



Official Newsletter of the Global Social Observatory
Geneva, Switzerland

Eighth issue, April 2015 (bimonthly)

Welcome to eighth issue of the [GSO](#) newsletter. The GSO aims to stimulate multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral dialogue and information sharing. The newsletter has three sections providing: updates on GSO activities; commentary on developments in international organizations and NGOs involved in addressing multi-stakeholder engagement; and upcoming events of interest.

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I. GSO Activities

Join Us for the GSO General Assembly Special Programme on Wednesday, 24 June 2015

On Wednesday, 24 June 2015, the GSO will hold its annual General Assembly with a special programme to publicize the GSO perspective on “2015 Challenges and Opportunities: Contributions from the Geneva International Scene”. Please mark this date on your calendars. We are planning an in-depth brief on the interplay between conflict-of-interest issues and multi-stakeholder partnership building for this occasion. We will also have a top-level panel from multiple sectors to share their perspectives and interact with participants. Our interest is in the means of implementation involving partnerships with a Geneva perspective for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Solutions Network at the Paris Climate Change Summit. Participants will be able to key in on the latest developments – the final negotiating session for the outcomes draft of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development that will have finished its work the week before (on 15 to 19 June 2015), and the latest stage of negotiations for the Paris Climate Change Summit coming out of the Bonn Conference on Climate Change on 1 to 11 June 2015.

The special programme is part of a project being developed by the GSO in association with the Office of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The project is focusing on cross-cutting linkages and partnering possibilities to effectively address the challenges of meeting the SDGs and the Climate Change outcomes. At the GSO General Assembly special programme on 24 June 2015, consideration will be directed to the challenges of trust-building and alignment of interests among stakeholders that can benefit from the key messages and lessons learned from a major project that the GSO has recently completed. This project has produced a policy framework and tools for the prevention and management of conflict of interest in the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement. The special programme

will be an opportunity to apply the policy framework and tools to the challenges and opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Solutions Agenda. Please watch for more details on this event in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, please note the summary of the 8 April 2015 informal, interactive dialogue on the evolving project in collaboration with UNOG.

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The Main Conclusions from the GSO Project on Conflict of Interest in the SUN Movement

The Global Social Observatory has submitted its final report in April 2015 for the project entitled “Consultation Process on Conflict of Interest in the SUN Movement”. The purpose of this two-year effort has been to develop a transparent process to address how to prevent and manage conflicts of interest in the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and to improve mutual understanding and willingness of stakeholders to collaborate through multi-stakeholder mechanisms for delivering better nutritional outcomes for mothers and children. The key messages and lessons learned from the project will be integrated into an in-depth brief on the interplay between conflict-of-interest issues and multi-stakeholder partnership building for presentation at the special programme for the annual GSO General Assembly on 24 June 2015. We share the five main conclusions from the report here in summary form.

- The GSO has delivered a *Reference Note and Toolkit on Engaging in the SUN Movement: Preventing and Managing Conflicts of Interest*; and a *Synthesis Report on Key Messages and Lessons Learned* that can help to lay the foundations for developing and strengthening SUN multi-stakeholder platforms at the country level.
- The project has reinforced the importance of addressing conflict of interest issues at the country level and thereby focusing on capacity-building at this level. This will necessarily result in national variations in applying the policy framework and tools to the national platforms – and also within stakeholder groups at the country level.

- Trust-building among *all* participating stakeholders is a necessary contributor to successful multi-stakeholder collaboration. The policy framework offered in the *Reference Note* sets the stage for identifying the positive interests that are needed for building trust and defining the parameters for collaboration.
- Platform development is at an early stage in most SUN member countries, and capacity-building is needed for building multi-stakeholder alignment generally. Integrating the GSO-produced tools for the prevention and management of conflict of interest into a comprehensive strategy for multi-stakeholder alignment can contribute significantly to the building of trust and to the development of active multi-stakeholder platforms.
- There is a fundamental inconsistency between the SUN Principles of Engagement and the varied national approaches to implementing the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Consistent, authoritative guidance is needed from those with the mandates at the global level. In the interim, the SUN Lead Group should identify what it can do to facilitate the harmonization of approaches with both the Code and the SUN Principles of Engagement.

