHAMBER | TUESDAY 16 JULY 2019 | 10 A.M. - 1 P.M.

10:00 - 10:50 Opening Session

Master of Ceremony: Mr. Robert Skinner, Executive Director, UN Office for Partnerships

Welcome remarks

H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, President of ECOSOC
Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations

QuickFire Dialogue: Setting the Scene

Mr. Massimo Lapucci, Chair, European Foundation Centre
Ms. Tsitsi Masiyiwa, Founder, the Higherlife Foundation
Ms. Necra Nundy, Co-Founder, Dasra

Moderated by: Ms. Heather Grady, Vice President, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

10:50 - 11:50 Session I: Key drivers for transformative impact in philanthropic organizations' engagement in SDGs: what is working?

Mr. Pablo Obregón, CEO, Fundación Mario Santo Domingo
Dr. Rajendra Melville, Executive Director, Deshpande Foundation
Mr. Jean Paul Bervoets, Vice President, Community Foundations of Canada
Ms. Georgette Mulheir, CEO, Lemos Foundation

Moderated by: Ms. Anne Bahr Thompson, Managing Director, Philanthropy, Synergos Institute

11:50 - 12:50 Session II: How to effectively scale up: what needs to change? what opportunities are there?

Mr. Jesper Nygård, CEO, Realdania
Ms. Margaret Munene, Founder Trustee, Palmhouse Foundation
Ms. Anika Williams, Bloomberg Philanthropies
Ms. Pam Foster, COO, Co-Impact

Moderated by: Ms. Elizabeth Cousens, Deputy CEO, UN Foundation

12:50 - 13:00 Closing Session

Ms. Maria Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UNDESA
Mr. Robert Skinner, Executive Director, UN Office for Partnerships
Speaker Biographies

(in alphabetical order by the surname)

Jean Paul Bervoets
Vice President, Community Foundations of Canada, Executive Director, Deshpande Foundation

For the past decade, JP has worked to foster collaboration and build partnerships across sectors to advance community wellbeing and sustainable development. As Vice President at Community Foundations of Canada, JP works to connect Canada’s 191 community foundations with partners from across sectors to advance community-driven outcomes and engage philanthropy in Agenda 2030. He is also working alongside a growing network of partners to host Alliance 2030, a new national network to connect and amplify Canadian leadership on the SDGs.

Prior to joining CFC, JP held various positions in the international development sector in Canada, and internationally, including with North Star Alliance, a groundbreaking public-private partnership founded by the UN World Food Programme and TNT Express.

JP sits on the Board of Directors at Impact Hub Ottawa and Art for AIDS International, and has voluntarily supported a number of organisations at home and abroad including Boys and Girls Clubs, the Nkosi Johnson AIDS Foundation, and UNAIDS.

Elizabeth Cousens
Deputy CEO, UN Foundation

Ambassador Elizabeth Cousens has been at the forefront of global policymaking and innovation for over 20 years. Currently serving as Deputy CEO of the United Nations Foundation, where she oversees all the Foundation’s work in policy, advocacy, and communications, she has worked on the frontlines of peace processes, played an influential role in shaping UN policy innovation from the “responsibility to protect” to peacebuilding, and is a seasoned observer of international politics. She served for several years at the U.S. Mission to the UN in New York, including as the U.S. Ambassador to ECOSOC, and she led U.S. negotiations on the SDGs. Ambassador Cousens has a D.Phil. in International Relations from the University of Oxford, where she was a Rhodes Scholar.
Pam Foster  
COO, Co-Impact

Pam serves as Chief Operating Officer of Co-Impact, a global philanthropic collaborative focused on systems change efforts aiming to improve the lives of millions of people in developing countries in the areas of education, health, and economic opportunity. In that role, Pam provides strategic leadership across the organization focusing primarily on operations, governance, and compliance. Prior to joining Co-Impact in 2017, Pam served in various roles over 20 years for The Rockefeller Foundation, including most recently serving as Managing Director, Program Operations, and Associate General Counsel. In between two stints at the Foundation, Pam was an associate with the Wall Street law firm Cleary Gottlieb, where she specialized in employment and executive compensation. She is Chair of the Board of Safe Passage Project, a NYC-based nonprofit providing legal representation for unaccompanied minors in immigration court, and Vice Chair of the board of Philanthropy New York. Pam received a bachelor’s degree with honors from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and a JD, summa cum laude, from New York Law School, where she currently serves as on the Board of Trustees and as President of the Alumni Association. Pam lives in New Jersey with her husband and two daughters.

