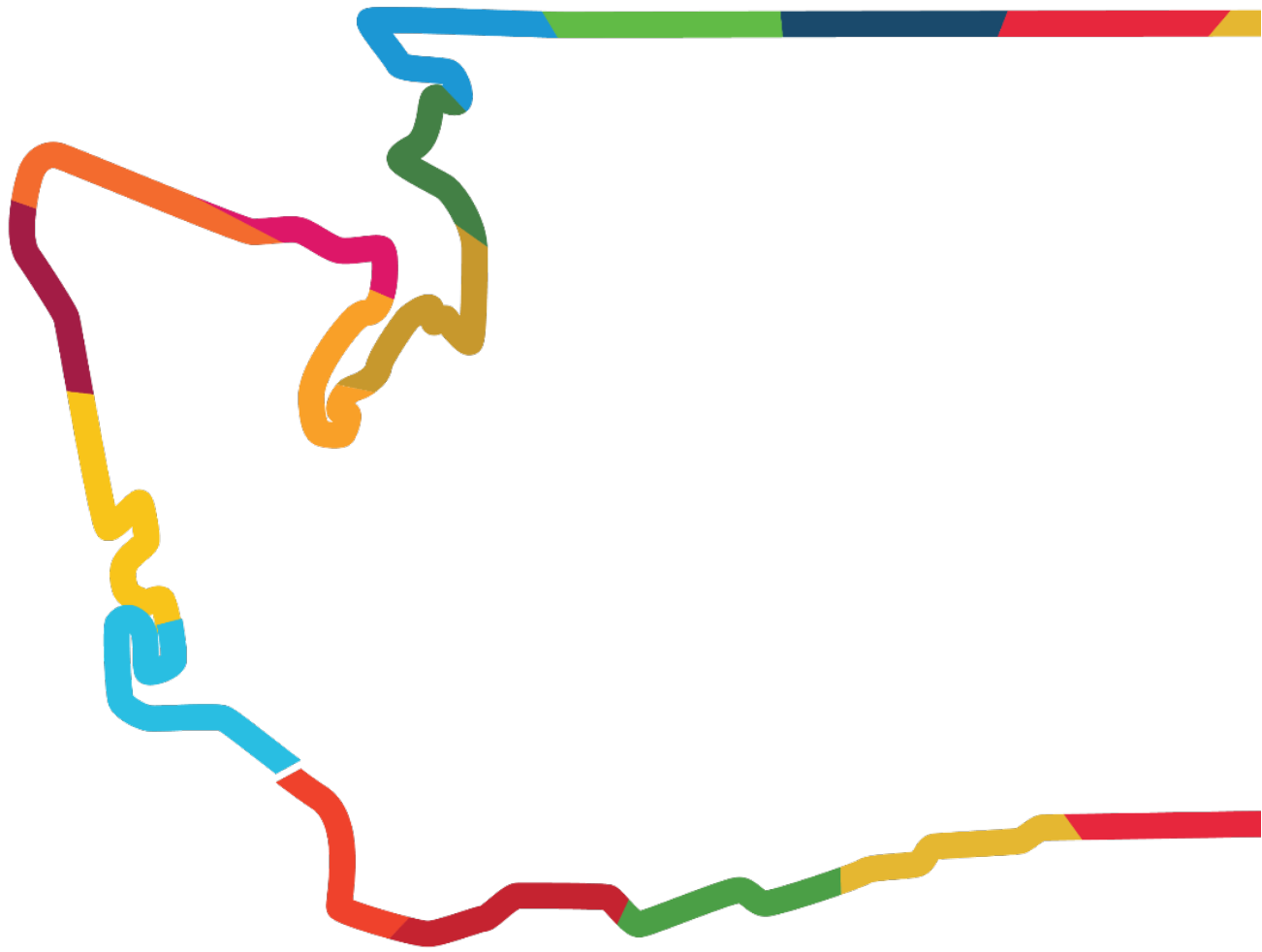


# Global Washington Goalmakers

Conference Report

*November 15, 2019*



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# Opening Remarks: Kristen Dailey, Executive Director, Global Washington



Kristen Dailey, executive director of Global Washington, giving opening remarks at the Goalmakers Conference.

## *A Decade and Change*

“Sit back and spend the day with Global Washington,” said Global Washington Executive Director Kristen Dailey, welcoming all the attendees to the 2019 Goalmakers Conference.

2019 marks an interesting crossroads. Global Washington turns eleven years old — over a decade of supporting Washington State’s global development community in making change. And a decade (and change) from now — 2030, is the year that the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be achieved — 17 global goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.”

You don’t need to be a Sounders fan, or even a sports enthusiast, to appreciate how each individual needs to bring their best to the game, in team sports as in life, said Dailey. You can’t score goals with one person; it’s a team effort.

“We are the practitioners that are making these goals happen. YOU are the Goalmakers!” Dailey exclaimed.

In a network like Global Washington’s, Dailey said, we’re not going to reach the SDGs by 2030 without being collaborative. This year, Global Washington’s annual convening is poised to bring a laser-like focus to the SDGs, and highlight the work that their over 160-member network is doing to reach them.

In a world of inter-related causes and effects, cross-sectional work is crucial. Global health and climate change are linked to the environment, hygiene and menstrual health are linked to infrastructure, education is linked to economic development—the list goes on. Luckily, Dailey said, we’re in the perfect place—Seattle—to be thinking outside the box when it comes to looking at solutions through unique partnerships.