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Summary of the GSO Informal Dialogue on 8 April 2015 on a New Colloquium Series for Multi-Stakeholder Partnering

GSO newsletter recipients have received a special report on the 8 April 2015 informal dialogue on “2015 Challenges and Opportunities: Contributions from the Geneva International Scene”. We include a summary here and encourage readers to find out more on the GSO website here. The purpose of this particular dialogue was to define, promote and facilitate a Geneva-based approach for supporting multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral initiatives and collaboration related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - and linking them

as well to the outcomes envisioned for the Climate Change Summit. Thirty participants graciously participated in this interactive dialogue from United Nations agencies, the WTO and the ITC, NGOs, multi-stakeholder partnerships, academia and diplomatic missions. The main points made by participants in the dialogue were the following.

- Geneva is an excellent choice for establishing a platform for multi-stakeholder initiatives for achieving the SDGs because of the strong Swiss and Geneva commitment to the process and the concentration and diversity of technical expertise in Geneva-based international institutions;
- Country level ownership, accountability and responsibility should be integrated into building alliances that are receptive to multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral partnerships;
- There is a need for conducting a series of dialogues to establish linkages among the SDGs and also between the SDGs and the outcomes of the Climate Change Summit, emphasizing pragmatic partnerships that are issue and outcome-based.

While the discussion was free-ranging and open-ended, there were several clear themes – the unique strength and support from both the local and national leadership in Geneva and in Switzerland; the need to establish linkages among the multiplicity of goals and targets in the SDGs, as well as their interplay with impending climate change commitments; the obstacles in mobilizing the necessary finance and resources for the SDGs, as well as for Global Public Goods, exemplified in the Financing for Development process; the particular challenge in implementing the SDGs (and climate-related commitments) through national accountability, ownership and responsibility while also operating in the increasingly multi-stakeholder and inter-dependent nature of today's world; and the advantages of the complexity and diversity of technical expertise in Geneva-based international organizations.

The GSO believes that there is strong support for developing a broad-based partnering platform and for a series of dialogues to develop a sense of what to do to work together, to identify and build on existing

partnering experiences, and to stimulate coherence. The GSO is proposing to provide an independent forum for a colloquium series to focus on the identification of linkages and of the development of partnering capacities. The series should encompass a stocktaking exercise of specific examples of successful partnering initiatives and how to take the collaborations to a more advanced level. It should be supported by a “Group of Friends” to select different subjects for the series of dialogues. It should take into account the transformation that is needed to make the linkages explicit among the SDGs and responsive to the commitments for climate change. The GSO General Assembly on 24 June 2015 will be an opportunity to define the challenges and opportunities for multi-stakeholder collaboration through trust-building and alignment of interests. Please join us on the 24th.

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Become a GSO member

The GSO's mission is to promote and provide a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on contemporary social issues. Sign up for individual membership on our [website](#).

Some of our services include:

- Providing a neutral and inclusive forum for dialogue and collaboration
- Contributing to mutual understanding of diverse perspectives
- Facilitating a broadened search for solutions
- Promoting action and partnership building
- Serving as a clearing house for research on social issues

Benefits of GSO membership include:

- E-mail alerts of and invitations to all GSO events
- Receipt of all GSO meeting reports and papers
- News alerts on matters and issues of concern to ongoing GSO projects and initiatives.

GSO members are invited to take part in the annual General Assembly and hear first-hand oral reports from GSO officials and project leaders, and participate in discussions on GSO priorities.

If you are interested in becoming an individual member, please sign up [here](#), or [contact us](#).

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II. Commentary on International Organizations and NGOs

GSO Participates in the First Dialogue of the Global Coordinating Mechanism on Non-Communicable Diseases

The “Dialogue on NCDs, Poverty and Development Cooperation” was the first multi-stakeholder “dialogue” event, held on 20 and 21 April 2015 at the WHO, for the Global Coordinating Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (GCM/NCD). Established in September 2014, the GCM/NCD is led by Member-States but is open to other participants from NGOs, business associations, WHO Collaborating Centres, academic institutions and philanthropic foundations. The Dialogue was a remarkable example of multi-stakeholder dialogue, with excellent turnout from multiple stakeholder groups. The GSO was represented at the Dialogue by its Executive Director, Katherine Hagen.

