

Meeting of the UNDG Sustainable Development Working Group

28 January 2016, 10:00am-12:15am, @ (FF-Building on the 15th floor, FF-1507)

Meeting summary and action points - final

Participants

Co-Chairs	
Co-Chair	Magdy Martínez-Solimán
Co-Chair	Geeta Rao Gupta
Agency	Representatives
ILO	Vinicius Pinheiro
FAO	Mariann Kovacs
Regional Commissions	Klara Rolies
UNAIDS	Josefin Wiklund
UN-HABITAT	Yamina Djacta
UN Women	Michele Ribotta
UNDP	Pedro Conceicao, Nicole Igloi, Babatunde Omilola
UNDESA	Thomas Gass
UNEP	Corli Pretorius
UNESCO	Clare Clark (phone)
UNFPA	Harold Robinson
UNHCR	Davide Torzilli
UNICEF	Vidhya Ganesh, Paul Martin, Mandeep O'Brien
UNOPS	Isabel Burchard
WFP	Karin Manente, Brian Bogart
WHO	Mariana Crespo
ITU	Gary Fowlie, Kadiatou Sall-Beye
OHCHR	Doris Schmitz-Meiners
UNIDO	Tally Einav (phone)
WMO	Paul Egerton
Invitees	
UNDG Senior Coordinator on "fit for purpose"	John Hendra, Ingrid Fitzgerald
UN Office for South-South Cooperation	Inyang Ebong-Harstrup
UNDG Communications and Advocacy WG	Mitchell Toomey (UN SDG Campaign)
Sustainable Energy for All	Jonas von Freiesleben (phone)
Human Security Unit	Chelsea Payne
UNV	Simona Constanzo Sow (phone)
UNITAR	Elena Proden (phone)
SDG-F	Paloma Duran
UNCDF	Samuel Choritz
OCHA	Hansjoerg Strohmeyer, Rodolpho Valente
MPTF-O	Mari Matsumoto
Secretariat	
DOCO	Kanni Wignaraja; Alex Warren-Rodriguez; Alexander Freese



Meeting summary and action points

Welcome and reflections on SDWG priorities for 2016

Magdy Martínez-Solimán, Co-Chair of the Sustainable Development Working Group, welcomed the participants to the first meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Group in 2016. The main objectives of meeting were (1) to hear from two Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams (led by Mia Seppo (RC Malawi) and Christian Salazar (El Salvador)) about first experiences with supporting national Governments and stakeholders in the localization of the 2030 Agenda; (2) to learn from Hansjoerg Strohmeyer (OCHA) about the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit, and its relevance for our work on a common approach for UN system support to SDG implementation; and (3) to agree on key priorities for the group in 2016.

Resident Coordinators and UN Country Team Member presentations on first experiences with the Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda Reference Guide

Mia Seppo, Resident Coordinator in Malawi, was joined by the UNICEF Representative Mahimbo Mdoe for the presentation. She started by outlining some key development challenges in the context of Malawi, such as shortage of water and food for many population groups which are aggravated by the adverse climate impact of El Niño. This has created an atmosphere of “focusing on what really matters” in the planning process for the new UNDAF.

In an aid dependent economy with only limited general budget support, the UN is a key driver of ensuring alignment of various development actors in support of national priorities. To guide the process, the UNCT is striving to engage all national stakeholders in a conversation on key priorities for Malawi. In terms of headquarters’ support to the process, Mia Seppo highlighted that efforts at the country level would benefit from stronger headquarters’ messages to donors and development partners at country level to bring all on board for an inclusive dialogue around planning and alignment at country level.

On the localization of the 2030 Agenda, any trainings and outreach we provide should support the role of national planners. Any guidance should be thoughtful, non-prescriptive, and issue-oriented rather than focused on process.

Enhancing our country analysis is a critical task. The UNICEF Representative Mahimbo Mdoe reaffirmed that data is a key issue going forward, to enable sound analysis, evidence-based monitoring and evaluation of results and capturing multidimensional indicators for poverty. Fostering innovation in data collection should be a key priority going forward.