“We do things a little differently here. We are data-driven and innovative.”

In addition to an exciting setting, there's a common language—the SDGs are a framework that allows shortcuts and reference points in the conversation, Dailey said.

“We don't have to argue over indicators and targets. We can get down to business to advance the goals.” And with that the day began.

## Fast Pitch: SDG Surprise!



Susan Bornstein from World Bicycle Relief tells the audience to think of a bicycle as a platform, one that can unlock multiple Sustainable Development Goals.

Right after opening remarks proved to be a perfect time to play the pitch game—the morning was fresh and so were the ideas. “Players” from nine Global Washington organizations braved the stage and shared the most surprising thing about the Sustainable Development Goals that their organization is advancing—all rapid-style, and all in under two minutes!

### Fast Pitch participants included:

- Susan Bornstein, Global Director, Institutional Partnerships & Influence, World Bicycle Relief
- Jenifer Botch, Director, Individual Philanthropy, Fair Trade USA
- Chelsie Noel Chan, Director of Strategic Partnerships & Foundations, Tearfund USA
- Alexis Chavez, Founding Director, Einstein Rising
- Will Forester, Director of Marketing & Development, Friendly Water for the World
- Katie Hultquist, West Coast Director, OutRight Action International
- Kimberly Davies Lohman, Senior Manager, Corporate Sustainability, Resonance
- Janet Lotawa, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Rise Beyond the Reef
- Cliff Schmidt, Founder & Executive Director, Amplio

# Opening Plenary Panel: Using multimedia storytelling to inspire social change

*Storytelling in a Noisy World*



Hanson Hosein, president of HRH Media Group, moderates the opening plenary panel on using multi-media storytelling to inspire social change.

As a former award-winning journalist for NBC News, moderator Hanson Hosein, president of HRH Media Group LLC and co-director of the Communication Leadership master's program at the University of Washington, is not one to beat around the bush.

He got straight to the point by starting with the biggest challenge non-profits face when trying to leverage storytelling creatively to reach donors,

volunteers, and decision makers —the “highly competitive attention economy.”

“It’s a noisy world,” agreed panelist Ted Richane, the senior director of engagement and impact at Vulcan Productions. “And getting above the noise is getting more and more challenging every day.”

But storytelling can still be a very powerful tool—especially if it can reach the right people. As the storytelling arm of a larger philanthropic venture, Vulcan Productions is uniquely positioned to be cross-functional with philanthropy, government, and tech, when developing and producing films, television programs, and digital series. Which is why it’s their behind-the-scenes strategies and outreach that matter as much as any film award.

“It’s one thing to get something seen; it’s another thing to get something seen by the right people.”

For that reason, Richane says, Vulcan Productions puts real strategy behind not just getting the content out there, but getting it seen by the people who can make change—community members, leaders, and decision makers.



Sohini Bhattacharya, president & CEO of Breakthrough, discusses the importance of thinking through how stories will be used to effect change.

“If we are using storytelling to change the trajectory of the problem, success depends on the ability to deliver those stories to audiences who have some sort of agency to take part in that change.”

When it comes to creating engaging content, panelist Sohini Bhattacharya had three words: “resources, resources, resources”—and not just money, but using creative resources to think about *how* stories can be used. The president & CEO of Breakthrough said the global development sector isn’t geared towards innovation in storytelling: “We still only think about traditional storytelling.”

Whether it’s facilitating conversations between girls and boys about sexual health, or using cartoons, PSAS, and even virtual reality as a medium, Breakthrough uses stories not only to tell stories to funders or policy makers, but as a programmatic tool, “to actually uplift people’s stories when they are breaking tradition, when they are creating a new norm. We want to elevate this.”

In the case of *Girl Rising*, the story itself drove the creation of the organization. *Girl Rising* is a 2013 documentary that followed nine girls in nine different countries and their struggle to access education.

From the beginning, the *Girl Rising* creators worked with Vulcan as a co-production partner and created a curriculum in concert with the Pearson Foundation to accompany the film.



Christina Lowery, CEO of Girl Rising, talks about building “the pipes” through which a story will be delivered to those who will benefit most from hearing it.

Meanwhile, the producers were building a robust social action campaign alongside film creation.

“We wanted to create the tools that could allow anybody, from a corporate partner to a teacher, to use the tools to spark conversation and dig into issues,” said Christina Lowery, CEO of Girl Rising.

When the film came out, they received a USAID grant to do work in India, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo using their curriculum to work with adolescents, “a critical time to address issues of gender.”

“We built the pipes through which we were going to deliver to story,” said Lowery, but the ultimate aim was educational—to take their work on the ground and feed it into their curriculum. “We were looking for long tail of impact.”

## Concurrent Panels

*Food Security, Peace and Justice: Building Institutions to address intractable causes of hunger*

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*SDG 2.4—Ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.*

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Think about how much we pay for avocado toast in the United States versus the cost of an avocado in Mexico. Or coffee at Starbucks versus the price of coffee beans in Ethiopia. When it comes to equity in food productions and distribution systems that exist around the world, something doesn't add up—and it's often the producers and the small farmers who end up getting short-changed.

“The people producing the food are benefiting the least economically,” said panelist Christabell Makokha, the director of strategic learning for Mercy Corps' AgriFin Accelerate program. “And this is an injustice.”