The WHO report of this event will be available in June, but we highlight some interim impressions here. The Dialogue was ably co-chaired by H.E. Ambassador Mr Jean-Marc Hoscheit, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations in Geneva and H.E. Ambassador Mr Taonga Mushayavanhu, Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations in Geneva. The programme (available [here](#)) featured prominent experts whose presentations were very substantive and informative, and there were numerous opportunities for truly interactive dialogue with the participants. Poverty itself was linked to many NCD-related conditions – especially air pollution, rheumatic heart disease and cervical cancer but also more generally the social determinants of health. The prevalence of hypertension and the role of basic vaccinations were also

identified as key issues to address. But it remains a challenge to bring development agencies into the multi-sectoral financing needs of poverty reduction AND NCDs. Several participants highlighted projects to promote multi-sectoral financing, and others also discussed the variety of “best buys” to tackle NCDs. Raising tobacco taxes was cited as an obvious benefit for both raising revenues to address NCDs and reducing tobacco consumption. Promoting breastfeeding was another obvious cost-effective strategy. Another issue related to financing was the absence of a separate fund for NCDs in the outcome of the 2011 High-level Summit, which many participants felt was a mistake and should be corrected with a moral appeal for action against NCDs.

Another line of discussion was directed to the complex interdependencies among stakeholders as well as sectors. Financing concerns and a new set of institutional capacities and responsibilities do raise the challenge of how to bring the private sector into the national action plans. In the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the financing issues that are being addressed through the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, a predominant message is that significant financing for the SDGs needs to come from the private sector. And yet, in the health world, the suspicions of conflict of interest by the private sector are blocking a cooperative approach. One proposal informally discussed on the sidelines of the GCM/NCD Dialogue was to develop a “typology” of business sectors with varying degrees of regulatory oversight and collaboration. Participants were aware of the separate and difficult negotiations among WHO Member-States on a new WHO framework for engagement with non-state actors, and this will be a major issue at the World Health Assembly in May 2015.

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GSO Considers Follow-up Dilemmas for Action on Nutrition

The GSO has participated in small-group meetings with both FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva (on 16 April 2015) and WHO Director of Nutrition for Health and Development Francesco Branca (on 23 April 2015) to discuss follow-up strategies for the Second International Conference on Nutrition. Both the FAO and the WHO

have follow-up proposals before their governing bodies – the World Health Assembly in May and the FAO Conference in June. Civil society groups are interested in ensuring that both food security and health concerns are integrated into advocacy and action to promote better nutrition worldwide. In addition, efforts are under way to increase dramatically the resources that are being devoted to undernutrition in particular. At the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and IMF on 16 April 2015, a new “Power of Nutrition” multi-donor trust fund was launched to multiply resources from both private and public sources through matching offers.

One of the concerns addressed at the Geneva-based meetings with FAO and WHO officials was how to involve civil society and private sector into the follow-up efforts. There is a revitalized and functioning Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that meets annually in Rome and has various task forces that meet through the year to develop advisory policies, such as guiding principles and codes. It has Civil Society and Private Sector Mechanisms for channeling these perspectives into its deliberations but limits actual voting in the CFS to member states. From the FAO perspective, this seems to be a useful arrangement to add nutrition concerns to the CFS programme. Some civil society groups see this as a useful way for nutritionists to connect to other issues and be more holistic, but others are skeptical of how receptive an organization that is run primarily by ministries of agriculture would be to embrace a credible health-oriented perspective on nutrition. In any case, it seems likely that the Standing Committee on Nutrition, which has been the main apparatus for inter-agency coordination of nutrition in the UN system, will have a key role. It has been operating within the WHO for the past several years, but it had been based in Rome previously and might be “rotated” back to assist the CFS on nutrition issues.

Another issue that has come up in these discussions is a proposal for an “International Decade of Action for Nutrition” which had been included in the outcome documents for ICN2 in November 2014. While there have been informal consultations over a draft resolution at the UN General Assembly sponsored by Ecuador and Bolivia, the latest reports from the UN indicate that this proposal has been set aside. The timing would appear to be unfortunate, given the dominant focus on

negotiations for the Post-2015 Development Agenda in the UN General Assembly. The idea may be taken up again after the September Summit in one of the UNGA committees. There is considerable interest in finding the appropriate “umbrella” to bring the various sectors concerned about nutrition to pursue an activist strategy, and this will be debated at both the WHA and the FAO Conference.