Heather Grady  
Vice President, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

Heather Grady is a Vice President in the San Francisco office of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and leads the organization’s strategy and program development in global philanthropy, including collaboratives and research. Heather advises clients from the US and other countries on strategy and a variety of thematic areas. She leads the Scaling Solutions toward Shifting Systems initiative, which encourages funders to collaborate to place longer-term, adaptive resources to accelerate scalable solutions and impact that target systemic changes, and she helped to create the SDG Philanthropy Platform to engage philanthropy in the Sustainable Development Goals. Heather also serves as an Adjunct Professor at the China Global Philanthropy Institute.

Heather’s approach has been shaped in part by two decades of living in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, managing long-term development and humanitarian programs for Oxfam Great Britain and Save the Children that focused on a range of sectors including education, livelihoods, gender equality, health, agriculture and microfinance. Following her time outside the US she served as the Managing Director of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative, founded by former Irish President Mary Robinson, and was an Adjunct Professor at Columbia University. In 2010 she joined the Rockefeller Foundation as Vice President for Foundation Initiatives where she oversaw an annual grantmaking budget averaging $65 million. Heather has degrees from the Kennedy School at Harvard and Smith College. She writes regularly on philanthropy and social investing. She serves on the boards of the Dropbox Foundation, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, Forum for the Future, the Wildlife Justice Commission, and is an Advisor to the B Team. She is a member of NationSwell and has served on the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on International Governance, Public-Private Cooperation and Sustainable Development.
Massimo Lapucci is Secretary General of Fondazione CRT, a foundation of banking origin based in Turin. He is also the Secretary General of Fondazione Sviluppo e Crescita – CRT, a foundation primarily focused on venture philanthropy and impact investing. Massimo is Managing Director of OGR Company, a former large industrial area in Turin reconverted into an international center for innovation, start-up, art and contemporary cultures. Massimo is also Chair of the European Foundation Centre, the network of institutional philanthropy which unites over 300 members from nearly 40 countries, including the USA and Vice President of the Social Impact Agenda for Italy.

He has extensive international experience as a board member for public and private companies in several sectors and nonprofit organizations in the EU and the Americas, including the London School of Economics- Marshall Institute and ISI Foundation.

Before assuming his current position with the Fondazione CRT, Massimo was Investment Director for Sintonia SA, a holding company based in Luxembourg. From 2006 he is a World Fellow at Yale University, USA.

Tsitsi Masiyiwa is an African philanthropist and social entrepreneur. She is Executive Chair and Co-Founder of the Higherlife Foundation, whose primary goal is to invest in human capital development to build thriving communities and sustainable livelihoods.

As a result of her work and experience establishing and growing Higherlife Foundation over the last twenty years, Tsitsi has become an advisor and thought partner to universities, national leaders, and social entrepreneurs on issues of education, leadership development, and youth empowerment.

In 2017, Tsitsi established Delta Philanthropies, as a vehicle for impact investing and grant making. Delta Philanthropies seeks to unlock and catalyse innovative solutions to the elimination of poverty by convening strategic partnerships and incubating new development models.

Her work has garnered global recognition, including Honorary Doctorate degrees from Morehouse University in Atlanta, Georgia; Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe; as well as the prestigious Champions for Change Award for Leadership from the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW).

Tsitsi is a founding board member and the current Board Chair of the African Philanthropy Forum, and also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Legatum Institute, the END Fund, and UNICEF’s Generation Unlimited Initiative. She lends her advisory expertise to several entities including the Sesame Workshop Global Advisory Group, the International Advisory Board for Texas A&M University, and the Kenjin-Tatsujin International Advisory Council.
Dr. Rajendra Melville
Executive Director, Deshpande Foundation

As Executive Director, Dr. Melville develops the Foundation’s strategy and efforts to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation. The Foundation supports the Deshpande Foundation India and the Hubballi Sandbox in Karnataka, India which has enhanced the livelihoods of 70,000+ farmers, enabled over 15,000 students to find gainful employment thru skills training, and has developed a unique entrepreneurial ecosystem to address challenges of rural India and smaller metros.

