

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL 2016 INTEGRATION SEGMENT

2 – 4 May 2016

SUMMARY

“Implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development through policy innovation and integration”

Introduction

The 2016 Integration Segment of the Economic and Social Council was held in New York, 2 – 4 May 2016, and it focused on the theme “Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy innovation and integration”.¹ The Segment provided a unifying platform for dialogue and exchange of views on lessons learned and recommendations for ways forward in policy innovation and integration. It facilitated discussions between Member States, the UN system and other relevant stakeholders, offering policy recommendations to guide the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Prime Minister of Estonia, H.E. Mr. Taavi Rõivas, the Sectorial Minister for Social Development and Inclusion of Honduras, H.E. Mr. Ricardo Cardona, the Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment of Viet Nam, H.E. Mr. Dang Huy Dong, other senior government officials, and senior officials from the United Nations system and other international organizations addressed the Council during the Segment. Representatives of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank Group, the BBC World Service, representatives of non-governmental and civil society organizations, academia and the private sector contributed to the substantive discussions held during the three-day meeting. Eight Member States made statements during the general debate on 2 May 2016.²

The Segment demonstrated that, while integrated policy choices may have trade-offs, the long-term benefits of investing in such approaches overwhelmingly outweigh the short-term risks. It also showed that innovation – defined by new approaches to find solutions, whether by means of existing knowledge or technological advancement – can be an important enabler for achieving the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The year 2015 featured many landmark agreements: the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

¹ Detailed information about the 2016 Integration Segment, including on the panel discussions, is available on the official website of the 2016 Integration Segment: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/603813>.

² The Segment heard statements by the representatives of Thailand (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Viet Nam (on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations), Iraq, the Czech Republic, China, Lebanon, South Africa and Mexico. A statement was made by the observer for the League of Arab States. Statements are available in the Papersmart portal of the meeting: <http://papersmart.unmeetings.org/ecosoc/sessions/2016-ecosoc-integration-segment/programme/>

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development links these agreements together in a universal and transformative “plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”. In 2016 the international community is faced with the challenge of implementation.

The 2016 Integration Segment, focusing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through policy innovation and integration, contributed to the work of the Council under its main theme for the 2016 session, “Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: Moving from commitments to results”.

This was the first Integration Segment to take place after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The importance of integration resides in the very nature of the 2030 Agenda and is at the core of the innovative approach to sustainable development, inherent in its design. Therefore, the importance of the Integration Segment as one element of the ECOSOC role as a unifying platform for candid and expert level discussions on the risks and rewards of policy integration, and how to balance these, was widely acknowledged and emphasized.

The opening of the Segment laid the basis for the discussions held throughout the meeting. Participants were reminded that the 2030 Agenda presented an indivisible vision for achieving sustainable development with the Integration Segment serving as a space for all stakeholders to discuss opportunities and challenges around innovative and integrated policymaking to guide the implementation of the Agenda. The Council heard the case of Estonia and how the country has embraced digital technologies to bring about new governance structures and, in this way, to promote sustainable prosperity and inclusiveness.

In other contexts, small entrepreneurs, as well as those in the informal sector, are not always able to make full use of their innovative potential. To unlock that enormous potential and advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, certain conditions need to be in place, such as better access to information, knowledge and finance, and respect for local values. The discussion confirmed the importance of translating the paradigm shift envisioned by the 2030 Agenda into public policies, scientific methodologies and business practices, as well as the adjustments required in terms of institutional frameworks and policy planning in order to maximize integration synergies and policy impact.

Importantly, the issue of how to communicate the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to people everywhere was also discussed. This was seen as key to the successful implementation of the Agenda. Through the dissemination of the Goals and the engagement of local communities in the advancement of the Agenda, it is possible to unlock the potential of 7.3 billion partners in achieving progress towards the shared vision. The Segment introduced a unique way of engaging the United Nations with the outside world, as the BBC World Service recorded a special edition of the radio programme “My Perfect Country” through a panel discussion inspired by the policies and initiatives highlighted in the programme. This special episode is scheduled to be broadcast on 2 July 2016, and is expected to reach over 50 million global listeners.