In the meantime, we are impressed to learn that a new “Power of Nutrition” multi-donor trust fund was launched on 16 April 2015 in Washington, DC, to be headquartered in London. Its mission is to unlock one billion dollars in new financing “to transform children’s futures on a scale that few can achieve alone”. Initial commitments amounting to approximately \$200 million have come from the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, the World Bank Group Trust Fund, UBS Optimus Foundation, and the UK Department of International Development. UNICEF is also an implementing partner. The fund will be a catalyst to multiply resources through matching offers, with the World Bank Group’s International Development Agency pledging to match at least another \$100 million. This will be a partnership of investors and implementers, open to new private and public investors interested in funding “large-scale, high-impact programmes” in countries that are among the worst affected in undernutrition. One hopes that the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement will facilitate the kind of multi-stakeholder cooperation that this new fund hopes to promote.

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GSO Internships Contribute to Understanding Key Issues

The GSO has benefited from part-time internships with undergraduate students who are part of semester-abroad programmes from Boston University, Kent State University and Smith College. Students receive academic credit for their internships as part of their study abroad. The GSO is pleased to have worked with two interns, Megan Anderson and Emily Siebert from Kent State University, and a third intern, Pablo Das from Boston University, who completed their internships at the end of April 2015 – and two interns from Smith College who will

be completing their internships later. We wish all of them them well in their continued studies. Four of the five interns have participated in GSO webinar to report on their impressions of major Geneva international meetings. Three of them (Megan, Pablo and Emily) have also completed special research reports as part of their internship experience, and we have included their full reports on the GSO website. Each has prepared a short summary of their reports for inclusion in this issue of the GSO newsletter, and we include them here. Our two other interns, Hanae Miyaki and Farah Kahn from Smith College, will have more to say in our next newsletter.

a. Megan Anderson, GSO Intern from Kent State University, on Food Safety

The World Health Organization (WHO) is certainly taking the initiative on a big issue in today's society: food safety. In fact, World Health Day, which recently took place on the seventh of April, had a focus on this particular issue with the appropriate slogan--- "From farm to plate, make food safe."

WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan noted how significant the issues of food safety and, consequently, foodborne illness are with regard to both outbreaks and potential epidemics. Looking at the supply chain of the food industry itself, it is evident how a food safety issue in one place can become an issue of international proportions. Shipments are made all over the world from just one source. With the many subsidies of the food and agricultural industries, as well as individual producers, there are numerous opportunities for unsafe food practices to occur with global ramifications.

The WHO emphasizes the need for active participation of the public in reducing unsafe food practices. Reading food labels that detail the necessary precautions that are needed in food preparation are of special importance at the consumer level. Risk reduction initiatives can be useful at the national and global levels in controlling large-scale contamination problems with chemical and microbial agents. Pesticides and bacteria are two widespread examples.

Dr. Kazuaki Miyagishima, Director of the WHO department responsible for food safety made a point that "it often takes a crisis for the collective consciousness on

food safety to be stirred and any serious response to be taken." This is undoubtedly accurate, especially in what we have seen in the past with other similar health issues. The WHO is pursuing an analysis on the global burden of foodborne disease with results expected by October of this year. The African region is an area of specific concern, reporting the highest burden of enteric disease in past years.

I think it is especially important to highlight this issue and wise to make this the topic of choice as the world is becoming increasingly more globalized. The slogan encompasses the impact that each constituent involved in getting food from the producer to the plate of the consumer has on food safety. It will take many different entities working together to make a difference as well as multi-stakeholder collaboration from both the private and public sectors to raise awareness of the issue. It is possible, and I believe that the WHO is taking the necessary steps to achieve this goal. See the WHO news release on this topic [here](#). Megan's in-depth report on this and related issues is available on www.gsogeneva.ch.

b. Pablo Das, GSO Intern from Boston University, on Internet Privacy and Surveillance Issues

In just the past 15 years, the number of Internet users across the globe has increased ten fold. This sudden growth, from 300 millions users to 3 billion users, has yielded both positive and negative impacts. The negative impacts have presented themselves through threats of cybercrime, online privacy breaches and excessive online surveillance. While cybercrime is still a developing issue at the global level, online data protection and freedom from excessive surveillance have become prominent issues in the global community. Although both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) outline a protection from unlawful interference of an individual's privacy, the dimensions of that privacy online are only now being defined. The consideration of Internet privacy kicked off in 2012 when Sweden and the U.S. co-sponsored a Human Rights Council resolution (20/8, 5 July 2012) stating that the same human rights apply on Internet communications as they do to non-Internet communications, which of course includes the right to privacy. The promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet were also

endorsed in the 26th session of the Human Rights Council (26/13, 26 June 2014).

