



*Together 2030 Webinar – Implementation Series – 1st Webinar
From Policy to Action: Are countries ready to start implementing Agenda 2030 by January
2016?*

January 20 2016 9:00 – 10am (NY time)

Number of Participants: 97 participants

The Implementation Series Webinars

The “Implementation Series” webinars are organized to provide members of **Together 2030** with an opportunity to discuss technical and political aspects related to the implementation of Agenda 2030 at global, regional and national level. The Webinars aim at bringing voices from different levels and sectors to share their experiences/concerns/recommendations around the implementation of Agenda 2030.

1ST WEBINAR - NOTES

1) Welcome and review of the Agenda – Arellys Bellorini, United Nations Representative, Child Rights & Development, World Vision International. Member of the Together 2030 core group (Facilitator) – Welcomed panelists and participants and recalled the critical moment the implementation of Agenda 2030.

2) What are the main challenges for the implementation of Agenda 2030? –Juwang Zhu, Division for Sustainable Development, UN DESA:

- The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the related SDGs are the result of an intergovernmental negotiation process that spanned over 2 years and that was marked by an unprecedented openness and inclusiveness. Representatives of civil society, major groups and other stakeholders were able to participate and contribute to the process throughout the consultations in many ways and have a strong sense of ownership of the agenda.

- Moving forward, there is a clear understanding that the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved by governments alone – rather, it will require the active engagement of all key sectors of society at all levels – national, regional and global.

- At the national level, it will be important to continue to spread information about the new Agenda to national level actors as well as to support governments to create opportunities and space for CSOs and other stakeholders to participate and contribute to the relevant national mechanisms for follow-up, such as national sustainable development commissions. A key challenge will be to ensure the active participation of marginalized and excluded groups in these processes.

- Through a generous EC funded grant “SD2015” DSD is in the process of developing materials and tools to support stakeholder engagement in the follow-up and review at the national level. You can visit (sustainabledevelopment.un.org) for further information.

- Also, DSD has been working together with UNITAR and relevant UN country teams to support initially a number of developing countries to align their national development strategies with the 2030



Agenda. We have also strived to engage stakeholders in these pilot efforts while the final decision on participation has rested with the relevant government and the UN country teams.

- In addition, we are also envisaging a number of country-level stakeholder workshops to enable stakeholders to come together to discuss and strategize their future engagement in the implementation, review and follow-up of the agenda at the country level. The envisaged workshops are:
 - Jordan 31 January
 - Togo (spring 2016 dates tbc)
 - Morocco (spring 2016 dates tbc)

You can visit dedicated website for further information on these activities.

- At the regional level, the regional sustainable development forums that are convened by the UN regional commissions will have a key role in follow-up and implementation. Again, with funding from the EC SD2015 grant, DSD is looking to organizing regional level workshops for stakeholders to be held in connection with the these intergovernmental meetings to build their capacity to effectively engage in the regional level processes. This year, we are expecting to hold regional workshops in ESCAP in early April, in ESCWA and possibly ECLAC. We will keep everyone posted on the plans.

- At the global level, the high-level political forum (HLPF) will have a central role in the review and follow-up of the agenda. This year, for the first time, countries are expected to make national voluntary presentations on their follow-up and implementation. To date (Jan 20) 13 countries have already volunteered to make presentations. The list of the countries is available on the sustainable development knowledge platform (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>) and is being updated as new volunteers come forth.

- The preparations for the HLPF are being guided by the President of ECOSOC, the Permanent Representatives of the Republic of Korea. While the exact details of the HLPF programme are still to be defined, the President's office is very committed to effectively engaging major groups and other stakeholders in all aspects of the HLPF, including the country presentations.

- The President will brief Member States, major groups and other stakeholders on the 2016 HLPF preparations today, Wednesday, at 10 a.m. and I would invite all those interested to follow the briefing, which will also be webcast.

- In addition to reports by volunteering Member States, the 2030 SD Agenda is also requesting major groups and other stakeholders to report on their implementation of the agenda. DSD will work with the major groups and other stakeholders on the details such reviews.

- A major challenge at the global level will be short time available for the HLPF to carry out its tasks. As you know, the HLPF meets annually for 8 days only – of which 5 are at the expert level and 3 at the ministerial level. Therefore, it is clear that much of the detailed follow-up and review of the 2030 agenda will need to be done by relevant functional commissions and other intergovernmental entities that will provide their recommendations to the HLPF.



- The Secretary-General’s vision on how the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 agenda should be structured is contained in a new report that will be released and made available on the sustainable development knowledge platform (sustainabledevelopment.un.org) shortly. This report, which outlines the different roles and responsibilities of the various intergovernmental entities including General Assembly, ECOSOC and its functional commissions and the HLPF, will be presented to the President of the General Assembly in accordance with the 2030 SD Agenda and is expected to be discussed by Member States this spring. DSD will work to make sure that major groups and other stakeholders will be able to participate and kept abreast of these debates as and when they unfold.