The interactive panel discussions addressed the above issues from different perspectives, and generated a number of substantive responses integral to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda. The following sections present the major highlights and recommendations stemming from the discussions, followed by an overview of the themes addressed during the various sessions.

Major highlights and recommendations

- Policy integration entails risks such as dilution of policies, responsibilities, and of the clarity that resides in purely specialized approaches. Nevertheless, risks inherent in pursuing an integrated approach are outweighed by the overwhelming longer-term benefits of investing in it. Failure to invest in a proper integration strategy will hinder the realization of its gains in the future.
- Data plays a key role in policy integration and innovation, and in the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Effective learning and knowledge sharing, which depend on data quality and availability, are critical in overcoming the institutional and policy challenges related to integration and innovation. The availability of high quality disaggregated data is central in creating informative knowledge for policymaking through “feed learning” processes to improve policy design and better target policy interventions. It is also crucial for monitoring and follow-up. Capacity-building for data collection is, therefore, essential.
- Inclusive and innovative partnerships are key enablers of policy innovation and integration and will generate adapted solutions.
- The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require both a top-down approach, through political leadership, as well as a bottom-up approach, through the promotion of innovative solutions by entrepreneurs and its use by the population at large.
- The local level is vital for successful implementation, and entrepreneurship is key to reaching local solutions for global problems. To unlock the potential of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), bring the informal sector into the formal economy, and to bring grassroots experiences to scale, certain conditions will need to be in place, such as better access to information, knowledge and finance, and respect for local values.
- Fostering ownership of the Agenda at all levels of implementation is instrumental in surmounting the challenges of integration. Communication is crucial in translating the SDGs into relatable actions and impacts at the individual level, ultimately aiming to promote public engagement that advances sustainable development.
- Digital technologies can play an important role in the implementation, monitoring and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, promoting greater inclusion, efficiency and innovation. But long-standing development issues cannot be solved by technology alone. Therefore, such technologies should be accompanied by policies to improve Internet access, to bridge the digital divide, as well as by “analogue” policies, including: capacity and skills building, integrating digital technologies in infrastructure, promoting market competition, strengthening regulations that ensure competition among businesses, adapting workers’ skills to the demands of the new economy, and ensuring that institutions are accountable.
- Innovation does not have to be based on the use of novel technologies. It can be achieved by applying existing technologies in different contexts or in different areas, or doing things differently to reach new outcomes in pursuing progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- The UN system is striving to equip itself with a unified, system-wide implementation strategy that retains specialization, while capitalizing on opportunities for synergies across entities and coalitions of expertise in support of issue-based approaches. To facilitate management coherence, clear strategic guidance from Member States while allowing scope

for the UN system to manage its structure would be beneficial, including through reduced earmarked and greater pooled funding and risk-sharing mechanisms.

My Perfect Country

Inspired by the radio programme “My Perfect Country”, produced by the BBC World Service in collaboration with the Institute for Global Prosperity of the University College London, the Council held a panel discussion featuring innovative policy solutions and initiatives that have been highlighted in the programme. These initiatives have improved the lives of people in a sustainable manner, in line with the principles and goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The discussion demonstrated that simple, bottom-up innovations, such as access to justice in Uganda and sanitation solutions in India, as well as top-down approaches, such as digitization of government services in Estonia and renewable energy policies in Costa Rica, can make profound impacts on integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development. These initiatives confirmed that policy innovation and integration require both a top-down approach, through political leadership, as well as a bottom-up approach, through the promotion of innovative solutions by entrepreneurs and its use by the population at large.

In terms of rule of law, lack of knowledge, costs related to legal services and remoteness were named as key impediments to equitable access to justice. In Uganda, an initiative shaped to enable access to justice made use of innovative solutions to reach people through several channels, including cellphones and social media. This provided a vehicle for access legal services at no additional cost for those lacking knowledge or financial means, including people living in rural areas.

