

**Annual Meeting of the General Assembly
of the Global Social Observatory
150 Route de Ferney, Geneva, Switzerland
19 September 2014**

**Annual Report of the Executive Director
July 2013 to July 2014**

During its tenth year, the activities of the Global Social Observatory continued its active engagement in support of multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral dialogue, collaboration and action on global social issues. The main activity has been a project involving a consultation process on the prevention and management of conflict of interest in the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement. The GSO has also engaged in advocating multi-stakeholder participation in the preparations and follow-up of the second International Conference on Nutrition and has remained supportive of the NCD Alliance and others involved in advocating for multi-stakeholder engagement in the global campaign on the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases. Additional activities have included a series of webinars and roundtables on the post-2015 Development Agenda and the introduction of a bimonthly newsletter on social and economic developments of interest to GSO members. This report includes brief descriptions of each of these activities.

The project for the SUN Movement has elevated the resource base of the GSO as a result of a grant awarded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in April 2013 and a further grant awarded by the same Foundation in April 2014 for the GSO to implement this project. Staffing and office space are now directly handled by the GSO for this project. This report includes a review of the 2013 financial report as it documents these important changes.

Finally, this report provides, as usual, updates on changes in the GSO leadership.

Consultation Process on the Prevention and Management of Conflict of Interest in the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement

As we reported last year, a full proposal was submitted to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in January 2013, and approval was officially granted on 1 April 2013 to implement a consultation process on Conflict of Interest issues associated with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement. The project is running from April 2013 to March 2015.

The purpose of the project is to undertake a transparent process to address the issue of conflict of interest in the context of the SUN Movement, in order to ensure that all stakeholders can contribute fully to achieving the Movement's objective of delivering

better nutritional outcomes for mothers and children. The Movement is supporting government-led, multi-stakeholder initiatives in over 50 countries. As it has with programs to address HIV/AIDS, diabetes and non-communicable diseases, the GSO is creating a neutral space for all stakeholders committed to working together through the SUN Movement to end maternal and child under-nutrition, to build a mutual understanding of each stakeholder's objective; to prepare guidance on the practical meaning of engagement in the SUN Movement; and to explore ways to manage conflicts of interest that may arise.

The project is organized around three objectives – (1) mapping the issues regarding the Principles of Engagement for the SUN Movement; (2) establishing and implementing a consultative process to adopt a reference note and toolkit on the Principles of Engagement and conflict of interest; and (3) testing the potential for implementing the reference note and toolkit in specific country settings through a series of enhanced learning exercises. The mapping exercise was completed prior to the first consultation event in June 2013.

The consultation process was supported by a GSO/SUN Steering Committee and involved participants from the various SUN networks (civil society, business, donor and UN) plus member governments. Three consultation events were convened on 11 June, 25 July and 16 October 2013. A draft reference note and executive summary were prepared prior to the 16 October 2013 event, and an interim report on progress was submitted to the SUN Movement's Lead Group at the SUN Global Gathering in New York in September 2013. The GSO/SUN Project Director also participated in the Global Gathering.

Following the third consultation even on 16 October, participants identified further refinements in the reference note and identified elements for a supplementary toolkit. The revised reference note and toolkit were then reviewed by the GSO/SUN Steering Committee as well as by outside legal authorities. Once finalized in English and with design work to enhance their presentation, the products were translated into French and Spanish and printed for use in the third phase of the project.

The third phase has involved a series of four enhanced learning exercises. The GSO has partnered with the SUN Secretariat and worked with local SUN focal points and planning committees to organize these events. Three events have already been held in Accra, Ghana (1-2 April 2014), Nairobi, Kenya (29-30 May 2014) and in Salinitas, El Salvador (17-18 July 2014). A fourth event is expected to be held in Indonesia in October 2014 but has not yet been scheduled. The lessons learned from these enhanced learning exercises will be integrated into a final reference note and toolkit for presentation at a global conference organized by GSO in February 2015. The conference will also include two important features of the project as revised in the additional grant from the Gates Foundation. One of these is a compilation of case studies by local authors that have been presented at these enhanced learning exercises. The other is an important effort to introduce an ethics perspective to the prevention and management of conflict of interest

through a partnership with Globethics.net, working with its CEO Christoph Stückelberger and four local ethics experts from the countries where the enhanced learning exercises have been held. This is being integrated into a broader community of practice strategy through the SUN Movement.

