



## 2018 Global Washington Conference Report

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When Global Washington (GlobalWA) was founded in 2008, Seattle’s global development community was highly fragmented. While non-profits, for-profits, academic institutions, and foundations were undertaking amazing work around the world – tackling healthcare challenges, poverty alleviation, early childhood education, and so much more – they frequently operated in silos.

The founding members of GlobalWA began with a vision and set the course to build the vibrant, connected, and thriving ecosystem of over 160 organizations that we now have in Washington state.



*Attendees at the 2018 GlobalWA conference chat during a break.  
Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

The 2018 annual Global Washington conference celebrated the ten-year anniversary of the organization, and it set the stage for our work over the next decade. As an organization, GlobalWA will continue to explore the big challenges and probe the underlying root causes of poverty, disease, injustice, and inequality as we seek to advance promising solutions that work globally.

Through a new initiative launched at the 2018 conference, Global Washington plans to harness members’ collective impact over the next decade toward ten topics that align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, signed by 193 countries, were conceived to set the world on a better course by 2030 by ending poverty, fighting inequality, stopping climate change, and combating other global challenges.

We had a record number of attendees at the conference, and we heard from speakers such as Patrick Awuah of Ashesi University, Justin Spelhaug from Microsoft, Sarah Hendriks of the Gates Foundation, and Steve Davis of PATH. Breakout sessions included topics on financial inclusion, technology for conservation, refugee integration, maternal health, gender equity, and so much more.

We consider all our members to be SDG “Goalmakers,” and throughout the next decade we will be championing how their work actively pushes the SDG targets across the finish line. GlobalWA members

are leading change all over the world. If we work together—businesses, non-profits, and civil society—we believe that a more connected Global Washington can usher in the best version of the future we all want to see.

## Network Leadership



*GlobalWA board member, Marty Kooistra, discusses challenges of collaboration and network leadership. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Global Washington board member, **Marty Kooistra**, spoke about the ways in which organizations can implement a Network Leadership approach to solving “Wicked Problems,” those challenges that are difficult to define, have tangled root causes, and link stakeholders with diverse values, interests and positions. These problems vary from person to person and community to community. They are constantly evolving, and have no obvious answers or measures of success.

As the executive director of the **Housing Development Consortium** of Seattle-King County, Kooistra knows a thing or two about diverse stakeholders with divergent views.

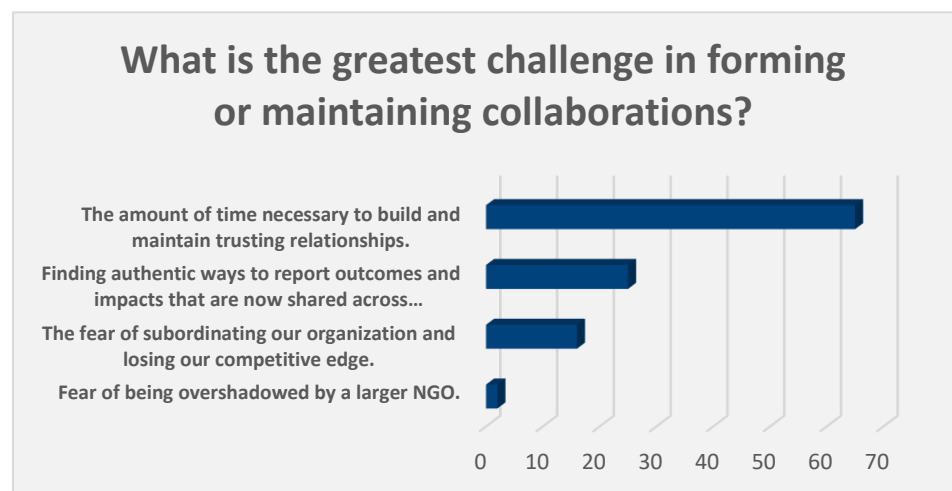
“We know complex collaborations offer a robust response to wicked problems,” Kooistra said, “but we also know that collaboration is an unnatural act involving unconsenting adults.”

His comment drew a laugh from the audience, and Kooistra continued with practical advice for making collaboration more effective.

First, the collaborators must clarify the focus and define the challenge, he said.

Next, they need to cultivate trust, and coordinate their existing actions in order to become a learning network. And finally, they must move beyond a learning network to create impact networks, where they can co-create programs and eliminate duplication of effort.

