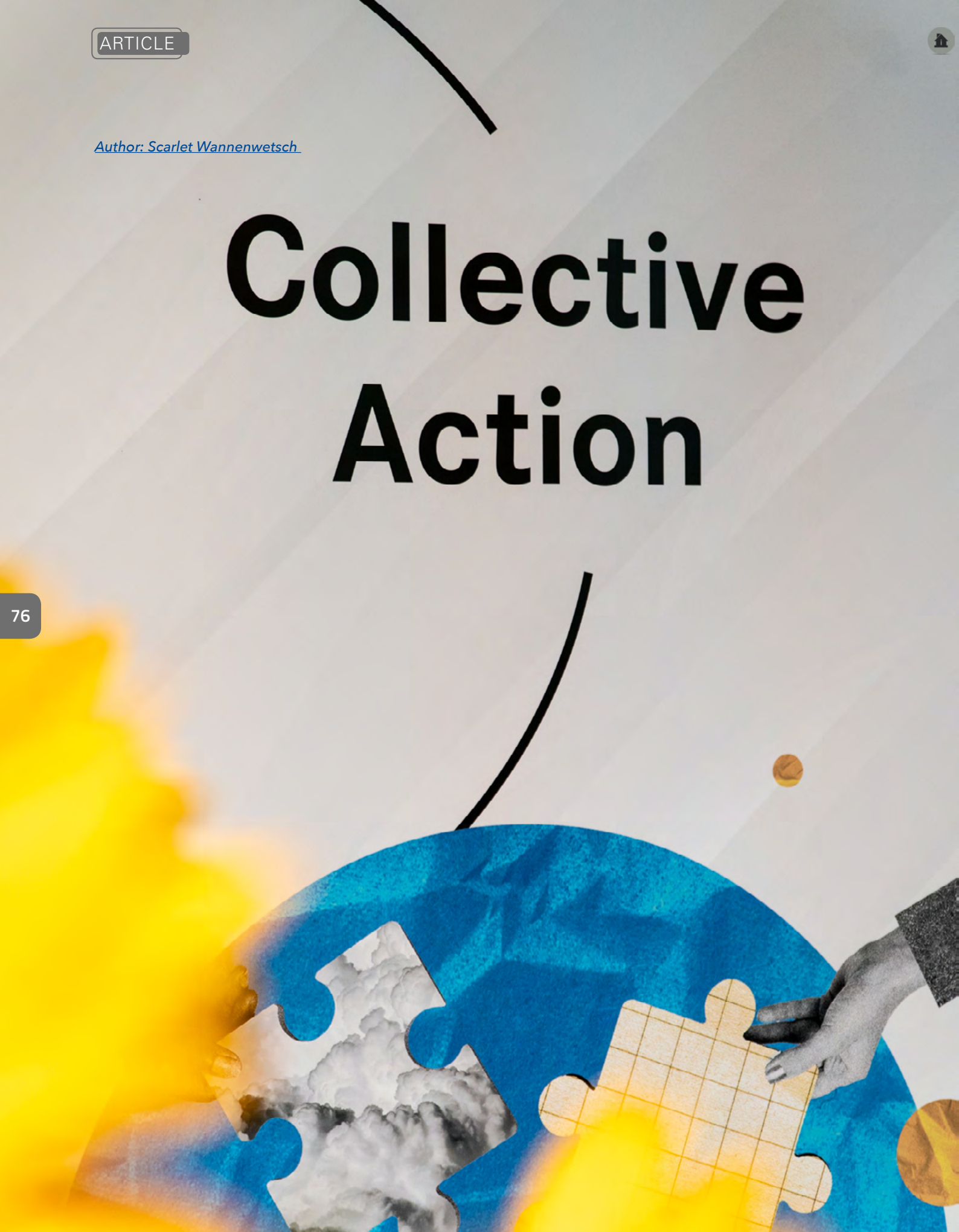


Author: Scarlet Wannewetsch

Collective Action



4th International Collective Action Conference in Basel Switzerland

Making multi-stakeholder approaches central to corruption prevention and part of business as usual

The 4th International Collective Action Conference on 30 June and 1 July 2022 enabled over 200 leading anti-corruption professionals to come together and discuss how to integrate Collective Action into their day-to-day business practices.

The conference offered a platform for participants to re-engage with one another in person, take stock of Collective Action efforts, and exchange on how the private sector, civil society and government can work together better to address shared issues of corruption through Collective Action. The Basel Institute on Governance was happy to see a strong representation and interest from civil society and a significant increase in both private-sector and public-sector participation.

Following an inspiring keynote address by renowned writer, speaker and entrepreneur Margaret Heffernan, the conference featured panel discussions, workshops, exhibitions and networking opportunities. Conversations explored how anti-corruption Collective Action is entering the mainstream of corruption prevention and compliance.

The ultimate goal of “mainstreaming” Collective Action is the same for all: a clean, fair and sustainable business environment. Each stakeholder group brings something different to the table, and has different expectations for engaging and driving Collective Action. So panellists across stakeholder groups and sectors showcased successful Collective Action examples, and interactive

sessions engaged participants to exchange best practices with their peers. During breaks, participants browsed the poster exhibition and spoke to practitioners at their booths. These had the chance to demonstrate their work to a wider audience and discuss their experiences developing and scaling Collective Action in their context.

A special highlight of the conference was the ceremony for the inaugural **Collective Action Awards**:

- The Outstanding Achievement award went to the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network’s **Collective Action initiative in Nigeria**, in collaboration with the Convention on Business Integrity.
 - The Inspirational Newcomer award went to the **Global Compact Network Ukraine Collective Action Initiative**.
- A warm congratulations to the win-

ners, to the other shortlisted candidates (**Business Integrity Society Korea, CoST - the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative, the Bribery Prevention Network and the Fight Against Facilitation Payments Initiative**), to the 37 nominated candidates in total and to all 1,260+ individuals who voted for the initiatives during the public vote.