Because the causes of hunger are so often complex and specific to their sociopolitical and environmental regions, there is no one approach that will end hunger for all. This is why partnerships are critical for achieving zero hunger, said Makokha.



Christabell Makokha, director of strategic learning at Mercy Corps, speaks on a panel about food security, alongside Aisha Jumaan, founder & president of Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation (right); and Suzanne Mayo Frindt, president & CEO of The Hunger Project (left).

AgriFin Accelerate develops and scales high-impact digital solutions for smallholder farmers. Their partnership roster is impressive, with a network of over 70 partners across Africa and Asia. They've recently partnered with a Telkom company in Kenya to create a mobile platform providing information and access to services for small holder farmers.



Both Makokha and moderator Suzanne Mayo Frindt, president & CEO of The Hunger Project, said that the charity mindset has only made people in the developing world more dependent on aid. Instead, food security programs should cultivate a business mindset that focuses on creating viable agricultural businesses for small farmers and producers.

The goal of zero hunger is now even more overwhelming due to environmental change— and as one audience member pointed out, it will only become harder to predict needed resources.

In some cases, there are also international political barriers to overcome. Aisha Humaan, founder & president of the Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation, said organized community pressure on elected officials is especially important when responding to man-made famines caused by sanctions, as in Yemen.

“When we try to sanction a leader, we are really only hurting the people. We all have an obligation to work with legislators and insist that sanctions not be used.”

The panelists all agreed—in the face of such uncertainty, collaboration and community-led collective efforts are the best means of achieving zero hunger at the Last Mile.

“We are going to cause collaboration on purpose, and at scale,” said Frindt.

## *Gender Justice: Transformative approaches to ending gender-based violence*

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*SDG 5—Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls*

*SDG 10—Reducing inequality within and among countries*

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The human cost of gender-based violence is much larger than we may even realize. It affects the lives of millions of women and girls in their everyday life, affecting their stability, health, and economic prosperity.

While there’s been a lot of progress towards ending gender-based violence through local and regional government policies, there’s still a lot of work to be done on the international front, said Zainab Ali Khan, founding working group member for the Every Woman Treaty.

“The Every Woman Treaty is important because we have other treaties, but the problem is that they are regional—this is global. This is for every woman in the world,” she said.

75% of women and girls in the world are not covered by *any* type of treaty, she added. And the UN’s Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), recognized globally as the international bill of rights for women, is not binding when it comes to violence against women—only discrimination.



Zainab Ali Khan, founding working group member of Every Woman Treaty, describes the importance of a global treaty to prevent violence against women and girls.

“We want a treaty that is binding; and we want countries to prioritize ending violence against women.”

The treaty includes five interventions that have never been done in tandem—reforming laws, training for law enforcement, nurses and doctors, education and prevention programs, survivor support networks, and funding.

That last part—funding—is important, because right now only 8% of philanthropy is invested in women and girls. And a 2008 study showed that less than 2% of funding goes to programs addressing gender-based violence.

“Indeed, it can be lonely in this space. There aren’t a lot of funders working on this,” said Puja Dhawan, director of the Initiative to End Violence Against Girls and Women for the NoVo Foundation.

“The reality is that violence permeates almost all aspects of life, so I hope that more funders can see how the dots connect. Health funders should see this as connected. Labor funders should think about this in terms of creating safe working conditions. Education funders should think about how gender-based violence affects learning.”

Violence against women is “not just a female problem” it’s a social change issue—which can be a critical way for other funders to join in on the work. And also why it’s important to engage men and boys in the solution.

“This is a human problem—it affects parents, teachers, families, children, adults—everyone,” said Rebecca Hope, founder and executive director of YLabs. YLabs works to create safe spaces for adolescent boys to talk about social pressures, confront stereotypes, and learn to foster empathy.



Rebecca Hope (center right) addresses the audience on why violence against women is a social change issue that affects everyone.

“I believe it’s important to engage with and listen to boys early on—not when they are 25 and have already formed their worldviews and habits. It’s too late if we wait until these boys are adults,” Hope explained.

“We also need to think about causal factors like poverty; we are addressing economic disenfranchisement in economic transformation programs. If we combine programs that address poverty it helps with some of the upstream drivers of violence.”

Dhawan agreed, and added that when women thrive, the entire community benefits: “When you invest in women to end violence against women, you are also investing in the power of women. It’s power-building. When they unlock their potential, we will have a very different world.”

### *Migration and Human Rights: How civil society organizations can protect the rights of Central American migrants*

Fleeing violence, poverty, and the effects of climate change, rising numbers of people, increasingly families, have migrated from Central America in recent years.

“Migration should be a choice, not a survival tactic,” said Vicki Gass, senior policy advisor on Central America & Mexico for Oxfam America.

Oftentimes, governments of these countries do not protect their citizens—especially the most vulnerable, like women, Indigenous groups, and LGBTQ people. And in the U.S. over the past thirty years, the response to immigration and those seeking asylum has been to close, not

open, doors. Currently, U.S. policies are attempting to put barriers up for migrants—which does nothing to solve the root of the crisis, said Gass.

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*SDG 10.7—Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies*

*SDG 16.3 —Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all*

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“Every policy decision this administration has made to thwart migration is counter-productive.”



Seattle International Foundation project manager, Mirte Postema (right), speaks on a panel about how civil society organizations can protect the rights of migrants.