When he asked the audience to respond to a live poll on what they consider the greatest challenge in forming or maintaining collaborations, the top response, by a wide margin, was “The amount of time necessary to build



and maintain trusting relationships.” The second most common response was “Finding authentic ways to report outcomes and impacts that are now shared across organizations.”

## Opening Keynote: Justin Spelhaug, General Manager, Tech for Social Impact, Microsoft Philanthropies

“The days of narrowly focused [Corporate Social Responsibility] are not going to cut it anymore,” **Justin Spelhaug** said, as he kicked off the opening keynote. Businesses have an important role to play in addressing poverty and inequality in our world by augmenting the efforts of governments, non-profits, and philanthropies, he said. Addressing today’s global challenges is more than just a “nice-to-have” component for companies. “A company cannot be relevant to their customers if they do not embed social impact into the DNA of what they do every day,” Spelhaug said.



*Justin Spelhaug, Microsoft Philanthropies General Manager, Tech for Social Impact, delivers the first keynote at the 2018 GlobalWA conference. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Spelhaug lauded the progress that has been made in reducing global poverty over the past 20 years, noting that economic growth, particularly in countries like China and India, has lifted one billion people out of poverty. And yet, 800 million people still live below the poverty line. Spelhaug celebrated the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals, and said that in order to achieve them, businesses need to step up in contributing their resources and expertise. Not only that, but businesses can be prosperous while working towards these goals.

In a “Blueprint for Corporate Social Impact,” Spelhaug challenged businesses to go beyond CSR and instead think about a company’s Total Social Impact. By focusing on core competencies that can also have a positive social impact, businesses can build a portfolio of scalable initiatives to amplify through partnership with other organizations.

At Microsoft, Spelhaug said, there are two areas where the company uses its core competencies for social impact. One is Artificial Intelligence (AI), which can support researchers looking to better understand our planet and find solutions to environmental challenges. In addition, AI is used in humanitarian and development efforts, including damage-mapping of disaster areas, anticipating drought conditions in order to get ahead of famine responses, and supporting refugees and displaced groups who need access to information and learning tools.

Nonprofit innovation is another area where Microsoft is using its technology for good. Spelhaug highlighted Dynamics 365, a new platform that non-profits are using to manage their relationships with supporters, analyze data, and support project implementation. This platform has also been used in humanitarian contexts to help organizations manage food and medical aid, and social services for

refugees, freeing up time to address longer-term priorities, such as creating jobs and strengthening communities.

## CONCURRENT PANELS

### Crossing Streams: How stakeholders are charting a systems-based approach to achieve sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene

For decades, funders and non-profit organizations have sought sustainable approaches to increasing access to water, sanitation, and hygiene globally, yet according to UNICEF, 30-50 percent of such projects fail after two to five years. Some of the common sustainability challenges include a lack of government and community adoption, the lack of robust local supply chains for operations and maintenance, and a project-by-project approach, rather than a systems-strengthening approach. Increasingly, funders and non-profits are implementing new systems-based strategies.

Reflecting on the failures of many water initiatives, **Rachel Cardone**, deputy director at **The Stanford Woods Institute**, noted that the majority of project incentives promote pricing tariffs and new infrastructure, rather than maintenance and long-term sustainability.



*Concurrent panel session speakers discuss systems-based approaches to achieving sustainable WASH.  
Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

**Andrea Jones**, program associate for international programs at the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation** agreed. “It wasn’t until about 10 years ago that the foundation asked ourselves, what kind of impact [are our investments] having? How are they really working to improve the lives of the vulnerable and disadvantaged?”

In keeping with the SDG framework, which considers water an essential public service, the Foundation’s approach today is to provide safe and reliable water through healthcare facilities and schools. It also considers the needs of communities, incentives for partners and stakeholders, and the underlying government structures needed to function cohesively.

**Leslie Llado**, the program sustainability manager at **Splash**, said that there has been an increased realization in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector that high quality implementation is not enough, and behavior change has since become a much bigger focal point.

“Historically a lot of WASH professionals were from more technical backgrounds, like water engineers and water scientists,” Llado said. “I think there’s been a big shift within the sector to having more people with backgrounds in economics or anthropology, or behavior change or social science, to help support that more holistic system around WASH in schools, not just thinking about the hardware but also the software and what needs to be done to maintain things long term.”

### Thinking Outside the Pencil Box



Panelists during a concurrent session discuss methods for improving access to education for women and girls. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.