3) Is Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) ready to implement? – Philipp Schönrock, CEPEI, Colombia (PPT Attached)

On the regional context – out of the 33 countries, 32 middle income countries and also the most unequal region in the world. A great amount (28%) of the population still leaves in poverty. Growth in LAC in 2015 was on 0.5%. No country in Latin America has allocated fresh funds for the SDGs as of yet.

LAC is also not dependent on aid. Only 7% of ODA comes to LAC. International agendas, such as the SDGs are usually not a priority in the region. Need to trigger processes to mobilize resources for the SDGs. There is also an endless list of “regional platforms” that do not interact and sometimes contradict with each other and with other MS have agreed at the global level. Lack of trust in the process is also an issue in LAC. Even journalists are very skeptical in writing about the SDGs.

The possibility of having a common agenda in the region is also extremely challenging. Regarding governance, governments are willing to implement the Agenda, although the “how” is still unclear. No parliament has already debated on the SDGs or allocated funds for the next fiscal years. Need to advocate with Parliaments for fresh resources and also for the government to take the lead on the implementation.

Regarding instruments to implement the agenda, only 5 out of 33 countries have the Congress participating in order to approve national development plans. Also a challenge to bring ideas to the Parliament about how to implement the agenda. Only 8 countries in the region has a legal framework bidding about engagement of civil society on decision making.

On data, there is a need for a robust data ecosystem, not only to monitor indicators but also to have monitor and evaluation systems to track implementation.

4) How will Africa engage on implementation? – Stephen Chacha, Africa CSO Working Group, Tanzania

Situation in Africa is a little bit tricky with many differences between the countries; some are affected by conflict or other issues that will impact on the implementation in the region. Africa 2063 Agenda is a Vision for the region for the next 50 years and Africa also developed the “Common African Position”. There are also regional plans and visions and national level plans. Challenge for countries to align plans for implementation towards the several agendas.

Another issue refers to the number of goals – perceived as too many for many countries and the issue of “prioritization” and “cherry picking” is becoming a reality in the region.



An additional challenge refers to the institutional frameworks in the region. For instance, after 1992, most African countries have not set up sustainable development commissions, which means a weak institutional framework in many countries to support implementation. There is also a “missing link” regarding the alignment and realization of the goals at the local level.

South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, Tanzania are examples of countries trying to align their sustainable development plans with the SDGs. The 2015 African Summit is happening in the January and the focus is on Human Rights. No specific session on Agenda 2030 or SDGs. There will be an update on Agenda 2063 by Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

The issue of data revolution in the region is also prominent. UNECA has been promoting discussions on this topic and trying to align those with the indicators process. At least four African countries have volunteered to present national reviews during the HLPF 2016: Madagascar, Morocco, Uganda and Sierra Leone. Also, four African countries participate in the High Level Group convened by Sweden to promote implementation: Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania and Timor Leste. Those countries will be meeting for the first time during the World Economic Forum in Davos.

In May the 2016 World Economic Forum for Africa is another opportunity to capitalize and push for the implementation of Agenda 2030. NEPAD is also positioning themselves to coordinate and guide Agenda 2030 implementation in the region. Financing is still a big challenge. Most of the countries have gone through their budget cycles for 2016 so there is a lot of work to be done in that front as well.

5) Discussion

- **Mexico** –Mexico is one of the countries that have formally a good scenario on governance and planning, but there are concerns about lack of political towards implementation. Important to have a diagnosis of the institutional strength of the countries.
 - SDG 16 is probably the driving force of the debate in Latin America and the Caribbean, also connected to the fact that this is the most violent region in the world. Also SDG 11 (cities) is getting a lot of traction.
 - Disaggregated data in the Caribbean – This is a challenge for the LAC, despite efforts from ECLAC. Clear need to improve data from this sub-region. There is a strong civil society movement in the Caribbean pushing for data.
 - Engagement of Parliamentarians in Africa – Most countries are supporting the setting up to the Parliamentary committees.
 - Goals expected to be prioritized in Africa – will depend very much on each country. Some countries will prioritize peace and security, expectations around prioritization of Goal 1 (Poverty eradication).
 - Together 2030 should be locally driven and focus on community groups as well. National structures may not attend or properly cover community groups.
 - UN DESA is currently supporting the following pilot countries: Ethiopia, Togo, Uganda, Jordan, Belize, Costa Rica and Vietnam, based on the request of the governments. UN DESA working with the UN Country Teams and UNITAR on this process. Recommends colleagues to keep following the Sustainable development platform (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>) for updates.

6) Wrap up and next steps

From Naiara Costa, Together 2030 Secretariat

TOGETHER 2030

- Next “Implementation webinar” to be held in February. Information to be shared soon.
- Recording and Summary to be made available at the website.
- Webinars in French and Spanish will be planned accordingly to the capacity.
- **Together 2030** structures starting to be set up to organize the joint work.