Freedom from excessive surveillance, however, has perhaps been the most noticeable global debate. Intelligence agencies across the world like the American National Security Agency and the British Government Communications Headquarters were found to have sophisticated surveillance programs on their own citizens and foreign governments. These controversies have called for stronger legislation protecting online privacy. However, the issues with privacy do not stop there. The electronic commerce sector has simultaneously grown with the Internet. While e-commerce growth has been welcomed, there is an apparent lack of security regarding e-commerce transactions as well. Often times, e-commerce transactions have led to dangers like companies storing and exploiting user information and even engaging in online fraud. Both of these topics of freedom from excessive surveillance and online privacy in e-commerce have been contested in international debate in recent years.

Regarding protection from excessive surveillance, UNHRC has taken the lead regarding both research and international pressure. The UNHRC has passed two resolutions regarding Internet privacy and surveillance (25/117 of March 2014 and most recently 28/27 on 26 March 2015). Leading up to the second resolution, the UNHRC received a comprehensive report on surveillance issues from the High Commissioner for Human Rights and convened a panel discussion on privacy and surveillance issues at its 27th session in September 2014. Most notably, in its March 2015 resolution, the Council has established a new special rapporteur on privacy to investigate the best practices of online privacy and report any violations he or she may encounter regarding protection of online privacy. The UNHRC resolutions were all adopted by consensus.

In the realm of e-commerce, there is a clear lack of regulation and policies protecting consumer's rights. This has raised concerns about e-commerce in developing countries. UNCTAD has released two reports, starting with a review of e-commerce laws in ASEAN countries and then moving more broadly to recommendations and guidelines for countries to ensure that data protection is maintained even outside the e-commerce industry.

In March, UNCTAD convened an "E-Commerce Week" to review its research, share experiences and contribute to preparations for revising the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection.

- c. Emily Siebert, GSO Intern from Kent State University, on the Working Groups of the Global Coordinating Mechanism on Non-communicable Diseases

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have significant socioeconomic impacts on societies, especially in low and middle income countries because they are increasingly prevalent and stifle the poverty reduction initiatives included in the UN Millennium Development Goals. In 2011, the UN General assembly adopted a Political Declaration on NCDs. It led to a comprehensive NCD Global Action Plan at the WHO which also provided for the formation of the Global Coordination Mechanism for NCDs (GCM). Established in September 2014, the GCM is a separate secretariat to advocate and raise awareness, disseminate information of new scientific research and best practice, encourage innovation, advance multisectoral action, and advocate the mobilization of resources. It has convened two Working Groups in February 2015 and convened its first multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral dialogue in April 2015. This article summarizes the work of the two Working Parties.

The two Working Groups are addressing commitments from the Political Declaration on NCDs to get the private sector involved and to allocate financial resources for the prevention and control of NCDs(7). The two Working Groups have specific agendas and scheduled meetings and are expected to submit final reports by the end of 2015.

The GCM Working Group on how to realize governments' commitments to engage with the private sector had its first meeting on February 18-19 2015. There were discussions of the current initiatives to incorporate the private sector within the targets areas of the GCM and to review and assess progress on marketing, product reformulation and salt reduction, workplace programmes, and access to medicines. On this last issue, for example, some preliminary conclusions were that it may be better to approach partnerships with private

sector entities by making them more specific to a certain disease rather than just NCDs in general; that there is a high potential for success in working with existing public-private partnerships and on strengthening their effectiveness; that NGOs may be a significant source for the distribution of drugs in small communities; and that large pharmaceutical companies should be monitored on the quality of drugs being produced. These kinds of preliminary conclusions have left the Working Group with things to consider and work towards for its next meeting, which is scheduled for 17-18 June 2015. The Working Group also came to the conclusion to hold separate bilateral consultations in June with each different stakeholder group (private sector entities, NGOs, philanthropic and academic institutions, as well as UN and international organizations), with member states present to observe both in person and via webcast.