In addition to the remaining enhanced learning exercise in Indonesia in October 2014 and the global conference in February 2015, the GSO will participate in the 2015 SUN Global Gathering, scheduled for 16 to 18 November 2014 in Rome.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition

The GSO has been involved in the consultation process for the second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) as a multi-stakeholder observer. The GSO attended the separate consultations on both 11 July and 25 August 2014 for civil society and the private sector organized by the WHO for the Joint Working Group on ICN2. The GSO also submitted a statement on 18 August 2014 supporting multi-stakeholder participation in the follow-up to ICN2 in the Web-based consultation on the draft Framework of Action.

Campaign on Prevention and Treatment of NCDs

The GSO participated in early deliberations regarding the NCD Global Coordinating Mechanism and has supported the NCD Alliance in its effective coalition building on the WHO Global Action Plan and 2014 high-level meeting at the UN General Assembly to review progress on the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs. The NCD Alliance has also been active in a health-related coalition on mobilizing support for a broad health-related goal in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The GSO has been part of this coalition but not active in its own right.

WHO Action on Non-State Actors

The GSO was invited to participate in a multi-stakeholder consultation on reform of WHO policy in relation to non-state actors in October 2013. The WHO deliberations on this issue have continued at the Executive Board in January 2014 and the World Health Assembly in May 2014. The GSO position has consistently been that approaches to non-state actors should be consistent among the different categories of non-state actors, including in the area of conflict of interest.

Post-2015 Development Agenda

Looking beyond this exciting project for the SUN Movement, the GSO initiated an interest in promoting a multi-stakeholder, inter-active and cross-cutting approach to the Post-2015 Development Agenda with a webinar in April 2013. This has continued with webinars in December 2013 and April 2014 and with two roundtable events on 24 April and 11 June 2014. The Post-2015 Development Agenda provides the GSO with a timely

framework for furthering its work in support of multi-stakeholder collaboration on NCDs, universal health coverage, economic growth and employment, food security and nutrition, climate change and water resources management, as well as more broadly in the areas of poverty eradication and sustainable development. Commentary on the latest report from the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals has been included in the latest GSO newsletter. We are looking to promote more partnering opportunities as we look to the final year of UN negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Bimonthly Newsletter

In February 2014, the GSO introduced a bimonthly newsletter for GSO members. The newsletters include an update on GSO activities, commentary on international organizations and NGOs of interest to the GSO mandate and a listing of upcoming GSO and other events of interest. We hope this will be a useful tool for a growing GSO membership base.

Administrative and Financial Changes at GSO

The GSO is pleased to note that the United Nations Economic and Social Council has approved its name change and is now listed with ECOSOC as the Global Social Observatory. This required GSO confirmation of the change with local authorities. We are now listed as the Global Social Observatory with the UN.

The Geneva Social Observatory has been fortunate to have members of the GSO Management Committee actively involved in specific endeavours for the GSO, including their expertise on budgeting, auditing, or otherwise managing the GSO accounts. Also, the GSO benefited from substantial support from HRI, including office space and other costs incurred by HRI, for which GSO reimbursed HRI in terms of specific project outputs.

As noted in the introduction to this report, the Gates Foundation grant for the GSO/ SUN Movement project has elevated the resource base of the GSO. The project is directly employing the Project Director, Deputy Project Director and an Administrative Assistant. No employee is employed full-time, and all are on short-term contracts that will come to an end at the conclusion of the project in March 2015. The GSO also moved into its own offices at the Ecumenical Centre on 1 November 2013 and is no longer tied to HRI for either office space or administrative functions. The two-year lease for office space is covered by grant funds allocated to overhead expenditures. More detail is provided with the financial report for 2013.

Changes on the GSO Management Committee

We note with appreciation the services of Bryan Deschamp and Mireille Quirina, both of whom have communicated their intentions not to seek a new term on the Management

Committee. They will complete their service as of the end of 2014. Mireille has also served as the Reviser des Comptes, a position that will need to be filled upon the end of her term on 31 December 2014. Ralph Doggett (also as Secretary-Treasurer) and Julia Seyer-Tainijoki have agreed to continue and seek approval for another two-year term. The Executive Director also expects to continue with a new two-year term ex officio, subject to re-appointment by the GSO Management Committee. New candidates who have agreed to serve their first two-year term on the Management Committee include Constance Thomas and Mustapha Kemal Gueye. The GSO General Assembly is welcome to nominate others.