Dustin O’Quinn, the Immigration Team Chair at Lane Powell PC, deals with several client calls a day “because U.S. immigration law, particularly as it exists right now, makes absolutely no sense. It is counterintuitive by nature and now it’s just absolutely illogical and unreasonable.”

Now, civil society groups are stepping in where governments aren’t, by providing humanitarian assistance with coordinated responses to the crisis the U.S. and at the border. These groups also have the power to address “push factors” for migration in the countries of origin, pull in the private sector as stakeholders in the issue, and put pressure on elected officials. And to litigate.

“We can sue the government if they are acting inconsistently with laws, be they international laws or domestic laws,” said O’Quinn. “Sue them. It is working, or at least in part. It is forcing the government to defend the actions that they are taking.”

“It’s really important to be informed,” added Mirte Postema, Project Manager at Seattle International Foundation. “To inform yourself and to know what’s going on. We can speak out to our representatives, but if a change in direction isn’t coming from the government, it needs to come from us.”

## *Education and Refugees: How technology, education, and livelihood skills can ensure opportunities and resiliency in refugee youth*

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*SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

*SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*

*SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries*

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When working with the SDGs, it’s more than okay to have multi-faceted responses in multiple SDG focus areas. And when responding to the scale of a particular issue, like the global refugee crisis, it’s pretty much required. Sometimes these cross-sector approaches call for unique pathways, like building programming around creativity, technology, art, and education to empower people to rebuild their lives and seek economic opportunities.

For example, many refugees experience trauma from border crossings, instability, and war. Curtis Romjue, co-founder and president of First Aid Arts, an organization that provides psychosocial support from trauma recovery to refugees, said that art is an important investment that sets up other programs for success.

“The arts are a beautifully strategic resource. It can help rebuild trust, which helps build relationships with those who are offering education and technology programs for refugees. Trauma survivors won’t listen without trust. But art is the language of the heart, and its beauty is disarming and welcoming.”

Mercy Corps uses technology like mobile and virtual reality to close the gap between understanding and targeting the unique needs of adolescent girls. Amy Ibold, senior technical advisor at Mercy Corps described how virtual reality storytelling allows Syrian refugees in Iraq and Jordan to connect with their homelands and be able to walk through the “streets of a

more peaceful Syria and see the corner shop that their mom has told them about.” Refugees who used these “visual heritage tools” experienced a 38 percent decrease in stress.



Curtis Romjue, co-founder and president of First Aid Arts (second from right), talks about how the arts can help refugees rebuild trust and start to recover from trauma. Far left: Justin Nelson, Microsoft Philanthropies. Second from the left: Anita Chandramohan, International Rescue Committee. Far right: Amy Ibold, Mercy Corps.

But technology in and of itself is not a panacea—development practitioners must adapt communication tools and approaches to local contexts. For example, in East and West Africa, radio messaging works well, while in other places, the pillars of the community and places of workshop would be the more effective places to build trust.

Partnerships start from the beginning,” Ibold said, citing Mercy Corps’ ongoing relationships with Harvard, Google, various community groups, village councils, and the Ford Foundation. “We use partnerships to leverage our impact and come up with new ideas.”

Anita Chandramohan, senior career development coordinator for International Rescue Committee, agreed that partnerships are key to help close the gaps when working towards the SDGs, and added that multi-year partnerships are critical to sustainable change and impact.

“We need three, five and 20-year programs instead of one to two-year programs.”

Working with youth, Ibold said, inspires hope when you see how adept they are at changing their futures: “Young people believe in their future and are leveraging technology to hold governments accountable and to demand change.”

# *Productive and Decent Jobs: The future of work in developing countries*

*SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*

*SDG 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere*



Sachi Shenoy, co-founder and chief impact officer for Upaya Social Ventures (right), proposes that large institutions set aside funding for small investments in entrepreneurship for economic development. Left: Carol Weiss, co-founder of Remote Energy.

The very nature of work is changing rapidly, as moderator Jordan Fabyanske, a partner at Dalberg Global Development Advisors, pointed out—with trends that illustrate global shifts. Industrial jobs are falling in the West but rising in the East, and while jobs are falling in high income countries, they’re rising in low-income countries and East Asia.

The future of work is filled with dualities as well—disruptive technologies are driving both job displacement *and* job creation. Results are mixed; sometimes jobs and industries are displaced, with new ones popping up to replace them.

Monika Aring, senior technical advisor for FHI360, explained that on the demand side of labor markets, there's two major 'existential' issues—climate change and the challenge of disruptive technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and what they're doing to the labor force.

“The AI challenge is the ever-widening gap between technological advances and workforce preparation.”

The other big disrupter—climate change—can actually offer opportunity in the form of massive social change. As the world starts moving towards renewable energies, more sustainable economic models can arise.

“When we look at decent jobs, the good news is that if we move towards cleaner energy, there will be a whole lot of new jobs out there,” said Carol Weis, co-founder of Remote Energy.

For Remote Energy, that means training the workforce in a safe, sustainable, *and* equitable way—like addressing the lack of women solar technicians by developing lab training centers to educate professional solar educators.

When it comes to keeping up with the disruptions of technology, problems of scale take solutions of scale—but the journey takes time, patience, and flexibility.

“This is going to be messy,” warned Sachi Shenoy, co-founder and chief impact officer for Upaya Social Ventures. Upaya is a social venture firm that helps entrepreneurs meet their financial milestones.

