

New Global Governance Architectures for Grand Social Challenges:

Domestic Actor's Capacity

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ABSTRACT

During the past decade there has been a rapid emergence of new forms of global governance architectures seeking to address grand social challenges. International organizations, national governments, and other strong actors in the global scene have been setting up new, ambitious, open-ended and solution-oriented initiatives. Hence, these new architectures are the coalescing of multiple national governments, IOs, NGOs and firms, around a set of ideas and practices, aiming to address some specifically identified grand social challenges, creating broader and sustained conditions for problem-solving. But the extent to which they are able to generate the expected impact at the domestic level is an empirical question that remains open. This paper provides a framework for analyzing that by focusing on three main mediating factors at the domestic level, namely, the knowledge absorptive capacity of domestic actors, their organizational capacity, and their communicative capacity with which they articulate needs, as well as visions about how to go about it.

Keywords: UN Millennium Development Goals, Sustainability Development Goals, grand social challenges, Product Development Partnerships, Public-Private Partnerships, PPPs, policy-making, domestic impact, policy innovation, policy learning, policy instruments.

1. Introduction

With the advent of the new Millennium, the United Nations and other international actors have engaged in a series of reflections about the most pressing social problems at global scale that still remain unsolved. These overall considerations have led towards a series of new types of initiatives that have a different nature than previous ways of approaching policymaking at global level. We call these new initiatives « new global governance architectures » because they epitomize a new approach to address collective problems, which seek ultimately to generate deep transformations and to provide concrete solutions to pressing problems.

The new Millennium Development Goals (MDG) put forward by the United Nations in 2000, the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the Global Compact, or regional governance architectures like the Lisbon strategy of the European Union, are examples of these new governance architectures.

They are new because they approach policy making in a different way than traditional governance architectures, and because they aim at creating broader and sustained conditions for problem-solving. However, the extent to which they are able to generate the expected impact, and are in fact generating new dynamics among domestic actors solving complex problems is an empirical question that remains open.

This paper provides a framework for analyzing that by focusing on three main mediating factors at the domestic level, namely, the knowledge absorptive capacity of domestic actors, their organizational capacity, and their communicative capacity with which they articulate needs and visions about how to go about it.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 defines the concept of “new global governance architecture”, paying particular attention to the different elements that characterize it, and providing some general examples. This section aims at defining the contours of the new global architectures, by identifying the traits that distinguish them. Thereafter, section 3 focuses on one specific case of new global governance architecture, namely, about developing accessible medicines for neglected diseases. This concrete area is one of the grand social challenges in the field of global health. The case serves to illustrate the contours and nature of new global governance architectures for grand social challenges.

Section 4 takes a step further, and looks into the domestic level, as a crucial level for the final implementation and provision of solutions. In particular, it examines the responses and proactive engagement of domestic actors in the definition and solution of those grand social challenges. In order to do that, the paper elaborates on the different types of capacity that are required at the domestic level. It emphasizes that three specific types of capacity at the domestic level are of key importance, namely, knowledge absorptive capacity, organizational capacity, and legitimacy as communicative capacity. After that, section 5 asks whose capacity is it relevant in the domestic context. The argument here is that the capacity of a state is not only about the capacity of public actors and public administration, but also of other types of domestic actors. The paper concludes summarizing the framework for analysis proposed in this chapter.

It discusses as well the need to bring the literature of global governance and of domestic actor's capacity closer together, and the need to consider how far the recent focus on 'grand social challenges' is re-shaping the interactions between organizations, ideas and practices at the global, transnational and domestic levels.