In a highly interactive session about women and girls’ education, panelists and audience members discussed the importance of funding and expanding girls’ access to primary education, as well as increasing women’s access to post-secondary education and employment opportunities. While 41 million more girls are in school today than in 2002, their educational and career opportunities still lag behind those of men worldwide. The panelists discussed how more mentorship and emphasis on girls’ leadership is needed, particularly during girls’ adolescence.

“Getting young girls into school is one thing, but *exciting* them about their future prospects is an important part that I didn’t feel was being done by arithmetic and reading from a book,” said **Yawa Hansen-Quao**, executive director for **Emerging Public Leaders**, a two-year leadership program for high-achieving Ghanaian university graduates.

**Shogofa Amini**, fellow at **Sahar Education**, noted how she uses her own life experience as an example to others. “Now I work in my community, empowering other Afghan women,” she said. To others, Amini is proof that women can travel; they can get an education; and they can be so much more.

Panelists also discussed how smart use of technology can boost educational achievement for girls and women. **Cathy Cavanaugh**, principal program manager for Learning and Analytics at **Microsoft** talked about the company’s research with educational organizations that examined “how using technology to

increase student voice, choice, and agency can help them with both academic and social/emotional learning.”

### A Dignified Path Out of Poverty

For the 1.7 billion unbanked people globally, universal access to financial services is critical for eradicating extreme poverty and promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth. This panel explored some of the latest approaches to financial inclusion to empower low-income people worldwide and break the cycle of poverty.



*Speakers on a concurrent session panel review some of the latest and most promising approaches to financial inclusion. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Several of the speakers focused on how their own organizations respond to “market failures,” where financial services for low-income and vulnerable populations have remained out of reach. **Andres Manzano Gomez**, senior product manager for Destination International Expansion at **Remitly**, shared how his organization has become more creative in its money transfer services. For instance, it now offers customers in low-income countries a range of options, such as bank deposits, mobile payments, cash pickups, and even home delivery.

It’s not just remittance services that are branching out. Many microfinance institutions are also responding to customers’ needs and identifying barriers to financial success. As a result, they have begun bundling financial services with literacy training and access to a bank account, as well as health and wellness information.

Since financial inclusion ultimately requires a transformation of systems, speakers emphasized the importance of collaborating with governments, the private sector, and other key stakeholders.

**KJ Zunigha**, research and impact officer for **Global Partnerships**, said, “As kumbaya as it sounds, I think collaboration is the name of the game. The private sector is trying to push down and reach the ‘Bottom of the Pyramid’, while the nonprofit sector is starting bottom up. I think there’s a way we can create a staircase.”

New platforms are also necessary to reach low-income communities with financial tools and services. Much of this is made possible thanks to increasing access to cell phones and the Internet. Over one billion of the unbanked own a cell phone, and almost 500 million have internet access.

**Liz Kellison**, gender lead on Financial Services for the Poor at the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, believes a digital payment system is necessary to reach the 1.7 billion people who are still unbanked. Not only that, she said, “We’re not going to reach financial inclusion if we don’t address the gender gap.” There is still a 9% gap in digital financial services used by women globally.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is working to help governments digitize their payment programs, and design them in a way that economically empowers women and men.

But not every location is ready for digital financial services. **Kathleen Colson**, co-founder of **The BOMA Project**, talked about her organization’s work in remote parts of Africa. They found that implementing digital services was complicated because 98% of the women were illiterate. When BOMA Project leaders asked women whether they wanted a product they could use without knowing how to read, they said no—they wanted to learn. Now, BOMA Project is trying to fund a literacy program and working to overcome objections from donors who see it as, “so old fashioned!” Colson said.

### [Eye of the Storm: What Human Rights Organizations Can Learn from the Family Separation Crisis](#)



*Speakers on a concurrent session review key insights that emerged as the U.S. border crisis unfolded. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

One of the targets for Sustainable Development Goal 10, which aims to reduce inequality within and among countries, is to “facilitate orderly, safe and responsible migration.” Beginning in April 2018, a policy of family separation at the U.S. border launched a firestorm of debate in the United States and around the world. Many US-based groups that had been working with refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers for years suddenly found themselves thrust into the spotlight.

This panel discussed key insights that emerged as the U.S. border crisis unfolded. Speakers included **Arturo Aguilar**, executive director for the **Seattle International Foundation (SIF)**; **Michele Storms**,



deputy director of the **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)**; **Jorge Baron**, executive director of the **Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP)**; and **Chitra Hanstad**, executive director of **World Relief Seattle**.