“Scale is a process, and it doesn't happen overnight. Entrepreneurs are going to make mistakes. It's going to take time. Take the long view.”

“You can scale a process, but you can't scale how it shows up,” added Aring. For example, automation in Vietnam's garment industry helps reduce risk, but it disproportionately affects women workers there who may find themselves out of a job.

“That's why scalability works well when there's policy,” Weiss explained.

Ultimately, though, you can never discount the power of the domino effect. Sometimes a relatively small investment in an entrepreneur or economic development program is “all you need to light up wonderful chain reactions,” Shenoy said. “I want to see larger institutions set aside a little amount of funding to light up these chain reactions.”

## Lunch Program Keynote: Raj Kumar, Author and Editor-in-Chief of Devex

“I feel like part of a family,” said author Raj Kumar as he stepped on stage to deliver the lunch program keynote. The author of *The Business of Changing the World* shared his story of trying



to get started in global development after graduating college—he was told to just “go to cocktail parties.”



Raj Kumar, president & editor-in-chief of Devex (right), presents the lunch keynote at the Goalmakers conference. Left: Akhtar Badshah, president & chair of the board for Global Washington.

Recognizing there had to be a better way for job-seekers to find opportunities in the industry, Kumar created Devex, a jobs and media platform for professionals and companies in the global development community.

It turns out that building a platform to connect across the international development community was good timing. Now, Kumar says, the ‘disruption’ that’s been shaking traditional markets to their core has hit the global aid industry—and it’s a good thing.

Disruption looks different in every sector. For philanthropy, the old era of global aid relied on government agencies and just a few big NGOs, and value was project-based, measured in ‘units of action.’ As a whole, the industry was organized in inefficient ways (making it hard to find basic data) and for the most part, managed with a hierarchical, top-down philosophy.

Now, philanthropy is shifting to an era with ‘many buyers’ of development and humanitarian services. The \$200 billion industry includes corporations, tech start-ups, and billionaire philanthropists who are now demanding market-driven results and accurate data.

“The fundamental shift is that this is no longer about *our* dream or our generosity; this is about the results. Intention alone is not good enough.”

Individuals formerly seen as beneficiaries of aid (and by extension victims of their circumstances), are instead viewed as agents of change in their own lives—and treated more like partners, collaborators or clients, making them the most important voice in the equation.

One example of this is Hello Tractor, a tractor sharing app for small scale farmers in Nigeria who cannot afford tractors year-round. This AI-powered app is known as the “Uber for tractors” and can help farmers cut costs as much as 50% and spend less time in the field. The tool is now used by 70 percent of farmers in Nigeria—a tremendous impact that’s scalable across the continent.

“The key to this innovation is actually seeing the poorest farmer as the customer,” Kumar explained.

There’s more of a role now for social good beyond the non-profit mission statement. Big corporations are embracing social enterprise. For example, Patagonia is telling its customers to stop buying new products. This kind of radical corporate thinking, Kumar says, is an indicator of a shift in priorities, and “there’s huge opportunities there we need to start thinking about.”

“Starbucks is a global development company,” Kumar explained. “They’re in our sector.”

There’s also been a democratization in fundraising technology, with a focus on social giving, entrepreneurship, small businesses, and small-scale loans. Private aid is growing, eclipsing public aid—causing more open competition that is both good and bad, Kumar says, but ultimately makes the industry, no longer a monopoly, more accountable.

As he left the stage, Kumar urged the audience to think about this important time as a shift in consciousness—what is the global aid industry we want to see?

## Global Hero Award Recipient: Celeste Mergens, Founder & CEO, Days for Girls International

The introduction was impressive—she’s a CEO with twenty years of nonprofit experience directing Days for Girls, named by the *Huffington Post* as one of the ‘Next Ten’ organizations that will change the world in the coming decade. Her work has been featured in Oprah’s *O Magazine* and *Forbes*. She’s won the AARP Purpose Prize Award, the Conscious Company Global Impact Entrepreneur of the year, and Women Economic Forum’s Woman of the Decade. She’s also a mother, grandmother, and foster mother.

“This is one of those moments when you wonder who they’re talking about,” joked Celeste A. Mergens as she stepped on stage to accept the Global Hero Award for her work as founder and CEO of Days for Girls.

“I don’t want to be emotional, but this moment is extraordinary and important. Eleven years ago, they said to me: nobody’s going to talk about periods. And yet here we are.”



Celeste Mergens, founder & CEO of Day for Girls International, accepts the 2019 Global Washington “Global Hero” award from Melissa Merritt, vice chair of Global Washington board of directors.

In 2008, when Mergens was working at an orphanage in Kenya, she wondered why it never occurred to anyone to ask what girls were doing about their menstruation. When she did, she was shocked by the answer: “Nothing. They wait in their rooms.”

From then on, Mergens joked, all her days became Days for Girls.

Over the years, Mergens has learned that it’s important to recognize that sometimes big shifts happen because of small changes. From its humble beginnings when Days for Girls made their first washable pad, “a truly *awful* design,” Mergens said, to 28 versions of the design later, Days for Girls is always evolving. And, listening.

“It is way more powerful to put solutions into the hands of those we serve,” she said.

Now Days for Girls is dispersing feminine hygiene kits to over one million women and girls in over 125 countries. And they’ve also spawned a global movement in menstrual health education, tearing down everything from stigmas to Chaupadi sheds (huts where women are forced to stay in during their menstruation). As the movement grew, it became clear how many other issues menstrual health connected with—poverty, education, gender equity, and the environment.