Christian Salazar, Resident Coordinator in El Salvador, joined the meeting with the full UN Country Team. Unfortunately, the connection was insufficiently stable and the interaction had to be postponed to a forthcoming meeting of the UNDG Sustainable Development Working Group.



No one left behind: briefing on the SG's report to the WHS - Presentation by Hansjoerg Strohmeyer (Chief of OCHA's Policy Development and Studies Branch)

Magdy Martínez-Solimán welcomed Hansjoerg Strohmeyer and handed over the floor for a presentation on key issues pertinent to the work of the Sustainable Development Working Group from the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit.

Hansjoerg Strohmeyer thanked the group for the opportunity and noted that the Secretary-General's report for the World Humanitarian Summit will be shared in the coming days and will be formally launched by the Secretary-General himself on the 9th of February. The report will build on a consultation process, as well as insights from other key processes such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the high-level panels on peace operations and humanitarian financing, the peace-building review, the review of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the new Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction, as well as the COP21 Paris Agreement.

The report places humanity and affected people at the center of global decision making. This is not just a moral imperative but a strategic necessity to confront today's global challenges. Humanitarian issues should never be seen as a discrete, technical stream of work. The Secretary-General will argue that successful humanitarian action makes a vital contribution to the strength of the UN's three pillars: peace and security, sustainable development and human rights.

The Secretary-General will highlight five core responsibilities:

- First, we must secure global leadership to prevent and end conflicts. We must act early, invest in stability, and develop solutions with and for people. Put simply, we must find ways to reduce the unsustainable demands being placed on the humanitarian system.
- Second, we must reiterate the need for everyone to respect the norms that safeguard our humanity, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law as well as the humanitarian principles.
- Third, the report will remind us that to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must reach the most vulnerable and furthest behind first. The Summit will be the first test of our commitment to "leave no one behind". This requires us to meaningfully address needs of internally displaced persons, refugees, migrants, the stateless, women and girls, children and youth among others. The report will include recommendations on how to improve gender equality and empower women and girls. Of course, we also focus on both the needs and roles of children, youth, older persons and people with disabilities.
- Fourth, we must commit to changing people's lives and move from delivering aid to ending need. This means that we – all of us – need to find a new way of working if we are to effectively tackle the humanitarian and development challenges of today and tomorrow. We can do this by putting people at the center of decision-making; addressing vulnerability and risk; reinforcing rather than replacing local and national systems; and overcoming the age-old "humanitarian-development divide" by working towards collective outcomes.
We can no longer afford to work in silos. We must transcend the divides that so often undermine the sustainability of our work. We must invest in more effective and efficient partnerships. This means more empowered leadership to drive coherent, coordinated and collective outcomes and results. In addition, it means a more local, more inclusive and more context-specific response. It also means reinforcing national and local capacities, rather than substituting or replacing them so that we support more resilient communities.
- And fifth, we must enable all of this by investing in humanity. Many of the recommendations from High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing will be in the Secretary-General's report. This



includes diversifying and optimizing financing not only for humanitarian response but for broader risk management, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Secretary-General will also state that without a fundamental shift from funding individual projects to financing outcomes, it will not be possible to transcend the humanitarian-development divide and achieve his vision on working to collective outcomes.

More information on the WHS under: <https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>

In the discussion, participants stressed that it is imperative for development and humanitarian actors to move closer together, possibly under just one UN sustainable development framework that bridges humanitarian and development interventions. The importance of root cause analysis and joint planning was highlighted, as well as the need for harmonized funding mechanisms including a change in donor behavior. It was stressed that a major challenge in this context is posed by the politicization of humanitarian intervention, which relies on access in difficult political environments.

SDWG priorities in 2016

Geeta Rao Gupta introduced the group to the last agenda item on key Working Group priorities for 2016. In 2015, the first year of operation of the group, progress was made in conceptualizing MAPS and delivering some important products. She highlighted that in 2015:

1. The UNDG SDWG has agreed on MAPS as elements of a future common UNDG approach to support SDG implementation; supported UNCTs and Governments with a reference guide and a UNITAR-UNDG briefings package on the 2030 Agenda for the Mainstreaming component of MAPS; started the conceptualization of the acceleration and policy support components; engaged in the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa through a policy paper for UNCTs; organized a well-attended UNDG side event at the UN Summit to adopt the 2030 Agenda; and progressed on deriving concrete implications from the “universal” nature of the agenda for the work of the UNDG.
2. The South-South and triangular Cooperation Task Teams initiated work on the mapping of good practices of SSC at the country level, worked on a collaborative framework in support of SSC and supported UNDAF roll-out countries.
3. The Gender Equality Task Teams continued to push for the strengthened use of the Gender Scorecard by UNCTs.