One of the biggest challenges all four speakers mentioned was creating programs to meet immediate needs of vulnerable groups with little advance notice. For example, their organizations found themselves ill-prepared for the fallout from the family separation crisis at the US border, particularly the extensive need for legal representation. Even as the crisis has faded in and out of the national conversation, Jorge Baron noted that the pain experienced by families continues. “While migrant/children reunification has occurred, cases are still pending and the trauma is ongoing,” he said.

In response to the heightened awareness of the situation at the border, various organizations working on the issue found themselves the recipients of so-called “rage funding” – donations made at the height of media coverage by individuals with a fervent desire to counter what they perceived as grave injustices. “It is important during these ‘rage funding’ periods to turn donations and membership into activism,” Storms said.

Organizations that received such funds—ACLU and NWIRP in particular—counseled that they should be used wisely with the understanding it may represent a one-time influx. Ramping up new programs and making new hires is often unsustainable.

In contrast to other panelists, Hanstad spoke about how World Relief’s funding had decreased substantially over the last couple of years. She attributed this to “crisis fatigue,” as well as to the fact that immigration has been so thoroughly politicized, whereas before it was a solid bipartisan issue.

“Our (the United States’) refugee program gives us standing on the world stage,” Hanstad said, lamenting the fact that fewer refugees were being accepted. Hanstad also spoke about the deep sense of fear within migrant communities. As a woman of color leading a refugee organization in Washington state, she talked about how she has received threats to her life and security.

Aguilar addressed the issue of migration from the perspective of a funder, noting the importance of evaluating both long-term and short-term needs. In the short-term, migrants and refugees need access to food, shelter, and legal assistance. For long-term needs, the Seattle International Foundation has rethought its strategy with regard to Central and Latin America, focusing on analyzing the root causes of migration. “We need to facilitate a Central America where people who choose to migrate can migrate, but they are not forced to migrate,” Aguilar said.

In the US, he stressed the importance of shifting the narrative from border security to compassion. “The current narrative surrounding Latin America is one of ‘invaders,’” he said. “That narrative needs to change. It makes providing services more challenging.”

### [Harnessing Technology for Global Conservation](#)

The exponential growth of humanity’s footprint has placed enormous stress on Earth’s life support and ecological systems. Three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 13 – climate action; SDG 14 – life below water; and SDG 15 – life on land) seek to address this challenge. This session’s panelists explored how technology is assisting efforts to combat climate change’s harmful effects on fragile ecosystems and

to support conservation and research initiatives that may be able to slow, or even in some cases reverse, the loss of biodiversity.



*Concurrent session panelists explore how technology assists efforts to combat climate change's effects on fragile ecosystems. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Speakers included **Carol Bogezi**, a wildlife science researcher at the **University of Washington**; **Michael Despines**, executive director of the **Snow Leopard Trust**; **Ted Schmitt**, principal business development manager at **Vulcan**; and **Robert Long**, senior conservation scientist at the **Woodland Park Zoo**.

The moderator, **Isabel Carrera Zamanillo**, from the College of the Environment at the **University of Washington**, framed the discussion by saying that a rapid transition to a resilient world economy and an ecologically healthy planet will require innovations across every aspect of human life and society. She also noted that as a tech-hub, Seattle has become a leader in creating new tools to empower local communities around the world.

Long made the point more bluntly: “Humans are the problem and they also need to be the solution.” Despines agreed, describing how The Snow Leopard Trust designs its programs in partnership with the communities that share the snow leopard’s environment. “We know that parks will never be the solution for snow leopards, so any solution has to engage humans from day one,” Despines said. To that end, the Trust has maintained partnerships with local communities for more than three decades. The Trust also incorporates technological innovation into its efforts, using camera traps paired with Microsoft’s AI technology to track the snow leopards and gain a better understanding of their movements.

On the subject of current and future challenges caused by climate change, Schmitt said, “I think it’s amazing in our data-rich world and all the data-run industries these days that in conservation we struggle to get data on trends in biodiversity.” The most important question, though, is whether people

will act on the information gathered. “All tech can do is provide the tools and then it’s up to us to act,” said Schmidt.

Echoing this point, Despines said, “We need to get political.” He also stressed the importance of positive storytelling: “What is the vision of the world we want to live in? Many of us in this room have a vision of what this world can be.” The value of storytelling, he said, is that it can motivate people to make necessary changes in the world.