“Who knew that something as simple as periods are so pivotal to a shift in equity,” Mergens said. “Thanks for not being afraid to talk about periods.”

## Concurrent Panels

### *Clean Water and Sanitation: Integrated solutions to menstrual health needs*

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*SDG 6—By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all*

*SDG 5—Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*

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While not specifically mentioned in the SDGs, menstrual health connects to SDG issues like clean water and sanitation, as well as education, gender equity, economic growth, and responsible consumption and production. And the issue seems to be in the spotlight recently, getting more attention from the press and the philanthropic sector.



Kara Cherniga Uhl, deputy director for Splash (left), emphasizes the importance of clean water and menstrual health management in schools. (Center): Stephanie Drozer, chief program officer for Days for Girls. (Right): Alyse Schrecongost, WSH Program Officer for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

“This is an exciting time to be working in menstrual health, because everyone is advocating for increased investment and the establishment of best practices,” says Stephanie Drozer, the chief program officer at Days for Girls International.

Early product intervention approaches (like disposable versus washable pads, for example) are now being replaced with a more holistic approach looking at social norms, education, and infrastructure around WASH—the collective term for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.

But even with all the recent attention, panelists agreed that menstrual health is under-researched and underfunded. Donors want data that directly relates to achieving specific SDGs—and that’s tricky when the issue doesn’t fall under one specific target.

“It is aggravating to have to prove that addressing menstrual health is necessary to donors,” said Kara Cherniga Uhl, deputy director for Project WISE at Splash. “Even if all the research said clean water did not improve school attendance, children still deserve clean water. The same is true for women and girls—they deserve good menstrual health regardless of evidence.”

Panelists stressed that menstrual health should not only be part of cross-sector solutions like WASH, but also in reproductive health and family planning sectors.

But sometimes it takes a direct approach—for example, moderator Alyse Schrecongost, WASH program officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, pointed out that menstrual health was not a focus there until grantees in the WASH sector specifically started to ask for it.

“Menstruation is healthy and should be happening. We should not be looking at it as problem to solve, but rather as a way to empower women and girls about their bodies.”

## *Scaling Health Solutions: Best practices in transitioning to government*

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### *SDG 3—Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*

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It’s clear that successful partnerships are one of the keys to reaching SDG objectives, and especially important for achieving results across different sectors. For global health organizations, local and national governments invested in their citizen’s health can be a tremendous resource for scaling up programs to help achieve global health targets. Governments can provide resources for overhead, testing new solutions, and measuring impact, often on a completely different scale than would be possible within the limitations of an NGO.

But transitioning a program into the hands of a government system is challenging. How can organizations develop the path to scale from the outset, and what does a successful government partnership actually look like?



Upile Kachila, program manager for Village Reach (center) discusses the factors behind their successful transition of a mobile-based health program in Malawi to government ownership. Left: Liz Diebold, principal, impact investment and social entrepreneurship with Skoll Foundation. Right: Mike Kollins, director of programs for Splash.

To answer that question, a video case study was presented at the session: the story of “Chipatala Cha Pa Foni” (CCPF), a health program in Malawi that allows people to get free on-demand health information through their phone.

It was started by Village Reach and then successfully transitioned from non-profit to government operations.

In a lively follow up, audience members asked a variety of questions about building citizen trust, accountability between partners, the problems with scale, data collection and metrics, and when to partner with the government in a project lifecycle.

Upile Kachila, the program manager for VillageReach attributed the success of CCPF to flexibility.

“Having an open mind to meet challenges and transform those challenges into wins helped us create a transition to a government framework.”

While transitioning a project with a government partner, know your capacity, Kachila said, in order for both sides to feel confident in their roles. Think about what you can bring to the table in terms of things like technical assistance and project design, and then plan activities around your strengths “so that at the end of the day there is enough support being channeled to the government to help them do the transition right.”



Liz Diebold, principle for impact investment and social entrepreneurship at Skoll Foundation, (right) emphasizes that governments are a necessary part of driving programs forward. Left: Nosa Orobaton, deputy director at Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

There's a lot that governments can bring to a program that funders may not be able to—like continuity. Funders come and go. But “government as the pathway to scale gives communities hope that the intervention is here and is here to stay.”

Liz Diebold, principal for impact investment and social entrepreneurship at The Skoll Foundation, agreed that governments are a necessary, not just optional, part of driving forward the life of a program.

“If we're talking about the public good, the governments have got to be involved and engaged—if we really want a sustained systemic solution.”

But, she warned, when scaling programs for governments, don't get trapped into designing them to meet the needs of a funder—you're in a different ballpark now: “Your funders' needs are fundamentally different than what the government needs.”

Michael Kollins, director of programs at Splash, advised getting governments involved early in the solution design process, so they could be invested in the outcomes.

“Not only is early engagement really important with the planning going forward, but the local government is probably more important for traction over the life [of a project] and for a transition.”

## *Global Health and Climate Change: Environment, health, and cross-sector collaboration*

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### *SDG 13—Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

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It's been pegged as the greatest sustainable development challenge of our time—climate change. And though not everyone wants to call it that, climate change is real. So real it can have a smell—burning forest fires, for example, or even a taste—according to a Bangladeshi rice farmer suffering from saltwater intrusion into her paddies, “it tastes like salt.”