Another innovative example by local entrepreneurs was the case of sanitation solutions in India, developing customized sanitation services as part of an integrated approach to sanitation, hygiene and water issues. The context of sanitation in India is characterized by specific cultural values that need to be considered in addressing such issues. The maintenance of available toilets required fostering ownership of sanitation facilities by local authorities. Sanitary infrastructure is important in advancing sustainable development, as it deals with questions related to health, gender equality, and education, among others. The discussion showed that market-based solutions, in particular those involving the engagement of small- and medium-sized enterprises, can be instrumental in achieving improvements in sanitary infrastructure.

In Estonia, innovation was driven by the exigencies of transitioning from a centrally planned to a market economy in the 1990s. The country has embraced digital technologies extensively, both in the private and public sectors. Education policies drove broad digitalization, ensuring that youths are skilled in using and maintaining new technologies. The benefits of e-governance and an e-society in general have included efficiency in government and the private sector keeping transparency. Digital governance hinders corruption and, thus, can play a major role in advancing fair and equitable institutions that can foster sustainable development. Digital services also foster inclusion once access by all is ensured. Therefore, investment in digital infrastructure is a vital requisite to unlock the vast potential of digital technologies.

Another example of national policies that have brought a significant change of mindset from business-as-usual was that of Costa Rica, where in 2007 the government introduced a plan to be carbon-neutral by 2021. The country’s electricity supply has been transformed and, in 2015, 99% of its energy consumption was met from renewable sources. This was achieved through investment policies to expand capacity in renewable energy production, as well as efforts to reduce the country’s carbon footprint, such as incentives to create a carbon-neutral

coffee industry, a traditional export product. Additionally, a key aspect in gaining support for its environmental policies has been the institutionalization of communication with its citizens around innovative policies such as renewable energy policies. The conversation with the population, informing of the benefits of the new policies and in particular, emphasizing those that can be directly observed by the citizens themselves, contributed to creating a national narrative and to galvanizing public opinion for change, translating into a “green growth” constituency in which a high proportion of businesses benefit from the country’s sustainable growth model.

The discussions concluded that making the 2030 Agenda a reality requires both top-down and bottom-up approaches bringing together citizens, civil society, the private sector and governments in a collaborative search for innovative and practical solutions. Innovation can be achieved by applying existing technologies to increase ownership, transparency and access to public services. Entrepreneurship is crucial to realizing local solutions to global problems; nevertheless, bringing grassroots experiences to scale requires addressing key issues of access, risk management and funding. In addition, communication is a crucial tool in achieving public engagement in causes that advance sustainable development.

Towards a paradigm shift in development

This session presented an overview of the 2030 Agenda, which is transformative in its universality, complexity, and inclusive and integrated approach to sustainable development that considers all dimensions - economic, social and environmental. Participants discussed the implications of this new framework in terms of policymaking, implementation and monitoring. The session considered the impact of current trends and emerging challenges on different elements and how they may unfold and be accounted for during the implementation phase of the new Agenda.

Breaking silos and building synergies

There was general agreement that the tendency to act in silos is mistaken and that the way forward resides in the adoption of integrated approaches through which the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development can be achieved. Some participants argued that the conceptual paradigm shift of breaking silos and moving towards integration had already taken place, featuring broad consensus around the premise that climate and development are integral and inseparable, and that the challenge is now to implement the right policies.

The 2030 Agenda is the epitome of this paradigm shift, calling for innovation in the way people think, connect, organize, work, and coordinate and their roles as individuals and as a collective whole. The Agenda also calls for a systemic overhaul of accounting, reporting, financing and governing frameworks. In doing so, it provides guidance on policies, emphasizing the need for innovative and integrative paths that invest in building synergies among stakeholders, innovative partnerships, governance mechanisms that promote transparency, inclusiveness and accountability, collecting disaggregated data and strengthening monitoring and reporting systems, as well as empowering people and increasing ownership of the Agenda. These actions were seen as important and complementary tools in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Such implementation will require adjustments and decisive action by national governments as well as the United Nations system. The United Nations is uniquely positioned to

provide leadership in this paradigm shift and support national governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, given its global reach and expertise spreading throughout the 17 Goals and 169 targets, combined with its regional hubs and strategic operational activities at the national level. The initiative of the UN to consider development in a more cohesive way through a participatory and transparent process has led governments to increasingly involve society in defining overall policies, including those related to security and safety. The Paris agreement, which established mandatory obligations for States, was mentioned as an example in that direction.