Bogezi also stressed the need to improve humans’ connection to wildlife and the environment. “Having good landscape connectivity is good for us and we get less negative interactions with animals so it’s also good for them,” she said.

## Lunch Program

GlobalWA Founder, Bill Clapp, Interviewed by Executive Director Kristen Dailey



*Global Washington Executive Director, Kristen Dailey, reminisces with philanthropist Bill Clapp about the organization’s founding. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

In a heartfelt and at times humorous exchange, **Kristen Dailey** interviewed **Bill Clapp**, a Seattle philanthropist and the founder of Global Washington. As the current head of the organization, Kristen asked Bill to recall the idea behind GlobalWA’s inception 10 years ago. Back in 2008, organizations working in global development mainly operated in silos. Since that time, “It’s grown so much,” Bill said. “It’s getting close to a tipping point, where if you ask people what they do internationally, people are going to say, ‘you mean, what aren’t we doing internationally?’”

## Patrick Awuah, Founder and President of Ashesi University

**Patrick Awuah**, the founder and president of **Ashesi University** in Ghana, was the lunch keynote speaker, as well as the recipient of Global Washington’s Global Hero award.

One thing that strongly motivates Patrick’s work is that the population of Africa is set to more than double within a generation, from 1.25 billion people to 2.5 billion. “This is a problem,” he said. “Especially with climate change. It’s going to stress security, agriculture, public health, education,

availability of jobs... Something this big requires the actions of an entire society, led by really strong leaders. It's going to require good action by governments."

Yet, such rapid population growth also holds promise. "We've seen that in Asia," he said. "If we have a productive workforce, this also represents huge potential."

Patrick's vision is for future leaders of Africa to draw on ethical frameworks that help them govern in the public interest.

In his talk, Patrick discussed how the model of Ashesi University incorporates ethical leadership into a liberal arts education. "My team and I model the kind of leadership that we would like students to have," he said. "They learn ethics, teamwork, tolerance, a spirit of service, and we also enforce a code of conduct. We've put it front and center—our mission is to educate ethical entrepreneurial leaders."

Patrick hopes that Ashesi's model becomes one that other educational institutions are able to adapt to their own needs. "What we do next has to be a systems effort," he said. "We have to do something in a more proactive way to really transform education on the continent."



*Patrick Awuah, founder and president of Ashesi University, and the recipient of Global Washington's 2018 Global Hero award, gave the conference lunch keynote speech. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Ashesi leans heavily on the Socratic method, broadly conceived. "When I say the Socratic method, I don't mean we're only looking at Western philosophy," Patrick said. "We're also looking at African and Eastern philosophy. A lot of Ghana lost its own philosophical [tradition]. We're going back to the philosophy of the villages, and we're having debates about those. That's how we do it."

## From Harm to Home: How Technology Can Improve Refugee Integration

Refugees around the world and within Washington state face enormous challenges when it comes to integrating into their new communities. This session explored the typical hurdles refugees face after being resettled in a new place, and how technology can support their transition.

**Nicky Smith**, executive director of the **International Rescue Committee**, and **Haris Svraka**, a refugee currently employed by **Swissport Fueling**, described the hardships associated with displacements. For one thing, refugees often face significant employment challenges because they cannot prove their identity – forms of identification are often lost in conflict or hastily organized travel. They may also have difficulty learning the local language. Besides the economic challenges, many refugees and displaced people experience a tremendous amount of post-traumatic stress. In many cases, they left everything behind, including their families, in search of safety.

Svraka described his own personal journey, including the loss of loved ones, and talked about the mental stress of prolonged uncertainty over his legal status and the lack of economic opportunity. “That is all we wanted, to just work, make a living, and make something out of ourselves,” Svraka said. Yet, as hard as it was for him to make the transition as a refugee when he was 19-years-old, he recognizes that for his parents and other older refugees the transition was much harder. “My mother worked as a school teacher back home. Another refugee I know... he was a doctor. Now they are cleaning rooms at the Marriott.”



*Speakers in a concurrent session discuss challenges with refugee resettlement and ways that technology can help in the transition. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Other panelists spoke about ways that technology can support refugee rights, services, and integration. When it comes to proving someone’s identity, ID cards, wristbands, and facial recognition technologies have all been used. There is also a pressing need for continuity. Haris spoke about his experience moving from one refugee camp to the next and being immunized each time with the same vaccines.