In a session moderated by Kristie Ebi, a professor in the Department of Global Health at the University of Washington, leading voices from academia, the private sector, energy, and health discussed how to break out of the silos, build relationships across sectors, and improve communication around climate change.

The good news is that climate mitigation activities, like driving less and walking more, have positive health benefits. Linking these dual outcomes can move the discussion forward, said Jeremy Hess, director of the Center for Health and Global Environment at the University of Washington. And when it comes to the hard-sell to funders and power-brokers, there's a healthy bottom line as well.

“The overall cost savings of these types of policies will often pay for the mitigation activity, if you include the health co-benefits,” said Jeremy.

But better communication is needed across sectors—specifically, there's a problem defining impact. Panelist Katharine Kreis, director of strategic initiatives and lead for nutrition innovation at PATH, noted the difference in how public health practitioners talked about “impact” (in terms of positive health outcomes) versus how environmentalists talked about it (in terms of negative impacts to the environment).

“There is a need to bring different groups together and to have a unified language, using similar language for similar concepts,” she said.

Savitha Reddy Pathi, deputy director of Climate Solutions, stressed that more partnerships are needed, and with a range of stakeholders—including tribal nations, labor groups, health organizations, and environmental organizations.

It's also crucial to develop stronger partnerships with community of color-led organizations. Communities of color, Indigenous communities and low-income communities are often on the front lines of climate change. This coalition building can be very powerful the when oil and gas industries are spending millions of dollars trying to defeat environmental regulations or ballot initiatives.





Speakers on the panel discussing global health and climate change. From L to R: Kristie Ebi, a professor in the department of Global Health at the UW; Jeremy Hess, director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at the UW; Katharine Kreis, director of strategic initiatives at PATH; and Savitha Reddy Pathi, deputy director at Climate Solutions.

Finally, the world needs to hear more success stories about effective mitigation and adaptation activities, not just the ‘doom and gloom’ narratives perpetuated by the media.

“People need to hear those stories, so they know change is possible,” said Ebi.

“We need to keep having these conversations. Go out with the challenges you’ve heard and talk to other people about your concerns. Celebrate what actions are being taken because that is how we’ll be able to build the political will,” said Kristie.

## *Responsible Consumption and Decent Work: Building transparent supply chains*

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### *SDG 12—Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*

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It’s a new era of corporate responsibility, and transparent supply chains are the next step for creating an honest and sustainable approach to tracing products to their source. But they’re also rife with complexity—complexity of inputs from multiple stakeholders, the intricacies of detailed product tracking, and creating ethical incentives for working conditions.

Meeting these needs often involves a balance between meeting compliance requirements, leveraging new technologies, and finding approaches that can help customers better understand the social and environmental impacts of products. According to Parker Townley, senior manager of Fair Trade USA, it’s a chaotic new frontier—one that needs common practices and standards.



Surabhi Agrawal, senior manager for coffee traceability at Starbucks (right), discusses its data tracking and reporting. Left: Parker Townley, senior manager for Fair Trade USA.

“There is a driver towards transparency, when working in an opaque world, especially with international supply chains. That’s where there needs to be an agreed upon process.”

Part of Fair Trade’s efforts towards transparency include the Sustainable Coffee Challenge, where corporations publicly share how they are meeting their sustainable commitment goals using clear metrics and reporting. Ensuring transparency on a larger scale with reliable data is important so that consumers can trace their coffee to understand its origin, said Surabhi Agrawal, senior manager of Coffee Traceability at Starbucks.

“Transparency is about connecting the data, from end-to-end.”

Closing the loop is a big part of it. For example, Starbucks has an app that can provide information about where coffee comes from, but “how can we share this information back with the farmers so that they know where their beans are going?”

Industry standards are helpful, said Tonette Lim, the global sustainability supply chain manager for Costco, but they’re just a means to an end.

“You want to raise the whole industry, not just your own product—that’s a short-term solution.”

While certification standards for food supply chains, like the GS1 Traceability standard, help raise awareness, companies need a shared sense of accountability, “and raising the standards for an entire industry is challenging.” Sometimes it’s hard, Lim said, to even get competition in the same room, much less agreeing on a shared vision of compliance and transparency.

As corporate leaders in this space, companies like Starbucks, Fair Trade and Costco are using their 'buying power' to forge new ground in creating holistic systems of consumption and production.

"[Supply chains] are a puzzle; you learn as you go along," Lim said. "You work with different people. There's always an opportunity to influence change. We are humble enough to realize that we cannot create all of the change; but we can influence how we make that change with our buying power."

## Afternoon Plenary: Data tracking for the SDGs

### *Don't be Afraid of Data*

The SDGs are comprehensive and, well, let's admit it, a little bit overwhelming. While most global development organizations work on issues related to the SDGs in one way or another, what does mean to actually "align" with the SDGs? And how can organizations track their outcomes of SDG indicators and targets in a way that gets everybody on the same page?

Like any strategic plan, the SDGs aren't perfect. They can be inaccessible and are often applied haphazardly, as Erik Arnold, the global CTO at Microsoft Tech for Social Impact, pointed out. At the same time, the SDGs are a common language, providing a framework of reference for non-profit organizations, funders, governments, and corporations to all get behind.



Ben Combes, co-founder of the innovation and sustainability practice at PwC UK (far left), discusses the challenge of turning data into actionable insight. Other panel participants left to right: Diana Fletschner, senior director at Landesa; Erik Arnold, CTO, Microsoft Tech for Social Impact; and Kristen Dailey, executive director of GlobalWA.