This paradigm shift entails new ways of doing things, which has implications regarding institutional and governance structures and mandates as to respond in an integrated manner and deliver improved solutions to the challenges and opportunities presented by the 2030 Agenda in the most suitable way. This is true for the UN system as well as for the national governments and all other development partners.

Building on the 'digital dividends'

At the same time, the implementation of the new Agenda occurs against the backdrop of rampant technological advancement. Evidence suggests that, while digital technologies have spread rapidly in much of the world, the broader development benefits from using these technologies, referred to as “digital dividends”³, have lagged behind. Digital technologies have boosted growth, expanded opportunities and improved service delivery, but their benefits are unevenly distributed. Increasingly polarized labour markets and rising inequality are risk factors that tend to diminish digital dividends. Evidence also shows that digital dividends are only reaped when accompanied by “analogue policies” such as capacity and skills building, integrating digital technologies in infrastructure, strengthening regulations that ensure competition among businesses, adapting workers’ skills to the demands of the new economy and ensuring that institutions are accountable.

Ensuring no one is left behind

○ *Ownership at the local level*

In order to leave no one behind, governments must solve the issue of how to reach the poorest first in implementation efforts. This implies fostering ownership in both policy-design and implementation. The disconnect that exists between the rhetoric around the SDGs and the needs of citizens will need to be addressed. Additionally, best practices indicate that ensuring ownership of the Agenda, as well as implementing evidence-based policies and translating global commitments into specific strategies and budgets at the local level are keys to success. Instilling ownership would also guarantee greater accountability and foster creative problem-solving through partnerships.

○ *Financial inclusion*

An important tool to bring marginalized groups into the formal economy, and thus ensure no one is left behind, is financial inclusion. By providing a way towards economic security

³ World Bank (2016), *World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends*, Washington D.C.
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2016>

for families, it also delivers a path away from the cycle of poverty and inequality. In particular, innovative financial products designed to meet the needs of women, for example, generate multiplier effects. Nevertheless, the gender gap in access to finance persists, despite some progress in improving financial inclusion, spurred by the growth of companies that use technology to make financial services more efficient. Some constraints to financial inclusion for women include limited access to banks due to remoteness, either physical or cultural, and lack of knowledge. To increase access, there is a need to invest in the financial literacy of women and to simplify procedures for opening bank accounts.

- *Strengthening data quality and availability*

Beyond implementation efforts, ensuring no one is left behind will also require innovation in monitoring and reporting systems. Data needs to be disaggregated to ensure effective follow-up on inclusiveness and statistical systems need to be strengthened. All relevant stakeholders need to be engaged in that effort. Capacity-building in this area will be crucial for the availability of high quality disaggregated data, which will be critical for monitoring and follow-up and, thus, for a successful implementation.

In terms of accountability frameworks in monitoring and follow-up of the Agenda, the high-level political forum (HLPF) was mentioned as a possible tool for ensuring accountability. Regarding the ongoing discussion of the global architecture for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, it was mentioned that prioritizing Goals and targets was a challenge and their selection should be based on evidence of best practices and highest expected correlated impact.

National perspectives on policymaking: institutional frameworks and policy planning

This session discussed institutional frameworks and governance arrangements needed for the effective integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also considered how the development of national strategic frameworks and policy planning could be informed by policy innovation and integration in order to respond to the new challenges of sustainable development such as climate change.

As an example, El Niño has shown how integrated responses are germane to dealing optimally with complex phenomena. In Honduras, El Niño has had direct effects on agricultural productivity, economic capacity and poverty, to which the government has responded in an integrated way through the construction of irrigation systems, provision of food, the design of agriculture programmes, and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Addressing such complex challenges will require integrated policymaking, coordinated implementation, effective learning, and knowledge generation and sharing.