After verification of identity, the greatest needs for refugees are finding a job, learning the local language, and integrating into the community. There is empirical data to suggest that beyond the ethical dimension, hiring refugees is a good business practice. Tent, a non-profit that helps businesses identify

and understand opportunities to help refugees, found that refugees tend to have higher retention rates at companies. Hiring refugees can also enhance a company's brand reputation with younger generations. Managers may need to be patient in the beginning, but it pays off in the long-run. "Nothing enhances integration more than working side-by-side with someone in the community," said **Susan Din**, operations manager for **Tent**.

Private businesses are also leveraging their core competencies to support refugees. For example, LinkedIn is working to find better placement cities and markets for refugees to match their skills.

Looking toward the future of refugee resettlement, the panelists agreed that we fundamentally need to solve underlying causes of mass displacements happening around the world. "Technology is important but we need to find some political will to solve some of these crises to stop displacement," said Smith.

**Eric Rasmussen**, the CEO of **iRespond**, an international non-profit organization that deploys a digital biometric identity solution, implored audience members to recognize their own agency. "Let me remind you that there are huge resources on how to be effective in addressing your local legislature about the things that you think are important," Rasmussen said. "Don't forget that you, yourself can be that advocate... those voices need to be out there."

### Gender Equality, Equity, and #MeToo: Cleaning Up Our Own Houses First!

Sustainable Development Goal 5 calls for gender equality, and in particular ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere. While global development programs often champion gender equality, equity, and inclusion, some development organizations themselves are falling short when it comes to applying these principles internally. This session created an opportunity for a different kind of conversation.



*Speakers on a concurrent session panel for gender equality, equity, and inclusion, discussed some of the ways development organizations themselves fall short in applying these principles. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Panelists included **Susi Collins**, senior program manager for diversity, inclusion & belonging for **Nordstrom**; **Niketa Kulkarni**, senior research and evaluation specialist for **Landesa**; and **Min Pease**, director of impact funding for **Echoing Green**. The session was moderated by **Teresa Guillien**, managing director for **Resource Media**.

The first major challenge the speakers discussed was that characteristics associated with leadership are often associated with male leaders. One trait often rewarded in male leaders is charisma, which may be seen as flirtatious when exhibited by women. Speakers noted how women must constantly monitor how they are presenting themselves and learn to be more comfortable with being outspoken.

“I had to learn how to be strategic in using my voice. I made a lot of mistakes along the way that have taught me to be a better advocate for social justice,” said Susi Collins.

“I have worked on women's issues in international development for over ten years and it's not lost on me that each one of the organizations I worked for was led by a white male,” said Niketa Kulkarni. “It is systemic and problematic.”

A second major challenge discussed was the various ways in which women of color experience discrimination from white women, many of whom perpetuate male-dominated systems, rather than encouraging other successful ways to lead.

As Min Pease, Echoing Green's director for impact funding said, “Talent is equally distributed, but opportunity is not.”

The panelists also discussed the myriad challenges of being a working mother. Women often delay starting their families because they worry what will happen to their careers. As it turns out, that fear is well-founded, as many jobs don't provide women with the flexibility and supportive environment they need to balance work and family.

“I made a choice for a long time not to become a mother because I was nervous about what that would mean for my profession,” said Kulkarni. “Now I am 40 years old and pregnant with my second child. These are choices we have to make because we are so scared of what's going to happen to us at work.”

### [Zero Hunger: A Renewed Commitment to Food Security Worldwide](#)

Sustainable Development Goal 2 calls for the international community to build sustainable solutions to end hunger in all its forms, with the ultimate objective of achieving food security by 2030. Although meaningful progress has been made to combat hunger and food insecurity globally, more progress is urgently needed as 790 million people worldwide still suffer from hunger, and agricultural expenditures in developing countries continues to be inadequate. Because the causes of hunger and food insecurity are complex, and cut across multiple global goals, progress requires multi-stakeholder partnerships to address a range of factors including environmental goals, local food security and food sovereignty, nutrition and health, human rights, and support for local autonomy and decision-making.

This session brought together food security experts from transnational agencies, corporations, and international NGOs to discuss how such partnerships can drive food security and make a positive impact over the next decade.

Governments can help create an enabling environment for sustainable food systems, create incentives that reward sustainable practices, and help initiatives reach scale. Within this framework, NGOs bring strong community partnerships and a good understanding of the local context, including food security

challenges and opportunities. Businesses, meanwhile, can help food producers reach markets and utilize their distribution networks and purchasing power to support sustainable agriculture.