2. The New Global Governance Architectures

"Global governance architecture" is a concept that has been used in the literature for some time now. It generally describes "the overarching system of public and private institutions that are valid or active in a given issue area of world politics" (Biermann et al., 2009) pp.15. According to these scholars, global governance architectures are located between the broad notion of "global order" and the narrower notion of "international regimes". Hence, "global governance architecture" is a notion that provides a medium range conceptualization of specific dynamics in world politics that are cutting across some specific institutional elements, norms and principles, but which are defining the contours of global collective action in some specific issue area, like forestry, fishery, maritime industry, etc. It is worth noting that these global governance architectures are today very relevant, and in a sense, they epitomize a more fundamental transformation of global governance moving towards more hybrid forms of organization (Kentikelenis and Seabrooke, 2017). These new global governance architectures are largely experimental (De Búrca et al., 2014) (Keohane and Victor, 2015) (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2012) because they use new approaches, and because they seek to generate concrete transformations addressing grand social challenges (Gostin and Mok, 2009) (Kuhlmann and Rip, 2014).

More specifically, the new global governance architectures are characterized by three distinct features: they attempt to solve strategic and long-term grand social challenges in a holistic and collaborative way; they focus on output goals of what they want to achieve; and they have particular implementation arrangements combining old and new organizational structures (Borrás and Radaelli, 2011). Each of the three features of this definition deserves further attention.

The first particular feature that characterizes the new global governance architectures is their strategic nature. Strategic is defined here in two senses. Firstly, strategic in terms of the turf and remit of the organizations involved (international organizations, NGOs, national governments, local governments, etc). Secondly, strategic in terms of the nature of the grand social challenges they aim at addressing, which are related to long-term wicked problems (Head, 2008) (Termeer et al., 2013), now addressed in a more encompassing and holistic approach. The notion of 'grand social challenges' is attracting much scholarly attention (Kuhlmann and Rip, 2014) (Eisenhardt et al., 2016), and has gained track parallel to the creation of these new governance arrangements. The core areas of action of the new governance architectures have to do with issues-areas that are at the core of the "raison d'être" of the organizations involved, like the improvement of health conditions for the global poor, fight against poverty, access to education,

etc. Secondly, they are strategic because they provide a renewed focus and drive for action directly approaching and formulating those challenges in explicit and clear ways. In other words, they are concrete problem-oriented rather than general policy-issue oriented.

The second particular feature of these new architectures of global governance is that they set up very concrete and substantive output oriented goals. In contrast to previous conventional global governance architectures which typically focus on inputs and are not explicit on targets or outcomes, the new governance architectures formulate in a straight way the final expected results. This output focus means that new global governance architectures have set up very high political expectations. They provide visions about a possible future that is expected to be realizable, and oftentimes define as well some time-frame for achieving that (2015, 2020, 2030, etc).

The third novelty that characterizes the new global governance architectures is that they are implemented through combinations of existing organizational structures and completely new set ups. This refers to the fact that the implementation combines existing (or partly reforming) legal/regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms, together with a set of new initiatives, like public-private partnerships, new mechanisms of cross-national learning and peer-reviewing, assessment and guidance. These combinations have also been referred to as the 'orchestrating' of some actors, most typically international organizations (Abbott et al., 2014). It is worth noting that the new global governance architectures tend to include new and more dynamics ways of cross-national reporting and monitoring, which focus on domestic advancements in achieving milestones towards the ultimate goals, and on processes of learning at the national level. This contrasts with the traditional monitoring of legal enforcement and compliance, or the ex-post impact assessment of specific funding programs.

These three features defining the new global governance architectures are indicative of the strong multi-level dimension in which they operate. The output oriented goals give a powerful narrative and vision about the expected final outcomes, in a way that aims at mobilizing and orchestrating different types of actors with different types of resources, interests, and backgrounds, in order to pull into the same direction. As mentioned above, it is important to remind that is new global governance architectures are sometimes led by international organizations, but many other times they are not. Because they are the coalescing of multiple national governments, international organizations, NGOs, and firms around a set of ideas and practices, they might be initiated by some of those actors, and not only exclusively by international organizations. Regardless of the initiation of those architectures, the domestic level is particularly important for achieving the overall goals of these new architectures. This is so because many (if not all) of the expected outcomes have to do with the achievement of specific goals at the national level. This requires the involvement of various types of actors in the domestic arena, not least of civil servants.