There was overwhelming agreement from all participants that Collective Action has a vital role to play and needs to be more integrated into existing systems, processes and strategies. Participants highlighted the importance of more engagement and commitment amongst and between the private sector, civil society and government to achieve this. They flagged the need to build capacity to help stakeholders better understand their potential role in Collective Action and the impact it can have.



Collective Action’s central role in corruption prevention and compliance

Since its emergence over 25 years ago, anti-corruption Collective Action has developed into a broad concept.

Anti-corruption Collective Action is considered to be an overarching concept, or umbrella term, that includes a wide range of tools and measures. These instruments are developed through multi-stakeholder approaches to address fair competition, bribery and corruption or combinations of these issues.

What most initiatives have in common is that they are developed and implemented through collaborative activities with the explicit support of the various stakeholders. The level of active engagement by the stakeholders may vary according to the type of initiative and the context. In every case, though, the aim is to work towards solutions to a specific problem, identify best practices, or address an agreed set of issues.

The potential of Collective Action tools to support business integrity is increasingly recognised by governments in policy and law enforcement guidance, and standards set by a range of international initiatives. But for Collective Action to achieve its full potential to catalyse systemic progress in raising integrity across industries, it needs a critical mass of companies to engage.

As Ken Graversen from [Fight Against Facilitation Payments \(FAFPI\)](#) remarked during the conference, *"there are things you simply cannot do alone,"* and that's why Collective Action as a tool for engagement is so essential.

For decades, Collective Action as a corruption prevention tool has been



[supported and called for](#) by leading international organisations and standard-setters, including the UN, OECD and World Bank. The endorsement and inclusion of Collective Action in the [2021 OECD Anti-Bribery Recommendations](#), which now include Collective Action as a good-practice tool for governments to demonstrate their

commitment to fighting corruption, marks a new stage of maturity – not least in light of the OECD’s rigorous review mechanisms.

Endorsement of anti-corruption Collective Action principles in international standards and guidelines not only facilitate its implementation in national legal



frameworks. It can also provide a basis for going beyond legal requirements in efforts to prevent corruption.

If you want to find out more about Collective Action and the different types of initiatives out there you can browse our [B20 Collective Action Database](#) for inspiration.

Stakeholder roles in Collective Action at a glance

Private sector

The business case is broad-ranging for companies to engage with other stakeholders on corruption-related issues, commit to integrity through trust-based dialogue, and drive the implementation of integrity standards within their sphere of influence. Those currently active in Collective Action see the benefits: now how to convince and include the others?

Public sector

The public sector gears up to take more of a driver's seat in mainstreaming Collective Action. To do this, they need to consult with other stakeholders, incentivise companies to engage and invest in corruption prevention, and engage actively by participating in initiatives and adopting anti-corruption tools.

Civil society and academia

Civil society or non-profit organisations and academia are well aware of the crucial role they play in facilitating Collective Action initiatives, providing expertise and conducting research to help progress the methodology, and monitoring implementation in practice. How can they do these things stronger and better?

To find out the answers and learn more about various stakeholders' perspectives, check out the full conference summary at:

<https://collective-action.com/explore/publications>.



80

Looking to the future

Collective Action, the conference showed, has not yet expanded to its limits of application. Due to its methodological flexibility, Collective Action is already taken up in different contexts: The intersections of Business and Human Rights experiment with similar concepts and lawyers and accountants start recognising the value for them to engage in Collective Action. Even possible correlations of gender and corruption may be explored in a future of Collective Action.

After 1.5 days of engaged discussion about future pathways of Collective Action, participants left the conference with a renewed call to action in mind. Mainstreaming Collective Action from all stakeholder perspectives has only just begun and the success of it relies on the cooperation and

development of each and every side. As Sabine Zindera, Vice President, Legal and Compliance at Siemens encouraged participants:

“Collective Action is not difficult to do, it just needs to be done”.



Get involved: In building a stronger network and Collective Action community

If you are interested in the concept of Collective Action but don't know where to start, or if you are already engaged in a Collective Action initiative but hit a bump in the road, then you might benefit from joining the Basel Institute's new [Collective Action mentoring programme](#).

The Programme offers tailored advice, support, and technical assistance for civil society organisations from leading experts in anti-corruption compliance and Collective Action – all for free. We aim to support organisations engaged in anti-corruption Collective Action in building strong, sustainable, and successful initiatives

Some things we could help you with:

Business case

How to identify and explain the business case to attract companies to take part in your initiative, at the outset and later on. What are the incentives for the private sector to engage? And other stakeholders?

Context analysis

How to conduct context and stakeholder mapping and analysis - both crucial steps to achieve your aims.

Trust building

Ways to develop trust among stakeholders and attract the right people to the table.

Strategy development

How to frame the scope of your initiatives, develop a strategy and build relationships with relevant stakeholders.

Organisation

How to organise meetings and logistics, as well as manage antitrust risks.

Training

Ways to train and empower facilitators.

Consensus building

How to work through consensus.

Communication

Ideas for how to communicate about your Collective Action initiative and the timing and implications of going public.

The mentoring programme also aims to support the development of a stronger Collective Action community. It offers the opportunity to exchange and learn from other initiatives that are part of the mentoring programme and beyond.

Only a select number of organisations can benefit from the Mentoring Programme.

If you are interested to find out more about the Collective Action mentoring programme feel free to reach out to: scarlet.wannenwetsch@baselgovernance.org

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www.baselgovernance.org