On the 2016 work plan

Geeta Rao Gupta emphasized that in 2016 the group needs to deepen its support for UNCTs that are engaging with Governments in the localization of the 2030 Agenda. This will require a demand-driven approach to provide tools and resources that are truly needed and the facilitation of peer-learning and dissemination of best practices across UNCTs.

UNDOCO was invited to give a quick presentation on the key work plan items that were submitted by the task teams. Alex Warren-Rodriguez of UNDOCO stressed that continuing the development of products for the application of the MAPS will remain a key work plan item in 2016, with further deliverables being:

1. The dissemination of the Mainstreaming Reference Guide;
2. Launch of the SDG acceleration toolkit; and
3. Establishment of a UNDG web presence to make resources useful for UNCTs easily available, including the tools and resources for policy support available across UNDG agencies;



4. Guidelines for national reporting on the SDGs, to be developed in close coordination and alignment with the work of the IAEG-SDG and Statistics Division in DESA; and
5. The task teams on South-South and triangular Cooperation and Gender Equality will continue to support key UNDG strategic priorities and implementation of QCPR mandates.

Some key points raised in the discussion were:

- UNITAR announced that they are continuing the work on the UNDG-UNITAR package and the 2030 Agenda with online learning products. UNITAR created an advisory council for these activities chaired by Jeffrey Sachs.
- The MAPS work and the preparation of revised UNDAF guidance need to go hand-in-hand;
- Further efforts are required to reach out and coordinate with the work of other key actors such as David Nabarro, DPI, and the other UNDG working groups; and
- It was reemphasized that task teams should be time-bound and dissolved after producing the agreed deliverables.

On the Funding MAPS-related activities

Geeta Rao Gupta handed over the floor to Brian Bogart of WFP who was co-leading a task team working on a concept note on funding MAPS-related activities, together with Pedro Conceicao of UNDP.

Brian Bogart highlighted the time-bound nature of the task team which was launched in December 2015 and completed its task by producing a discussion note. The primary purpose of the proposed MAPS funding arrangements would be to ensure that resources are made available to meet critical impediments to collaboration within the UN system for MAPS-related activities at the national level and for critical enabling activities at the regional or global levels. As indicated in the UNDG-approved concept, MAPS represents an integrated approach through which the UN development system will share tools, expertise and capacity with governments, civil society, and the private sector in support of the 2030 Agenda. The MAPS funding arrangements should clearly outline funding priorities and conditions to ensure coherence with the existing architecture of pooled funding mechanisms and demonstrate complementarity with operational activities outlined in the UNDAF.

The Co-Chairs suggested that the note could be submitted to the UNDG task force, which is currently developing a strategic approach to UN joint funding in support of Agenda 2030.

Wrap-up

Geeta Rao Gupta wrapped up the meeting by summarizing the key actions points:

1. UNDOCO to circulate the discussion notes on “universality” and the SDG acceleration component;
2. Any comments on the background materials shared, including the note on MAPS funding should be send to UNDOCO by 1 February 2016;
3. SDWG to ensure strong collaboration with the Programme Working Group;
4. SD-WG co-chairs to propose for consideration of the UNDG the merger of the Sustainable Development and Programme working groups;
5. Task teams will be dissolved once deliverables are completed. This principle is to be applied with immediate effect to the Universality, the Policy Support and MAPS-Funding task teams;



6. Co-chairs to consider as a possibility focusing the next meeting of the SDWG on the issue of national reporting guidelines on the SDGs.

At the end of the meeting, Geeta Rao Gupta announced her departure from UNICEF in mid-2016. Magdy Martínez-Solimán thanked her for her leadership and excellent collaboration over the past year.