The above definition of 'new global governance architectures' serves as a basis to identify these new initiatives in the context of global and transnational politics, and most importantly, to undertake an analysis about their interaction with the domestic level. As mentioned earlier, some of the most well-known examples of new global governance architectures for grand social

challenges is perhaps the set of initiatives that have been put in relation to the ‘Millennium Development Goals’ (MDG), the goals defined by the United Nations in 2000 and the subsequent round of goals under the name ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) (Sachs, 2012). The SDGs are a set of 17 goals, which contain in total 169 targets (each with several corresponding indicators to measure progress) (Sridhar, 2016). The implementation is done at the national level, as UN member states must translate the goals into their own national context, and develop a specific plan of action that involves budgetary and legislative decisions, as well as the search for capable partners which can be engaged in the implementation process. Monitoring is done regularly. Naturally, the implementation is one of the largest issues for success, requiring broader frameworks for monitoring progress and assessing impact (Victora et al., 2011) (Maurice, 2016). The high level of ambition of the goals, and the somehow limited stakeholder involvement in the process that lead to the definition of the goals, has been criticised and related with the possibilities of making real progress (Fehling et al., 2013).

From the perspective of the current chapter, it is important to understand that the Millennium Development Goals are not a global governance architecture on their own. Instead these UN goals must be seen as an important element forming part of such a new architecture, that is a larger ensemble of organizational actors (the UN, other IOs, national governments, NGOs, philanthropists, etc.) who are combining efforts and visions around a set of ideas and practices, ultimately aiming at addressing specifically identified grand social challenges. These new global governance architectures mobilize different resources, and generate differentiated dynamics on each of the challenges identified for action. It is those actors, resources, and visions that form the new architecture.

3. Access to Medicines for Neglected Diseases: An Example at Point

Neglected diseases pose serious problems for poor countries’ public health and development. Providing accessible medicines for these diseases are among the most enduring and difficult grand societal challenges, as they require advanced investments in R&D, as well as expensive and long regulatory approval processes for authorizing those medicines to enter the market legally. The problem is that the low purchasing power of patients has created a market failure. The weakness of purchasing power on the demand side limits the supply side, in terms of the investment levels from private firms. This is because the lack of real market means that private firms are unable to regain their investments with the profit levels requested by international investors. The development of new medicines is capital intensive and high risk, due to the nature of scientific discovery process, which is intrinsically serendipitous and uncertain. Likewise, on the other side, the problem is that public governments in developing countries lack the scientific knowledge, financial resources and overall expertise to develop such advanced and capital intensive R&D investments, and complex legal authorization procedures in a successful manner.

The market and state failures are the two simultaneous problems that product development partnerships (PDPs) seek to overcome. By bringing together national governments, international organizations, universities, private firms and large philanthropies, they target efforts to find suitable ways to prevent, treat and cure these diseases. Therefore they can be seen as specific forms of public-private partnerships (PPPs), which are an important trend in the new global health governance (Clinton and Sridhar, 2017).

There are approximately two dozens of PDPs currently operating across borders (Nishtar, 2004) (Rushton and Williams, 2011), most of them created around the year 2000. They are quite diverse in nature (Buse and Tanaka, 2011), yet they are characterized by managing medium-size R&D project portfolios of different active components' medicine candidates, with the ultimate objective to launch to the market medicines for these diseases that are cheap and easily accessible for the poor in the global South. In a sense, much of the initiatives and drive behind these partnerships can be related to the UN Millennium Development Goals, which has served as a strong source of inspiration, and has provided an overreaching narrative. For that reason, and in many ways, these targeted partnerships can be seen as a serious attempt of create new types of governance instruments for fostering change in the complex socio-technical systems related to these diseases.

Product Development Partnerships are relevant examples of transnational and global forms of hybrid governance (Wolfram, 2004) (Pierre, 2013), and in particular of the gradual emergence of new global governance architectures, which are strategic and directional initiatives on targeted issues (Borrás and Radaelli, 2011) (Abbott et al., 2014). The peculiarity of product development partnerships is that they bring diverse types of actors (including private actors, public actors, and civil society organizations) in partnerships, which are backed up by informal secretariats (Vabulas, 2018). In that regard PDPs are very broad, combining actors with very different resources, backgrounds, goals, and capabilities. It is important however to note that most PDPs are backed up by strong knowledge networks of scientific and medical communities, which have the expertise in the laboratory as well as in the active delivery of health care in those diseases. These knowledge networks and scientific communities are operating in a transnational as well as in a global scale (Sending, 2018), and they are on the driving seat of the concrete partnership arrangements.

