Fit for whose purpose?
Private funding and corporate influence in the United Nations

Barbara Adams and Jens Martens

ISBN 978-3-943126–20-4

Global Policy Forum

“Follow the money” is the recipe for good investigative journalism and Fit for Whose Purpose does precisely that for the institution created to defend global public goods. Digging into the numbers behind the funding of the United Nations, Adams and Martens uncover a trail that leads to corporate interests having a disproportionate say over the bodies that write global rules. This book shows how Big Tobacco, Big Soda, Big Pharma and Big Alcohol end up prevailing and how corporate philanthropy and private-public-partnerships twist the international agenda without governments overseeing, but it also clearly spells out some practical ways to prevent it and rescue a citizens-based multilateralism.

Roberto Bissio, Coordinator of Social Watch

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Chee Yoke Ling, Director of Programmes, Third World Network

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A most timely study that ought to concern all those who believe in the United Nations as a global public good. As an inter-governmental organization, the UN needs to preserve its own independence—financial as well as political. UN relations with the corporate sector deserve to be scrutinized and made more transparent so that important public functions do not risk becoming compromised by private interests. Many parliamentarians are unaware of the deterioration of UN funding highlighted in this well-researched report. I hope it will catch their attention.

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Published by

Global Policy Forum
866 UN Plaza
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New York, NY 10017
USA
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With contributions and editorial assistance from:
Wolfgang Obenland, Karolin Seitz, Eleonora Hoffmann, Johannes Peter,
Katherine Marshall, Lisa Monschau, Sabá Loftus and Karen Judd

Cover picture: Anthony Quintano/Flickr “United Nations New York City”; used under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic License (CC BY 2.0, cf. https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/).

Design: www.kalinski.media
Printing: www.kalinski.media
Data and information cited in this study are as of June 2015.

Acknowledgements
The authors are grateful for advice and comments on earlier versions of this study received from many friends and colleagues, in particular Roberto Bissio, Gita Sen, Henning Melber, Hubert Schillinger, Judith Richter, Klaus Hüfner, Tom Kruse, Ziad Abdel Samad, Manuel (Butch) Montes, Lou Pingeot, John Probert and Gretchen Luchsinger.

This study, however, does not necessarily represent their opinions. Any errors or omissions are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Global Policy Forum gratefully acknowledges financial support received from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund for preparing this study.

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de

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Bonn/New York, September 2015
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