The challenge, said Ben Combes, co-founder for the Innovation & Sustainability Practice at PwC UK, is making sense of all the numbers. “Data on its own doesn’t mean anything. Data needs to be turned into knowledge and insights.”

Shared languages are key to empowering smaller, grassroots organizations to work toward common SDG objectives, Arnold added, which is why his team helped developed Microsoft’s Common Data Model (CDM), a tool that makes monitoring and evaluation accessible to NGO’s of all sizes.

“With the vast quantity of data out there, we need to be thinking about how it’s going to be used and who is going to be using it,” said Diana Fletschner, senior director of research, monitoring, and evaluation at Landesa. Fletschner also pointed out the importance of inclusivity.



Diana Fletschner, senior director of research, monitoring and evaluation at Landesa (left) talks about the importance of inclusivity in data collection. Right: Erik Arnold, CTO of Microsoft Tech for Social Impact.

“We don’t need data if considerable segments of the population would not be included,” she said.

As a former economist turned technologist, Ben Combes knows data can be intimidating—“it’s a bit scary at first, but you’ll get there.” He urged all organizations to be a major actor in their own data collecting and storytelling, echoing Fletschner’s call for equity.

“When I came into tech I was a bit nervous,” Combes said, “but we all need to be involved. We cannot have a world designed by 20 to 30 year-old males living on the West Coast. We need a world designed by everyone – we need lawyers, ethicists, scientists. We need the whole community to come together.”

“The tech sector is open to that,” he added, “but we need to knock on the door.”

## Afternoon Keynote Conversation

### *Focus on the Positive*

“We’re going to bring it home with some panache,” said Tony Pipa, senior fellow of global economy and development at Brookings Institution, “with a beautiful sunset actually

happening on the water here,” motioning to the view outside the wide windows of the Bell Harbor International Conference Center.



Alex Reid, deputy director and head of Goalkeepers at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (left), chats with Tony Pipa, senior fellow at Brookings Institution, about charting progress in the SDGs.

Throughout the day, conference-goers were examining what progress looks like in light of the SDGs, an opportunity to ‘compare notes.’ For the final session, Pipa and Alex Reid, deputy director and head of Goalkeepers for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, spoke about the growing global movement of SDG activists—celebrating their achievements, and focusing on the positives.

“You know it can be so depressing going online, whether it’s Brexit from my own country or what’s going on here, you can easily find you’re going down these rabbit holes of negativity,” said Reid.

Recently, Reid drew much of her inspiration and energy from leading the annual Goalkeepers conference in New York alongside the UN General Assembly this past September, which included Bill and Melinda Gates, world leaders, celebrities and youth advocates.

“It felt like there was a sense that people everywhere around the world working in this space wanted to feel like their work was relevant and that we were giving them a sense of, sort of, validity that they actually connected to something bigger,” she explained.

Goalkeepers is a program bringing together emerging young leaders from around the world to be a catalyst for action to accelerate progress toward the SDGs.

“To me it’s like there’s no option but to invest in in that generation,” said Reid.

Tony Pipa actually had a hand in creating the SDGs when he was the U.S. special coordinator for post-2015 agenda at the State Department.

“I’ll take full responsibility,” he joked. “I did my best.”

He admits the SDGs “should be way more precise, but they are a framework that does give a common language and a common North Star.”

Pipa says the world needs more Goalkeepers. (Global Washington would argue it needs more Goalmakers, as well!).



Alex Reid, deputy director and head of Goalkeepers at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, sees optimism in the Global Goals.

“You might not be the Gates Foundation, but I would challenge the organizations in this room to think, how do I use my influence, even in the contexts which you’re working in, how do I bring data to bear, translating that into something that’s digestible and accessible, especially for audiences that don’t live it every day?”

Pipa now leads an effort at Brookings about place-based initiatives to advance the SDGs both in the U.S. and cities around the world.

“The SDG’s aren’t just a common language within an institution like Gates or a national government, but they’re a common language from business to government to philanthropy to civil society.”

Cities like Bristol in the UK are using the SDGs as a framework for their policy planning tools, enabling them to match up their city-wide goals with sustainability, resilience, and equity objectives.

“One of the real value propositions [to the SDGs], besides the common language, is that it has a positive agenda,” Pipa said.

“In this sometimes scary world full of an overwhelming amount of change, we can feel like we’re actually going to be part of progress, and that that progress is actually attached to a global movement of others in places we don’t even know about, also working toward the same thing, and it might all aggregate up to something, and I think the power of that inspiration and the power of that hope is actually really, really important.”

# GlobalWA Goalmakers ‘Marketplace of Ideas’



Ryan Morris from Amplio shows off the features of the organization’s Talking Book to a conference-goer.

Global Washington encourages its members and others in the community to host exhibit tables at the annual conference to showcase their products, services, and solutions.

This year we welcomed 17 organizations to the Marketplace of Ideas:

- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Amplio                         | Northeastern University - Seattle |
| Ashesi University Foundation   | OutRight Action International     |
| Every Woman Treaty             | Pilgrim Africa                    |
| Global Impact                  | Resonance                         |
| International Rescue Committee | Rotary District 5030              |
| Key Travel                     | The Hunger Project                |
| Lane Powell                    | WaterAid                          |
| Lynden International           | World Bicycle Relief              |
|                                | World Vision                      |

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