All in all, PDPs can be seen as epitomizing rapid transformations in global governance, and in particular the emergence of new global governance architectures, through the creation of large ensemble of organizational actors who combine initiatives and visions in order to address problems of market and government failures. Likewise, PDPs can be seen as well as new (transnational) instruments of transformative research and innovation (R&I). This is part of an overarching political agenda that sees R&I activities from an agenda that promotes responsiveness and responsibility. Thus, product development partnerships are perceived as instruments of transformation, rather than instruments for scientific development on its own terms or for economic growth. At national level this is related to the raise of policy instruments to address grand societal challenges (Rogge and Reichardt, 2016) (Chataway et al., 2014), and the growing directionality and mission-oriented nature of science technology and innovation

STI policy mixes towards transformative innovation (Schot and Steinmueller, 2016) (Wieczorek and Hekkert, 2012).

Yet, it is worth noting that, in spite of sharing similar goals and overall expectations, there are many different types of PDPs in terms of their structures, funding sources, knowledge expertise, regulatory strategies, and interaction with public health authorities (Muñoz et al., 2015). Some PDPs focus on developing single types of medicines (f.example vaccines) in a relatively wide number of different diseases. Instead, others focus on the opposite, namely, developing a wide variety of medicine types (vaccines, treatment and diagnosis) in a very few number of diseases. By the same token, some PDPs focus on the early stages of the value chain producing medicines (the R&D activities in the laboratory and pre-clinical trials), whereas other focus more on the latest stages of the chain (the clinical trials phase II and III, and the authorization procedures – when the drug is closest to be approved and introduced to the market). The above means that PDPs are very different when it comes to the diseases and the type of drugs they aim at addressing, and the stages in the value chain they address.

Funding comes as well from very different sources. Some are coordinating and managing projects mainly funded from public sources. Others are mainly funded by philanthropies and private donations, acting as funding agents and managing specific projects implementing the purposes designed by those funders. Likewise, some of these PDPs include very large numbers of members, coordinating and funding a huge diversity of activities and projects in many places of the world. Others are more restricted in terms of members and numbers of activities.

Recent empirical studies about PDPs focus mainly on the collaborative aspect of these initiatives, asking about the different scales -global, national and local- of the partnership formation and operation (Ansell, 2015), particularly on the issue of scaling from specific levels and across them. Other empirical studies analyze the dynamics of collaboration paying particular attention to power relations in the partnerships (Jobson et al., 2017), and to issues of global-level leadership required to launch those global-scale endeavours (Buse and Tanaka, 2011). These empirical findings are highly relevant and shed good insights about the creation and implementation of PDPs. However, they tend somehow to disregard the actor-oriented approaches of organizational studies, putting most emphasis on institutional dimensions. Furthermore, they tend to pay more attention to the global-level dynamics rather than the national- and local levels. Hence, more emphasis needs to be put on empirical questions about delivery and impact at the domestic level (Storeng, 2014), which is ultimately key for the success of the visions and goals of these partnerships in solving the grand social challenges they target. Next section delves into this, paying particular attention to the conditions for impact at the domestic level.

4. The Conditions for Impact at the Domestic Level: Three Dimensions of Capacity

The open-ended strategic goals of the new global governance architectures are articulated in different institutional and organizational arrangements at different levels. The goals are typically defined as a set of specific objectives to be reached at a certain point in time. They are normally accompanied by some institutional frameworks for monitoring and assessing progress at different levels, typically the national level. These objectives and institutional frameworks provide a rather wide overall set up for defining the specific lines for action at the domestic level.