The second Working Group on realizing governments' commitment to funding NCD programs met on February 23-24 2015 and discussed the commitments made by the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs on domestic financing, bilateral/multilateral financing, and innovative financing. The discussion on domestic funding extensively looked at the possibility of tobacco taxing as a sustainable source of income for states to use to fund NCD initiatives, while also preventing the use of tobacco. In the session on bilateral and multilateral funding, the concept of focusing on the "best buy" interventions was discussed. It was agreed that lower income countries need to have more of an emphasis and sense of urgency behind prioritizing NCD initiatives. The concept of multi-sectoral aid also came up, which intersects with the other Working Group and their work with the private sector. The final session on innovative financing considered the potential for lotteries, private sector partnerships, reducing costs by working with industry, micro financing, bonds, and many other suggestions. This Working Group will meet again on 6 to 7 May and for a third meeting on 23 to 24 September 2015.

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III. Upcoming Events

GSO events

- GSO Webinar Series: Preparations for World Health Assembly, 13 May 2015
- GSO Webinar Series: Outcomes of the World Health Assembly, 3 June 2015
- GSO Webinar Series: Outcomes of the International Labour Conference, 17 June 2015
- Annual General Assembly with a special programme to publicize the GSO perspective on "2015 Challenges and Opportunities: Contributions from the Geneva International Scene", Geneva 24 June 2015

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Key upcoming events of interest to the GSO

- Triple COPs [Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions](#) Geneva 4 May – 15 May
- UNCTAD [Commission on Science and Technology for Development, eighteenth session](#) Geneva, Switzerland 4 May - 8 May
- UNCTAD [Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade Services and Development, third session](#) Geneva 11 May - 13 May
- WIPO [International Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a New Act for the Lisbon Conference for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration](#) Geneva 11 May - 21 May
- UNECE [Fifth meeting of the Working Group on Development](#) Geneva 11 May - 13 May
- ITU [ITU Council 2015](#) Geneva 12 May - 22 May

- ITU [ITU's 150th anniversary celebrations](#) Geneva 17 May
- WHO [68th World Health Assembly](#) Geneva 18 May - 26 May
- UNCTAD [Trade and Development Commission, seventh session](#) Geneva, Switzerland 18 May - 22 May
- IGF [Second Open Consultations for IGF10 and MAG: Evolution of Internet Governance: Empowering Sustainable Development](#) Geneva 20 May - 22 May
- ITU [WSIS Forum](#) Geneva 25 May - 29 May
- WMO [17th Session of the World Meteorological Organization Congress](#) Geneva 25 May - 12 Jun
- WHO [137th Session Executive Board](#) Geneva 27 May - 28 May
- UNECE [Open-ended Consultations on UNECE Work on Sustainable Energy](#) Geneva 27 May - 28 May
- UNGA [Stakeholder Hearings for Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) New York 26-27 May
- ECOSOC [Forum on Partnership](#) New York 28 May
- ILO [Committee on Freedom of Association](#) Geneva 28 May - 29 May
- ILO [104th Session of the International Labour Conference](#) Geneva 1 Jun - 13 Jun
- OECD [Forum 2015 and Ministerial Conference](#) Paris, France 2 Jun - 3 Jun
- FAO [FAO Conference](#) Rome 6 Jun - 13 Jun
- G8 [G7 Summit](#) Schloss Elmau, Germany 7 Jun - 8 Jun
- ILO [324th Session of the Governing Body](#) Geneva 13 Jun
- WTO ["Merci Genève" 20th anniversary Open Day At WTO headquarters](#) Geneva 14 Jun
- FAO [FAO Council 152nd Session](#) Rome 15 Jun
- UNDESA [Third drafting session of the outcome document for the FfD Conference](#) New York 15 Jun - 19 Jun
- HRC [29th Session Human Rights Council](#) Geneva 15 Jun - 3 Jul
- IEA [Launch of World Energy Outlook special report on Climate](#) London 15 Jun
- UNIDO [Vienna Energy Forum 2015](#) Vienna, Austria 18 Jun - 20 Jun
- UNCTAD [UNCTAD Public Symposium with civil society](#) Geneva, Switzerland 22 Jun - 23 Jun
- UN Global Compact [Global Compact +15: Business as a Force for Good](#) New York 23 Jun - 25 Jun
- UN [High-level Event on Climate Change](#) New York 29 Jun

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IV. Who We Are

The Global Social Observatory (GSO) is an international organization founded in the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland in April 2004. The mission of the GSO is to initiate dialogue on social issues in order to encourage leaders to engage in a broadened search for solutions and policy coherence. This service is

based on a participatory process in a neutral space that brings all interested parties together across national boundaries to identify solutions and policies that are coherent. These solutions can then contribute to policy-making at the governmental and intergovernmental levels. Visit our [website](#) for regular news and project updates.

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