Governance and coordination for policy integration

As preparations are underway for the 2016 HLPF, it is vital for all countries to keep the momentum regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This will require all stakeholders to be part of the implementation efforts. At the national level, coordination is critical around national visions and strategies that are aligned with the SDGs. State policies would need to be harmonized with the SDGs. This would necessitate the adaptation of existing institutional frameworks and policies, as well as creating new ones to address emerging challenges.

Integration will require a strong normative framework; organizational changes in government administration; procedural tools such as impact assessments, “green” budgeting, sectoral reporting, audit and review. It also involves a cognitive dimension, for sectors to rethink paradigms and facilitate learning through dialogue and partnerships.

Whole-of-government approach: effective integration avoiding policy dilution

Adapting the SDGs to national policies may involve fundamental shifts in the way the roles and capacities of governments, civil society, academia and the private sector are conceived, coordinated and channelled for effective action. This means that integration will also imply a reallocation and sharing of responsibilities to avoid policy dilution. In this context, knowledge-sharing allows for integration while building on the benefits of specialization, hence reducing the risk of dilution and heightening the capacity to manage integration complexities.

During the discussions it was noted that pursuing integrated policymaking requires investment of time and resources, to build institutional and human capacities. Without these investments, transaction costs and coordination efforts may be higher in the long-term, hence making it more beneficial for all government ministries and agencies, as well as other stakeholders, to join efforts in an integrated manner as of now, in what is known as a “whole of government” approach⁴.

Therefore, integration, innovation and inclusion go hand-in-hand. They entail enormous benefits as well as risks and costs, but resources are available and trade-offs weigh in favor of those investments being made sooner rather than later.

National strategies and policy frameworks

Some national examples were shared. In Honduras, the government has established a national vision, a sustainable development strategy and a four-year strategic plan revolving around four coordination cabinets in charge of different sectoral ministries. In the Republic of Korea, the government has established a national strategy for sustainable development to guide policies.

In Vietnam, the government is preparing a masterplan for translating the SDGs to the local level in line with the master development plan 2014-2020. The government is also facilitating the development of the private sector through the privatization of State owned enterprises (SOEs), using funds generated from those operations to invest in social sectors. Social enterprises are legally acknowledged as new forms of businesses, contributing to the diversification of the range of actors in the economy. The government is also involving people in policy and programme planning, including through crowdsourcing.

Other actors that can be further involved in the implementation efforts, and in particular in monitoring and follow-up processes, are supreme audit institutions. Beyond verifying compliance, these institutions may also promote integration. The role of governments,

⁴ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2005), *Modernising Government: The Way Forward*. Paris.

United Nations (2012), *Taking a whole-of-government approach*, Chapter 3 in United Nations E-Government Survey 2012, United Nations, New York, pp.55-71.

nevertheless, remains key to create the required institutional framework and policy environment for a successful implementation.

Transparent and accountable policymaking: the key role of data and knowledge-sharing

Effective learning and knowledge-sharing are critical in surmounting the institutional and policy challenges involved in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Innovation, and policy innovation, includes sharing ideas as well as building knowledge on data. Transparency and public sharing of data would enhance its quality by identifying potential gaps and serving as an incentive for accountability and further data generation.

Beyond the availability and quality of data, an important aspect is that of turning data into knowledge that informs policymaking, which would allow policies, norms and strategies to be more precise. The use of comprehensive indicators that integrate several dimensions, such as the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), are important tools in this context, as they allow for identifying synergies and trade-offs.

Making it work: shared vision and innovative thinking in action

This session explored coalitions and inclusive partnerships for building long-term capacity, and promoting ownership of a broad spectrum of groups of society. It also addressed the kinds of trade-offs that have been encountered so far in the use of innovative policy solutions to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The local level: catalyst of implementation of the 2030 Agenda

During the exchange of views, it was emphasized that discussions of policy integration for sustainable development, which are often complex and technical in nature, need to be oriented towards delivering results for people. Integration may not be what is on the mind of people; instead they are concerned with their well-being and access to opportunities across a range of spheres, such as education, health and jobs. However, delivery in these areas requires integrated policy approaches from key decision-makers to ensure inclusiveness and sustainability.