The extensive literature about multi-level governance, policy learning and policy transfer, and transnational governance, provide useful insights to examine the conditions for impact in different ways. This literature has brought to the fore the role of international organizations and non-state actors in processes of transnational policy transfer and in the growing role of global governance, particularly the norms and values which are related to 'softer' forms of transfer (Stone, 2004). Hence, the literature has moved from a North vs. South and state-centric approach of transfer and learning, towards a wider and more comprehensive approach of cross-national public administration from a global perspective (Gulrajani and Moloney, 2012) (Benson and Jordan, 2011). Likewise, recent developments in causal theorisation about policy learning and policy change look at the multi-scale relations between the micro-level individual learning, learning in groups and the macro-dimension. These studies explore the logic of moving from the micro to the macro scales of learning and change (Dunlop and Radaelli, 2017). Scale becomes a relevant issue in geographical as well as functional ways (Ansell and Torfing, 2015). Likewise, the literature on organizational studies has increasingly paid attention to issues of capacity in the context of learning and change. More concretely, the extensive literature on health studies sees capacity and capacity building, as a crucial dimension (Crisp et al., 2000) (Minja et al., 2011).

Building from these approaches, this paper brings some of these items in the context of the particular open-ended, strategic and combined institutional arrangements that characterize the new global governance architectures defined above. The starting point is to focus on the role of capacity in the context of analysing the impact at domestic level of these new global governance architectures. In particular, this chapter suggests focusing on three dimensions of capacity: the knowledge absorptive capacity, the organizational capacity and the communication capacity at the domestic level.

Absorptive capacity is a notion developed by economists since the beginning of the 1990s, and largely used in economic and organisational studies. Put forward in the context of knowledge economics, this notion has to do with the ability of a firm or any other organization to utilize knowledge that comes from external sources (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990) (Zahra and George, 2002). This is related to the importance of knowledge for businesses development in a rapidly changing market and technological contexts. Firms need new knowledge in order to transform business opportunities into real market value. Producing knowledge is very expensive, this is

why firms rely on combining internal and external sources of knowledge. The main argument of the absorptive capacity notion is that the ability of firms and other organizations to recognize the value of new external knowledge, and to use it in the development of their own new products and solutions, is largely associated to the firm's absorptive capacity, that is, to the firm's own level of internal knowledge resources.

What these authors suggest is that when organizations possess a certain level of internal knowledge they will be in a better position to understand the value and to utilize the external knowledge that is available to them. It is the combination of internal and external knowledge sources that gives the organization a strong capacity to innovate and generate new solutions.

There is a large literature in the field of organisational studies and economics dedicated to absorptive capacity and diffusion of innovations (Greenhalgh et al., 2004). The empirical research that tested that theory shows that absorptive capacity is not linear, but curved taking an inverted U-shape: When organisations start using external sources of knowledge there is a positive increase in their performance. But at certain point, if they are far too relying on external sources, that performance becomes negative. This means that if organisations are too dependent on external sources, this dependency will tend to have negative effects on their performance (Laursen and Salter, 2006).

These empirical findings in knowledge economics are relevant when considering the importance of specialized technical knowledge in other organizational settings. The grand social challenges that the new global governance architectures aim at addressing are characterized by large degree of complexity and in many cases by the need of combining different sources of specialized social and technical knowledge. This is the case for our example of PDPs in the context of health, where technical and scientific medical knowledge needs to be combined with knowledge about local health conditions and needs. For that reason those empirical findings might be a useful starting point in considering the factors that are relevant for processes of change and learning, associated to the new global governance architectures.

The level knowledge resources and the absorptive capacity of knowledge at the domestic level is an essential factor for explaining differential impact across countries. Domestic actors enjoy certain levels of internal sources of knowledge. This is distributed differently across different countries, and across different actors within the same country. Those internal sources of knowledge have different characteristics and different strength. Examples of that knowledge associated to grand social challenges are medicine and health knowledge, forest tree management knowledge, statistical capacity and data availability, accessibility to data management capacity, etc. Solution to large and complex problems in the field of public health in developing countries requires the combination of different types of knowledge, and access to different networks of knowledge actors (Stone, 2013).

