

Expert meeting in preparation for HLPF 2017 Readying institutions and policies for integrated approaches to implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Summary

The expert meeting on “Readying institutions for integrated approaches to the 2030 Agenda” took place from 14 to 16 December 2016 at UNIDO Headquarters in Vienna.

The meeting reflected on the interlinkages among the seven SDGs to be reviewed by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017 (poverty, hunger, health, gender, infrastructure, oceans and means of implementation) and how public institutions and policies can best deal with these interlinkages.

A key message was that taking full account of the interlinkages among the SDGs will help accelerate implementation. Participants noted that this is complex. They pointed out that there is need for simple tools and frameworks to transform the analysis of interrelations into actual operational guidance to policy makers.

Participants considered that institutions need to undertake a number of actions to promote integrated implementation. This includes ensuring continued leadership at the highest level but also promoting joint policy development at the working level and clarifying institutional mandates (i.e. define who is doing what), and opportunities for collaboration. The meeting showed that many countries are setting up institutional arrangements to promote coordinated SDG implementation and break down silos. Those include inter-ministerial groups or working groups ensuring coordination in specific areas (e.g. SDGs 1, 3 and 14). Parliaments, local governments, auditing bodies and other key institutions need to be engaged in SDG implementation. It is also critical to reach out to all actors in society.

Participants identified important linkages such as between food security and poverty, between food security and oceans, and between health and gender equality. They considered that the multidimensional concept of **poverty (SDG1)** called for moving from an income-focused approach to an integrated approach that looks at various kinds of deprivation, including in housing, health and educational services, and the sustainable development of communities. In the case of **food security and nutrition (SDG 2)**, a multi-agency approach with effective leadership was deemed necessary, with a focus on access to food in countries where this is an issue. For **health (SDG 3)**, policymakers were urged to conduct assessments of the impact of *all* policies, not just from the health sector, on advancing good health.

It was noted that **gender equality (SDG 5)** is key to accelerating progress on all the SDGs. Many countries have gender equality action plans, which need to be synchronized and integrated with the SDG implementation process.

With regard to **SDG 9**, participants noted that many SDGs need **infrastructure and industrial development** as well as strengthening of ‘soft’ infrastructure (i.e., human and institutional factors).

Oceans, which are one single interconnected system and not a sector, are interlinked with other SDGs (e.g., climate change, food security, water and sanitation), but these connections need to be recognized, and lack of transparency and monitoring should be overcome.

Participants underscored that many integrated policies and plans already exist. But a critical lack of resources and insufficient capacities hinder their implementation. Mobilization of domestic resources and development cooperation, including aid, tax cooperation and trade, are essential, as is capacity development.

The outcome of the meeting will contribute to the thematic review of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017, and inform the work of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration. Much attention was devoted to the role of the HLPF in reviewing and promoting SDG implementation and conducting national voluntary reviews.

The meeting was organized by UNDESA (Division for Public Administration and Development Management and Division for Sustainable Development) and UNIDO.