Although integration is complex, it can also help to make complex, global problems more manageable when looked at through local or national lenses that connect environmental challenges with everyday concerns such as job creation, quality wages and infrastructure development. This should be achieved particularly at the local level, with institutions fostering a transmission of local level policies and initiatives to the national level. Additionally, the marginalized need to be brought in and made part of the solution.

Inclusive and innovative partnerships: key enablers of implementation

During the discussions it was acknowledged that many solutions already exist, especially those driven by technology. What is missing are the fundamental enablers — such as enabling institutions, managerial and administrative capacities, political will and financing — that facilitate the use of such solutions to their fullest potential. In this respect, new actors have to be brought into the discussion of complex challenges to generate different approaches and solutions. The Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative of the UN Secretary-General was

referred to as a specific example where the existing technologies (e.g., renewable energy) have been identified and discussed in the context of inclusive partnerships, involving key actors from governments, local communities and the private sector.

In this context, involving local communities and non-governmental actors in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring is critical to integration and innovation. The inclusion of all segments of society in important decision-making processes that affect people's lives should be encouraged, moving towards "shared societies"⁵. Young people are key partners in implementing the integrated new Agenda. In particular, youth are leading the way in areas such as technological innovation, international connectivity and social entrepreneurship, all useful tools for SDG achievement.

The importance of nurturing networks, particularly at the international level, was emphasized with respect to facilitating learning from knowledge exchange among countries and actors. Potential models for networks that were identified included the Multi-dimensional Poverty Peer Network (of over 50 countries) and Socialab, which is a network of social-tech and social-business entrepreneurs.

A suggestion was made regarding the need for a global platform that brings together leading innovators to elaborate ideas to advance sustainable development through innovative solutions. The support of the UN to this process was deemed crucial.

Innovation in measuring policy impact: do not forget the data!

Innovation should permeate not just how the formulation and implementation of policy but also the measurement of its impact. Increasingly, multi-dimensional measures of well-being or deprivation—capable of being disaggregated—are helping societies to better target policy interventions and track their effects. The Multi-dimensional Poverty Index is one such approach which informs a number of countries' domestic efforts to take targeted action against poverty.

Indicators are as good as the data that is collected for them. In order to provide reliable data to the policy making process, capacity building for data collection needs to be a key priority to ensure efficient and reliable data availability. There needs to be strong collaboration between international organizations and academia in data collection. Attention should also be paid to how policy can be made in those instances that data is not fully available to inform policy decisions. Here, exchanges of experiences are crucial to learn from past failures and successes.

Policy innovation and integration: views from the multilateral system

In this session, senior officials of UN entities discussed how the multilateral system can effectively support governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and how policy innovation and integration at the national level can be bolstered by initiatives through international platforms. The principle of integration, which is at the core of the 2030 Agenda, also has implications for the UN system, as the latter has to find improved ways to respond to the world's needs and opportunities. Participants considered how the UN system could develop a more harmonized approach and promote integrated and innovative policymaking to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

⁵ Club de Madrid, *The Shared Societies Project. Building a World Safe for Difference*, http://www.clubmadrid.org/img/secciones/SSP_ONEPAGER_ENGLISH_2015_web.pdf

During the discussions it was observed that the interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda poses challenges in terms of working in an integrated manner, as well as building strategic links with partners. These challenges are not limited to the UN system but affect all development partners. Examples of effective multi-stakeholder partnerships that were presented are Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, and the Food and Agriculture Organization's Committee on World Food Security. International roadmaps such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the latter establishing mandatory obligations for signatory States, are evidence of the leading role of the UN in this changing paradigm.

Multilateral coordinated support to implementation in Africa

Africa remains the region with the greatest development challenges. The African Union's regional development agenda, Agenda 2063, also addresses effectiveness and integration. The multilateral system must support African countries in their implementation of both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, especially given their synergies.

Participants observed that Africa will need to exploit its youth dividend, as well as foster integration and inclusion through gender-sensitive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Integration will imply the systematic mainstreaming of gender equality perspectives in policies. To that end, an approach based on the "ten Is" will be helpful: innovation, implementation, inspiration, indivisibility, institutions, investments, information, inclusion, impact and intergovernmental processes.