The degree to which a specific domestic context enjoys internal sources of that knowledge is likely to have an effect on the way in which the different domestic actors are able to understand and use effectively external sources of knowledge. Put in other words, domestic actors are able to make the most of new knowledge and ideas if they themselves have a certain minimum level of internal knowledge themselves to start with. This is what the theory of absorptive capacity

tells. Its applicability to the context of new global governance architectures' domestic impact is relevant due to the advanced nature of social and technical knowledge related to the specific issue areas they refer to.

The second factor that is crucial for understanding the impact at the domestic level of those new global governance dynamics is organizational capacity. This has to do with the national traditions of political and administrative organizations, as well as their interactions with other private and not-for-profit organizations. This has to do with the features that characterize interorganizational interactions and dynamics across the different national administrative structures, and across different organizations in the domestic context. In particular it is important to examine two aspects. Firstly, the organizational capacities of individual organizations in terms of their resources and strategies towards addressing grand social challenges (Ferraro et al., 2015) (George et al., 2016). Secondly, the inter-organizational relations, meaning, the way in which the public, private, not for profit sectors in that country interact with each other to explicitly aim at reaching those goals. The key issue is to see the extent to which the different organizations that populate the sectors related to specific grand social challenges (health, energy, environment, etc) have developed explicit strategies, as well as formal and or informal mechanisms for complementing and strengthening each other's activities.

Countries with long established synergetic interactions between public, private and civil society organizations, will be better prepared for dealing collectively with these global challenges and for implementing particular requirements of the new global governance architectures in the respective issue-areas. By the same token, countries where those interactions are weak or uncoordinated, will encounter more difficulties to articulate suitable responses and courses of action. This is partly related as well with the inter-organizational inability to make most effective use of the resources each of those organizations have.

The definition of grand social challenges in the context of new global governance architectures are subject to political processes like any other issues in international and world politics. They are not pre-given or exogenously defined, but they are the outcome of long processes of interaction and power. Likewise, the process of implementing those, putting them into practice at the domestic level, is also a process of subjective interpretation and constant definition by those involved. This is related to the communication and coordination of discourses and narratives around those grand social challenges and around how to articulate solutions to them. Legitimacy plays here an important role. (Termeer et al., 2015)

Thus, the third factor that shapes domestic impact of the new global governance architectures is the communication capacity of the organizations. This has to do with the way in which those problems have been discursively defined in relation to the goals of the global level. Domestic actors of different types would only engage in solving challenges if are normatively justified and if they believe are relevant for their local constituencies. The grand social challenges defined at a global level are very open ended in that regard. Translating them into a coordinated narrative that has meaning and relevance for the problems that domestic actors perceive, is crucial for the success of implementing solutions.

Hence, the extent to which domestic actors are able to ‘translate’, ‘interpret’ and ‘articulate’ in a coherent manner the nature of the problem and the vision for a possible solution, is paramount for the collective ability to pull resources into the same direction. A broad legitimacy at the domestic level is a building block for a significant domestic impact. Thus, legitimacy and its normative articulation is an essential element in the process of community engagement in research-related activities for addressing grand challenges (Tindana et al., 2007), but also for the endorsement at the domestic level of these global governance arrangements that are based on private-public partnerships (Bernstein and Cashore, 2007).

5. Whose capacity? And how to analyse it?

The analytical framework exposed above can be summarized in three types of capacity at the domestic level: knowledge absorptive capacity, organizational capacity, and legitimacy as communicative capacity.

The next issue that is worth considering here is, whose capacity? Traditionally, in the context of public policy, the focus has been mainly on the features of public organizations and public administration in terms of their resources like funding, manpower, administrative traditions, etc. In their recent book Martin Lodge and Kai Wegrich have identified four types of capacity of the state: delivery capacity, regulatory capacity, coordination capacity, and analytical capacity (Lodge and Wegrich, 2014). Their point of departure is the question about the limited problem-solving capacity of contemporary industrialized and advanced states. Their edited book focuses on administrative capacity within public administrations and state-level bureaucracies arguing that those four types of capacities should be explored in relation to some specific combinations of policy instruments.