When it comes to multi-stakeholder partnerships, having mission alignment is key. **Diana Fletschner**, senior director of Research, Monitoring & Evaluation for **Landesa** said, “To be able to work together, you need more than good intentions. You need a common language, common goals, and concerted training efforts.”



*Speakers on a panel for sustainable solutions to ending hunger discuss the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

It is also critical to understand business dynamics. At PepsiCo, initiatives are underway to reformulate existing products to improve public health and to improve the portfolio of healthy products put in the market. “Healthy products just don’t sell as well,” said **Margaret Henry**, director of sustainable agriculture at **PepsiCo**. “Ending hunger through Doritos and Pepsi is different than ending hunger through Quaker Oats and Tropicana.”

Another topic the panel touched on was how agriculture sits at the nexus of conflict, hunger, and climate change, making it an important component in pursuit of the SDGs. “Policy, partnership, and peace are the key factors in how we are going to address global hunger,” said **David Austin**, director of strategic partnerships at the **World Food Programme**.

Agriculture may be part of a complex system, but when agricultural systems are functioning sustainably, they can be a strong force for positive change, including helping to buffer market volatility and climate change.



## Delivering with Dignity: Innovations and Trends in Maternal and Newborn Health



*Speakers on a concurrent panel session discuss new approaches to improving health outcomes for mothers and babies.  
Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Sustainable Development Goal 5 seeks to achieve good health and well-being for all. The first two targets under this goal include reducing maternal mortality and ending all preventable deaths of newborns and children under five years of age. This session focused on how Washington-state based organizations are supporting new approaches to improve health outcomes for mothers and babies.

The panel discussed two areas for continued improvement: 1) The provision of respectful delivery care and 2) collaboration with local communities to design new solutions.

Speakers included **Heidi Breeze-Harris**, executive director of **PRONTO International**; **Sadaf Khan**, senior program officer for **PATH**; and **Heidi Nakamura**, global health director at **Adara Development**.

“The new antenatal care guidelines released by [the World Health Organization] now have this focus on a positive pregnancy experience, going beyond just the procedures...” said Sadaf Khan, senior program officer for PATH. “It’s now become a more holistic focus on an experience that empowers the mother and helps the entrance into motherhood for her.”

When birth attendants are disrespectful to pregnant women, it can be easy to blame them for their actions. In the process, however, we may miss seeing how over-worked they are and how limited their resources are to provide safe care. In addition, many birth attendants carry the trauma of having witnessed women die in labor or suffer horrific birth injuries, only to later have patient family members threaten their own lives.

PRONTO International focuses on the needs of the provider, and trains them to empathize with the needs of pregnant woman, as well as to ask for what they need, and to not take things out on their patients.

During a PRONTO birth simulation when the midwife called on the driver in the hall to help, Heidi Breeze-Harris noted, “Pretty soon, [the midwife] understood that she didn’t have to do this alone, and that there were many ways to get hands there to help her. They might not be technical hands, but any hands at that point mattered with one midwife for 30 women. So one of the things I love about that is that we help them find a way to manage what’s real for them. We meet them where they are, not where the algorithm says they should be.”

Similarly, Heidi Nakamura shared a story from her work at Adara Development, helping birth attendants overcome a pervasive sense of hopelessness:

“That baby’s only 1,000 grams. That baby’s not going to live,” the nurse Teddy told her. “And I told her ‘but this baby can live’... over the next days she was the one to look after the baby... until one day the mother was able to walk out with the baby in her arms. And I just felt this buzz in the NICU. Teddy turned to me and said, ‘That baby lived. That baby was 1,000 grams.’ I said, ‘I know, you did it!’ And I could just see this shift in her. There was this newfound pride and confidence in her abilities, but what I really saw that was most important was I saw this hope, a hope that was not there before. And this hope is such a powerful thing.”

On the patient side, PATH is empowering pregnant women to know their maternal rights and to speak up for what they want in terms of their care. It’s important to emphasize that maternal health is not just a biomedical issue, but a human rights issue.

## Fast Pitch Presentations



*Sola Soyombo, Vice President of The Spring Development Initiative, delivers a Fast Pitch presentations about how his organization is using tools from the business world to accelerate social transformation.*

*Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

The Fast Pitch is a chance for a handful of non-profit members to introduce their work to the GlobalWA community in a fast-paced and engaging way. This year’s participants talked about how their work is

helping accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by retooling some of the best ideas from the business world for social change.