Achieving more integration within the UN system

The UN has been adapting to provide the integrated support needed for the implementation of the new Agenda. At the strategic level, common approaches must be adopted to address issues in a holistic manner. The United Nations Development Group's MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) common approach is such an example. Operationally, integrated support implies joint operations and structures, such as the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI). Such joint initiatives also lead to the rationalization of existing mechanisms and therefore foster greater efficiency. It was suggested that one way to facilitate joint strategies and operations is to focus on outcomes rather than on inputs.

o Support to implementation at the regional level

At the regional level, the UN Regional Commissions are integrated structures by nature, as they span many sectors, and have been pursuing further coherence. Regional Commissions offer an intergovernmental structure at the regional level that allows Member States to meet, engage and discuss across sectors, thus breaking down traditional siloes. Importantly, they chair meetings of all agencies present in each region under the Regional Coordination Mechanism, bringing together all UN entities to help to coordinate implementation.

In addition, they offer a body of expert knowledge in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda by member States. The Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has been leading important work on integrated issues such as green industrialization in Africa, moving away from the traditional concepts of industrialization and providing sustainable growth paths for the Continent; the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is overseeing multiple

processes across sectors, such as on transport and on health and environment, which break down traditional siloes; the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) has focused on inequality, showing that to tackle this complex phenomenon social policies alone do not suffice and that a combination of labour, industrial, monetary and fiscal policies must also be used in a coordinated manner; the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has been developing studies on pathways to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development; and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has been developing integrated modelling exercises and other processes that are supporting member States in building pathways towards sustainable development.

- *Support to policy integration at the country level*

The One-UN policy is currently being implemented in fifty-three countries at the request of their governments, with Delivering-as-One as an integrated model. It was noted that this operational model has led to progress in transparency.

In the discussions it was highlighted that support to country-level policy integration by the UN system should include up-stream policy advice at the headquarters level, taking into account spill-over and trade-off effects. This would also involve the UN system support in a “whole-of-government” approach based on cross-cutting and integrated strategies.

A survey conducted by UNECE on how the Commission’s member States are implementing the 2030 Agenda shows that breaking down siloes, creating inter-ministerial processes and structures, and increasing the level of political engagement and responsibility are among the top priorities in terms of policy actions in these countries.

The UN would also need to break down boundaries between siloes to achieve greater coherence. However, as emphasized during the discussions, integration should not imply abolishing specialization. Rather, it means better management and strengthening communication and knowledge-sharing, capitalizing on opportunities for synergy across entities and coalitions of expertise in support of issue-based approaches.

Existing structural barriers to further integration within the UN system

Barriers based on differences in mandates, management and funding structures, in particular the predominance of project funding over core funding, make it more difficult for UN agencies to shape the new partnerships required to support the new Agenda. These barriers would need to be broken down in order to promote coordination and integration within the UN system. Many initiatives already exist and could be replicated, such as the WFP-OCHA interactive data platform in Yemen.

Finding solutions

Participants acknowledged that changes will need to take place to effect management coherence. To facilitate such reforms, it is useful for Member States to provide suggestions and overall strategic guidance while allowing the UN system enough room to manage its structure. It is also important for UN Resident Coordinators to be empowered to foster greater coherence of UN support at country level. Incentives such as pooled funding and risk-sharing mechanisms should be used to accelerate efforts.

Next steps

The deliberations of the Segment will contribute to the high-level segment of ECOSOC, including the high level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of ECOSOC. The Segment could also inform Member States' deliberations on country-level operational activities, in particular the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, and the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN Development System.

The integrated nature of the SDGs will be crucial to the realization of the new Agenda. ECOSOC is tasked with ensuring coordination, dialogue and follow-up to the outcomes of global conferences and summits, including for the 2030 Agenda on an annual basis. Going forward, the Integration Segment continues to offer a unique opportunity to bring together key development actors, gathering contributions by Member States and the UN system, including the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, to assess the status of integration and coherence of actions on the SDGs. However, it is important to consider how to best utilize the Segment in the future, especially in advance of the preparations of the HLPF.

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