Under his watch the Foundation has launched the Dunin Deshpande Queens Innovation Center at Queens University, Canada; the Gopalakrishnan Deshpande Center at IIT Madras; the Pond Deshpande Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of New Brunswick, Canada; and the Entrepreneurship for All Center that has launched 400+ startups in under resourced cities in the US in the past five years. In addition, the annual Deshpande Symposium attracts over 100 universities and colleges from around the world to share best practices in innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.

Dr. Melville’s previous experience includes over 25 years of product management, marketing and consulting experience at leading consulting and technology firms and several startups. He has a Doctorate and a Master’s degree from MIT, a Master’s from MIT’s Sloan School of Management and a Bachelor of Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.

Amina J. Mohammed
Deputy Secretary-General

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed was Minister of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria from November 2015 to December 2016, where she steered the country’s efforts on climate action, protecting the natural environment and conserving resources for sustainable development.

Prior to this, she served as Special Adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Post-2015 Development Planning, where she was instrumental in bringing about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Before joining the UN, Ms. Mohammed worked for three successive administrations in Nigeria, serving as Special Advisor on the Millennium Development Goals, providing advice on issues including poverty, public sector reform and sustainable development, and coordinating programmes worth $1 billion annually for MDG-related interventions.

She is also an Adjunct Professor in Development Practice at Columbia University, and served on numerous international advisory boards and panels, including the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, the Global Development Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the African Women’s Millennium Initiative, Girl Effect, 2016 African Union Reform and the ActionAid International Right to Education Project.

Ms. Mohammed began her 35-year career in the private sector with architects and engineers responsible for the project management of health, education and public sector buildings.
Georgette Mulheir is CEO of the award-winning international children’s rights organisation Lumos. For 28 years, Georgette has worked in 32 countries around the world. Her work has transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged children and saved the lives of more than 15 thousand.

She pioneered a model of transforming care now followed by many governments, preventing the separation of children from families, returning children from institutions and so-called ‘orphanages’ to families, and redirecting finances from institutions to community services that enable children to flourish in families. She has trained and advised policymakers and senior government practitioners from 51 countries in transforming children’s services. She has spearheaded ground breaking work to ensure full inclusion in society of children with disabilities, through the development of inclusive education and award-winning projects to support children and young people with intellectual disabilities to become powerful self-advocates, influencing policy at the highest level.

Georgette led action research that exposed the phenomenon of orphanage trafficking. This research has contributed to global efforts to eradicate this widespread form of modern slavery. She is now leading a new approach to ensure unaccompanied and separated child refugees are placed in family-based care rather than detention.

Margaret Munene is an entrepreneur, business leader and philanthropist. Margaret is the co-founder of Palmhouse Dairies and a founding trustee of the Palmhouse Foundation. Palmhouse Dairies is a milk processing plant based in Githunguri, Kenya that processes 7000 liters of milk daily.

Margaret has grown the business from one cow to now having more than 500 smallholder farmers (mostly women) delivering to her business. Margaret is also a founder trustee of the Palmhouse Foundation, an indigenous Kenyan education trust whose mission is to finance the secondary education of needy and bright students and mentor them through life.

Palmhouse Foundation was set up in 2003, to assist the needy families and farmers who were supplying milk to Palmhouse Dairies. The support was initially unstructured and based purely on the desperate cases presented by farmers from the area. The increasing appeals motivated the funder trustees – Margaret and her husband – to formalise this support. The Foundation has over 300 beneficiaries in high school all across Kenya, and over 600 have already completed their secondary education. Palmhouse Foundation has received a corporate philanthropy award from the East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN) for their work in local corporate philanthropy. In 2011, Margaret received the ‘Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear (MBS)’ award from the President of Kenya for her service to the community. Margaret holds a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from the University of Nairobi and a Masters in crop protection from Bath University.
Neera Nundy is the co-founder of Dasra, a strategic philanthropy foundation that for 20 years has supported non-profits to achieve scale and impact lives. She leads Dasra’s ecosystem-building initiatives in the areas of adolescents, urban sanitation and democracy and governance.