Acknowledging that problems are large and complex, some authors have associated this capacity with the ability of public civil servants to meta-coordinate and collaborate with other actors in order to generate innovation in the public sector. The centre of attention remains the administrative capacity of the public sector, as the main question is what administrative skills are needed to enhance collaborative innovation between the public sector and the other sectors in the economy and society (Sørensen and Torfing, 2014).

These are highly relevant observations about the administrative capacity of the public sector in context of rapid change, and in contexts of the collaborative efforts to problem-solving. However, it is argued in this paper that we need to consider domestic actor’s capacity in a wider perspective, and not only in terms of administrative capacity of the public sector. This is so for two main reasons. Firstly because the nature of some large problems is so that the solutions are not necessarily only solutions that can be designed and performed by public-sector actors. This is the case for example when market dynamics and other social economic dynamics from civil society organizations are in fact the dominating dynamics in terms of solving problems. In those situations, administrative capacity of the public-sector is important but not decisive for

providing workable and accessible solutions to local communities or market related interactions.

The second reason why we need to consider domestic actor's capacity in a wider perspective is that administrative capacity of the public-sector is problematic in many low income and lower middle income economy countries. In those countries it cannot be assumed that administrative capacity will be able to coordinate or meta-govern the design of some interactions or frameworks for collaboration across actors. In many cases that function is performed by non-state actors (civil society, NGOs, private firms, etc). This is to say that in some countries with weak public institutional frames, the administrative capacity of the public-sector might not be on the driving seat.

For those two reasons, when discussing domestic actor's capacity it is worth to include administrative capacity, as well as the capacity of a broader notion of actors. This is somehow similar to questions about political capacity that have been associated to the studies about the effectiveness of new modes of governance. Following Adrienne Héritier: "A political process is considered to have political capacity (*a*) when a decision can be reached without long negotiations, and (*b*) when it enjoys the political support of all concerned actors and therefore has a high consensus capacity". P.106 (Héritier, 2004). This scholar suggests that capacity is associated to the process of negotiations and issues of legitimacy across different types of actors.

These remarks serve to turn back again to our question above about "whose capacity?". The point here is who are we talking about when focusing on the three capacities of the state identified earlier, namely knowledge absorptive capacity, organizational capacity, and legitimacy as communicative capacity. The answer to that is naturally that we are talking about the capacity of the public administration of the country in question, as well as the capacity of private actors, and civil society actors. In other words we discuss issues of domestic actor's capacity in terms of the respective capacity of public, private, civil society actors in that country.

Therefore the next question is how to analyse that capacity. Naturally this is linked to the issue of defining more concretely the attributes that define each of the three capacities, and to their operationalization for the design of empirical research endeavours. As mentioned above knowledge absorptive capacity of domestic actors has to do with their level of expertise, technical skills, scientific knowledge on the areas in question. That could be done by examining the specific skills and professional background of the human resources employed within civil service, and within the other private and not for profit organizations. In the case of product development partnerships, this could be examined by looking into the number and type of health-related knowledge skills among the employees in the civil service, and the NGOs, working on the area.

Likewise, the organizational capacity could be started by looking into the amount of physical capital and monetary resources, as well as their ability to engage in interactions with other organizations outside the national administrative structures. The level of organizational flexibility and of problem-solving approach in the interaction between public private actors, are

two concrete ways of empirically pinning down the extent to which there is organizational capacity in the domestic level.

Last but not least, communicative capacity has to do with the extent to which domestic actors are able to translate and interpret in a coherent manner the nature of the problem. A suitable way to examine that would be to look into the degrees of sophistication of the own visions of domestic actors, as well as the channels that those actors have used to communicate politically and socially those ideas. The coherence of that communication, in terms of content of the ideas, and of the communication channels, would be an important aspect to consider empirically.