Participants included:

- Michelle Bradley, Co-Founder and Executive Director, EKARI
- Tiffany Boyles, Director, Global Philanthropy, Street Business School
- Ndudi Chuku, Executive Director, Mission Africa
- Sola Soyombo, Vice President, Spring Development Initiative
- Yogita Verma, Head Resource Mobilization & Comms, Breakthrough
- Frances Walker, Executive Director, Path From Poverty

### Afternoon Keynote: Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals

**Sarah Hendriks**, director of gender equality at **The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**, began the afternoon keynote with a quote by Alice Walker: “The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”



*Sarah Hendrix, director of gender equality at The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, delivers the afternoon keynote presentation. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

Sarah explained that because of the power structures that surround them, women and girls often think they lack power. “I believe when women and girls can recognize and see their value,” she said, “it benefits not just them but everyone.”

The face of poverty is often female, as disparities can be entrenched in societal norms. Sarah gave the example of women who struggle with “property dispossession” after their husbands’ deaths, with the husband’s family taking everything from the widow, “even what seemed to be hers – clothing, bicycle, cooking utensils, cash, often the house and the land.” Sarah said she met hundreds of women who were forced from their homes “without even a pot to boil water.”

The Foundation is looking at ways to address the primary barriers that women and girls face. Having researched economic data from 100 countries, they identified the role of economic empowerment in changing gender dynamics.

By economic empowerment, they mean "access to income and assets, control and benefit from economic gains, and the power to make decisions."

"When a woman has a job, income; when she has her own bank account; when she can make decisions about saving and spending... she can exercise better control over her life," Sarah said. In fact, the Foundation's research revealed that having assets not only enhances a woman's power and her own self-worth, but also how society sees her.

With this insight, the Foundation has been exploring digital finance, where the gender gap is growing. Working with governments in eight countries around the world, the Foundation is helping them design and digitize social payment systems so that those payments go directly into women's bank accounts.

### The NGO of the Future



*Steve Davis, the president and CEO of PATH, speaks with Gabrielle Fitzgerald, the founder and CEO of Panorama, about what NGOs should strive to become over the next decade. Photo credit: Megan Swann for Global Washington.*

For the final session of the day, conference-goers gathered in the main auditorium to listen as **Steve Davis**, the president and CEO of **PATH**, spoke with **Gabrielle Fitzgerald**, the founder and CEO of **Panorama**, about what NGOs should strive to become over the next decade. With the world awash in complex challenges, from rapid disease outbreaks to a rise in nationalist governments, donors' priorities are constantly shifting, and non-profits need to shift their thinking about not only the challenges they face, but also the opportunities they represent.

"2018 has been a nightmare," Steve said. "It's not because we lack innovation, but because we are hitting the headwinds. We are operationalizing in a complex environment of changing U.S. policy, Brexit, and the rise of nationalism. Everyday feels like whack-a-mole in terms of policy challenges."

In his time at PATH, Steve noted that he has learned four important lessons:

1. **Strategy matters.** NGOs should not be driven just by donors' goals, but also by the goals and mission of their organizations. This may require saying "no" to things, and looking for alternative funding sources.
2. **Global means global.** Organizations need to have their workforce reflect the world at large, and not just have employees and leadership based in Europe and the United States.
3. **Inequality is everywhere.** The framework of global health and development arose in a post-World War II era. This framework is no longer as useful today because a majority of the poor now live in middle-income countries, including here in the U.S.
4. **Back to basics: people and partnerships.** Organizations need to think about the people they are hiring, whether they represent "next generation talent," and whether there is local capacity for building that talent. Organizations also need to think about more strategic ways to have creative collaborative partnerships.

Asked what the NGO of the future will need in order to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Steve emphasized that organizations need to develop a more agile model. For one thing, funding mechanisms driven by grant cycles are no longer working. Organizations need to think about new ways to sustain their important work. PATH in India, for example, is using more local money and support. They also have fee for services initiatives.

"The reality is that the social-demographics of the world have changed dramatically," Steve said. "Poverty is increasingly urban, and the development architecture is not built for that, so as NGOs we have to adapt. We have to rethink the way we do our work in terms of how we support vulnerable communities and low-resource settings in all countries of the world, including our own."

Another thing organizations need to do is build platforms of technology and teams that are fit for purpose. Most of the change and opportunity will be around digital and data transformation, he said. It will help us better understand the communities we serve and give them more power.

Finally, organizations need to do a better job of pursuing new kinds of partnerships. A good example is the growing recognition of the link between global health and climate change.