She is responsible for initiating the Dasra Social Impact Leadership Program with Harvard Business Publishing, a first-of-its-kind executive education program for social sector leaders in India. She also launched the $50 MM Dasra Adolescent Collaborative, a high-impact collaborative funding platform that unites funders, technical experts, government stakeholders and social organizations to focus on key outcomes for adolescent empowerment.

She has been critical to establishing partnerships with global leaders that include Harvard University, Stanford University, USAID, Omidyar Network and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. She is on global board of The Hunger Project, SNEHA and Disha Seema Centre; strategic and investment committees of Mann Deshi, Educate Girls and the Education Alliance.

She holds a Master’s in Business Administration from Harvard Business School, is an Indian Leadership Initiative Fellow with Aspen Institute. She is a recipient of the Canadian Governor General’s Medallion for her dedication to addressing India’s critical development challenges, and has been awarded the Forbes Philanthropy Award in the Crossover Leaders category for 2014. She lives in Mumbai and is married to Dasra cofounder Deval Sanghavi with three boys Ayush, Laxman and Akbar.

Jesper Nygård is the CEO of Realdania. Mr. Nygård obtained an MSc in Public Administration from Roskilde Universitetetscenter in 1989. He is Chairman of Realdania By & Byg and Bolius, Vice Chairman of Fondenes Videncenter (Danish Foundations’ Knowledge Center) and board member of C40 Cities, Danish Architecture Center, Fonden for Socialt Ansvar (Federation for Social Responsibility) and Brøndbyernes I.F. Fodbold A/S (Danish soccer club).

Mr. Nygård joined the Supervisory Board of Realdania in 2003 and was elected chairman in 2009. He resigned from the Supervisory Board on 4 June 2013, when becoming CEO of Realdania. Before joining Realdania, he was CEO of KAB, a large Danish non-profit social housing association, from 1996-2013. Mr. Nygård has previously served as Chairman of the Board of Landsbyggefonden (the national social housing fund) from 2000-2013; Chairman of the Board of the Social Housing Association AKB from 1988 to 1996 (Board member from 1983-1996) and Chairman of the National Federation of Housing Associations from 1993 to 1996 (board member 1990-2013). Mr. Nygård is an active public debater. He lives in Birkerød north of Copenhagen with his wife Tine and two daugthers.
Gabriel Obregón is a board member of the Mario Santo Domingo Foundation and was its Chairman/CEO from 1984 to 2019, leading its transformation and growth into an organization which today manages Colombia's largest social housing and community development projects, as well as microenterprise support programs, pioneering social innovation initiatives and transformative grant-making.

Mr. Obregón was also Ambassador of Colombia to UNESCO from 1994 to 1998, where he was elected to important leadership positions. He previously held executive posts in private business and a development finance bank and was a board member of major Colombian companies, amongst which Bavaria and Avianca. He has also been Chairman of associations such as the Confederation of Colombian NGO’s, the Association of Family and Corporate Foundations of Colombia and the Colombian Bankers Association. He currently chairs the boards of several Colombian non-profit organizations, amongst which the Pro-Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta foundation and the Universidad del Norte foundation, and is a board member of others in the areas of education, environment, culture and entrepreneurship.

Mr. Obregón is fluent in English, French and Spanish and holds a Masters degree in Latin American Economic Development (Georgetown University) and a B.S. in Comparative and Regional Studies (Georgetown School of Foreign Service).

Her Excellency Inga Rhonda King, who comes to diplomacy from the private sector, has lived and worked in several Caribbean countries, the United States of America, and China. She is a small business owner, business strategist, the author of three books, and a management accountant with more than two decades of professional experience. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in mathematics and chemistry, is the immediate past chair of the Investment Promotions Agency of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (Invest SVG), and a former Honorary Consul for Portugal to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Since becoming Permanent Representative in September 2013, Ambassador King has held several leadership roles which include:

- Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council for the period 2017-2018.
- Chair of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly of the 71st Session (2016 - 2017). At the time of her chairmanship, she was only the second woman to chair this committee in the history of the United Nations.
- Immediate-past chair of the Island Women Open Network (IWON) (2014 - July 2018). The IWON is tasked with ensuring gender-mainstreaming in the renewable energy sector of Small Island Developing States by building capacity at the grassroots and community level. The IWON is a part of the SIDS DOCK Secretariat platform. SIDS Dock is a UN registered SIDS International Organization.
Robert Skinner is the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Partnerships, taking up the post in July 2018. In this role, he engages partners for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), manages the UN’s relationship with the UN Foundation, oversees the administration of the UN Democracy Fund, and directs the SDG Advocates and the SDG Strategy Hub.