Taking the three capacities together, it would be important to study empirically how those capacities are distributed inside the country. The key issue is whether those capacities are evenly distributed across three types of domestic actors (administrators, private, civil society). This is not only related to the resources of the actors, but also about power and dominance according to the way in which those capacities are utilized in the domestic context.

6. Conclusion

This paper provides a first step into an analytical framework to study the way in which the new global governance architectures that seek to address grand social challenges, is linked to issues of actor's capacity at the domestic level. The framework provides some clues about bringing closer together two sets of literature, namely the literature about global trends and new forms global governance, and the literature about capacity. The paper argues that there are new forms of global governance architectures emerging since the turn of the millennium along the lines with new ways of approaching complex and long-lasting problems. These new forms of global governance architectures are directly focusing on strategic problems in a comprehensive way, they define clear output-oriented goals, and they are implemented by combining traditional instruments and new organizational structures across different levels of political action. They are phrased and framed in a different way than before. Their explicit focus on problems, and their relative open ended nature, which do not necessarily entail regulatory/ legislative instruments, are their main novelties compared to the more input oriented, regulatory instrumentation of previous governance architectures.

The extent to which those new global governance architectures will manage to deliver the expected outcomes is an unresolved research question as well as practical question. In this paper it is argued that domestic actor's capacity is a crucial intermediary factor in that regard. Domestic actor's capacity not understood as the capacity of public administration, but the capacity of other key private and civil society actors explicitly involved in the mechanisms and structures set up by the new global governance architectures to address grand social challenges. Those private and civil society actors have different capacities and resources that might be successfully mobilized together with the public administrators capacities in problem-solving.

The paper identifies three essential types of capacities that are relevant in this regard, namely, knowledge absorptive capacity, organizational capacity, and legitimacy as communicative capacity. Those three constitute essential intermediary factors for understanding the possible success of those new global governance architectures. This framework of analysis makes a plea for bringing closer together the growing literature on the fields of global governance studies and of domestic actor's capacity studies, in an understanding that global and state levels of policy action are strongly interrelated and dependent upon each other.

One final remark is relevant at this point. The role of new narratives should not be underestimated as a fundamental explanatory factor behind the remarkable dynamics of these new types of governance architectures. In a way, the large echo that the notion of grand social challenges has received around the turn of the Millennium, has mobilized the imagination and aligned willingness and intentions of many strong global and transnational actors. The notion of grand social challenges is essentially problem oriented. It seeks to identify with clear terms the wicked problems that remain unsolved. Many of those problems are trapped between the double failures that we mentioned earlier in this paper, that is, the market failure and the government failure. In a way, the notion of grand social challenges has provided an overall narrative, and vision, that has articulated specific lines of action, by pulling together actors to what's one same ambitious goal. Experts, professionals and specialists in some specific fields (like health, agriculture, etc) understand the obstacles of such two failures. The narrative and visions around the collective ambition to solve grand social challenges, has provided a strong overall support to those actors. They have mobilized their complementary knowledge resources, and attracted financial resources (from nonprofit organizations as well as firms), while shaping new and different pathways to address those problems.

There are some skeptical voices questioning the real possibilities of those grand visions to be materialized, and to achieve successfully their goals. However, individual and concrete initiatives like PDPs, which have managed to mobilize such a wide variation of complementary resources, might be able to provide concrete solutions. Naturally, the solutions to grand challenges will not come at once, but they will be able to make a substantive step forward in very concrete ways, overcoming the paralysis of market-only or state-only initiatives. By pulling together the different resources, and collaborating at project level, multiple national governments, IOs, NGOs and firms, are engaged in finding new ways. Those concrete partnerships, and their very specific project portfolios, might become sustained conditions for problem-solving. For that reason, scholars of global policy, international relations, transnational administration, and governance, must pay increasing attention to the visions and dynamics behind the notion of 'grand social challenges'. Anecdotal evidence shows that this broad notion has been able to stimulate concrete ideas for courses of action among resourceful global and transnational actors. Those courses of action might not only re-shape interactions between organizations and practices at the global, transnational and domestic levels, but they might also be able to provide concrete responses and solutions to problems that seemed intractable few years ago.

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