From November 2015 to July 2018, Robert was the Director of the United Nations Information Center (UNIC) in Washington, DC. His duties included maintaining relations with U.S. government officials, members of Congress, media, civil society, the diplomatic community, business and educational institutions; as well as managing UN public information activities.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Robert was the Executive Director in the New York Office of the United Nations Foundation, where he was responsible for managing relations with various UN offices, Permanent Missions to the UN, civil society organizations, and private sector actors; communications and press; and office operations.

Before joining the Foundation in 2006, Robert held several positions in the United States Department of State, including as Deputy Spokesperson at the United States Mission to the United Nations in New York, and as Public Affairs Officer for the United States Embassy in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. He also held posts in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire and San Salvador, El Salvador.

Robert was an attorney in the Office of the Cook County Public Defender, Chicago, Illinois before starting his diplomatic career. Robert holds a law degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Oakland University in the United States. He is married and has two children.

Ms. Spatolisano was appointed Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations on 20 December 2018.

Prior to her current post, Ms. Spatolisano had 33 years of experience in public service including extensive senior leadership in multilateral affairs. She has served as the European Union Ambassador to the OECD and UNESCO, Monaco and Andorra. She was a member of the EU Delegation to the United Nations, serving as the Head of its Economic and Trade Section. She covered all issues related to trade, development and environmental policies in the Second Committee and ECOSOC and was also the EC representative to the Fifth Committee. She was responsible for International Organizations and Development Dialogue with other Donors in the European Commission’s Directorate General for Development Cooperation. In this capacity, she assured EU presence and developed EU positions on development policy in a number of international fora including the United Nations, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, OECD, G-7 and the G-20, where she represented the EU in the G-20 Development Working Group.

Ms. Spatolisano holds a Doctorate in Law (cum laude) from Florence University and is fluent in Italian, English and French. She is married with two children.
Anne Bahr Thompson is Managing Director of Synergos’ Philanthropy program, including the Global Philanthropists Circle. For more than 25 years she has counseled leaders across sectors – including companies, non-profits, family offices, foundations, and humanitarian aid organizations -to connect more deeply with purpose and values, develop a social mission, crystalize operating principles, and identify like-minded partners.

Author of Do Good and named a Trust Across America 2018 Top Thought Leader in Trust, Anne pioneered the model of Brand Citizenship. She is a former executive director and head of consulting at Interbrand, the world's leading brand consultancy, and the founder of Onesixtyfourth, a strategic and creative consultancy.

Anne has authored articles for numerous publications including Economist Books, hbr.com, Bloomberg News, The Guardian, and PR News. She’s been interviewed on podcasts and radio shows and regularly speaks at business schools and conferences globally. Anne holds an MBA from the Darden Graduate School at the University of Virginia and has been an adjunct professor at New York University Stern School of Business's London campus.

Antha Williams leads the Environment Program at Bloomberg Philanthropies, supporting Michael Bloomberg's personal efforts to combat climate change as well as initiatives to improve sustainability of cities, to accelerate the transition to clean energy, combat overfishing and protect coral reefs, and help businesses and investors better understand climate-related financial risks and opportunities.

Antha was Consulting Producer of Paris to Pittsburgh, a film about communities across America grappling with the impacts of climate change, and From the Ashes. Previously she served in leadership positions at Corridor Partners, Atlantic Philanthropies, The Beldon Fund, the Campaign for Change, and Green Corps. She sits on the Boards of Directors of the League of Conservation Voters, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, the European Climate Foundation, Global Fishing Watch and Oceans5. Antha graduated from Dartmouth College and lives in New York.