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Global Issues Newsletter

United Nations Development Programme in China

27 March 2015

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UN Headquarters Updates

UN Statistical Commission Assesses SDG Indicators

18 March 2015



The co-facilitators for intergovernmental negotiation process on the post-2015 development agenda have released a working draft of a technical report by the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) on global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. The report is expected to be discussed during the third session of intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, convening on 23-27 March 2015.

UNSC prepared the draft report in response to a request by Co-Facilitators Macharia Kamau of Kenya and David Donoghue of Ireland. International agencies submitted recommendations of global indicators for the targets under all 17 SDGs, which then were assessed by national statistical offices (NSOs). The results on over 300 indicators are reflected in the draft technical

report.

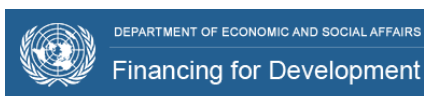
NSOs' assessment of the proposed indicators was based on: feasibility; suitability; and relevance. Of the indicators proposed: 16% of the indicators proposed were evaluated as feasible, suitable and very relevant (AAA); 13% were considered only feasible with strong effort, but suitable and very relevant (BAA); 9% were considered only feasible with strong effort, in need for further discussion but very relevant (BBA); 28% of the indicators were considered only feasible with strong effort, in need for further discussion and somewhat relevant (BBB); and 31% were considered difficult even with strong effort, in need for further discussion and somewhat relevant (CBB).

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/6754Technical%20report%20of%20the%20UNSC%20Bureau%20%28final%29.pdf>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/un-statistical-commission-assesses-sdg-indicators/>

Co-facilitators Release Zero Draft of Addis Ababa Accord

16 March 2015



The Co-Facilitators of the preparatory process for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD 3) have issued the zero draft of the Conference outcome document. Geir Pedersen, Permanent Representative of Norway, and George Talbot, Permanent Representative of Guyana, note in a 16 March letter to UN Member States that the draft is intended to provide a holistic and forward-looking framework and concrete actions for the financing of sustainable development, in order to deliver the means of implementation (MOI) for post-2015 development agenda.

The draft outcome document, titled 'Addis Ababa Accord,' will be discussed by Member States during the Second Drafting Session for FfD 3, scheduled for 13-17 April 2015, in New York, US.

The document contains two main sections on: a global framework for financing sustainable development; and the Addis Ababa action agenda. The first section identifies a "threefold" task: following-up on commitments made in Monterrey and Doha; further strengthening the framework to finance sustainable development and the MOI for the post-2015 development agenda; and ensuring that the actions agreed are implemented and reviewed in an appropriate, timely and transparent manner. This section also notes "enormous" unmet financing needs for sustainable development, and acknowledges the needs of countries in special situations and the specific challenges facing middle-income countries (MICs). And the second section includes eight sub-sections.

http://www.un.org/pga/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/03/160315_ffd-zero-draft-outcome.pdf

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/co-facilitators-release-zero-draft-of-addis-ababa-accord/>

UNDP Fund Supporting Transition from MDGs to SDGs in 18 Countries

11 March 2015



In a UN Development Programme (UNDP) blog, the director of UNDP's Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SDG-F) highlights the Fund's efforts to ensure a smooth transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the SDGs. The SDG-F, created in 2014 by the government of Spain and UNDP, serves as a development cooperation mechanism, building on the MDG Achievement Fund while expanding the focus on sustainable development and public-private partnerships, and incorporating discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, according to UNDP.

Director Paloma Duran writes in 'Bridging the gap: How the SDG Fund is paving the way for a post-2015 agenda' that the SDG Fund currently has joint programmes implemented through UN agencies in 18 countries in Africa, the Arab States,

Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean addressing challenges of inclusive economic growth for poverty eradication, food security and nutrition as well as water and sanitation. It operates by engaging local people in programme design, implementation and evaluation, with 56% of its funds provided through matching funds from national and international partners. The SDG Fund addresses gender equality and other cross-cutting priorities. For the list of the 18 countries, please refer to the link below.

<http://proposals.sdgfund.org/approved-programmes#overlay-context=approved-programmes>

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2015/3/11/Bridging-the-Gap-How-the-SDG-Fund-is-paving-the-way-for-a-post-2015-agenda/#>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/undp-fund-supporting-transition-from-mdgs-to-sdgs-in-18-countries/>

USG Wu Highlights IAEG-MDG Achievements at Final Meeting

10 March 2015



Opening the 27th meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators (IAEG-MDG) on 9-10 March 2015 in New York, US, Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said the Group has "transformed an inspirational global agenda for development into a set of concrete and time-bound goals and targets, regularly monitored by statistically robust indicators." He noted the UN Statistical Commission's (UNSC) decision, at its 46th session, to establish a similar working mechanism (IEAG-SDGs) for the development and implementation of the post-2015 indicator framework.

The 27th meeting sought to discuss: preparations for the final global MDG monitoring report and related outputs; transitioning from the MDGs to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and steps

toward the conclusion of the IAEG-MDG's work.

Wu said regular monitoring of the MDGs had helped to galvanize development efforts and implement successful targeted interventions. He said the annual MDG report has become "the key reference on MDGs" and remains one of the most widely downloaded and utilized UN publications. Looking ahead, he said the final MDG report "will be a historical document" as it will provide key reference material to the UN summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in September 2015.

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm#9-10Mar2015

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/usg-wu-highlights-iaeg-mdg-achievements-at-final-meeting/>

UNEG Report Calls for Strong Evaluation in Post-2015 Development Agenda

6 March 2015



The UN Evaluation Group (UNEG)

launched a report titled 'Evidence Changes Lives: Realizing Evaluation's Potential to Inform the Global Sustainable Development Goals,' calling for evaluation to be an intrinsic part of the post-2015 development agenda and for strong national evaluation systems on 6 March 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, US, during UNEG 2015 Evaluation Week. It provides examples of evaluations successfully carried out in countries and the UN system by UNEG members, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Independent Evaluation Office and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda will not be legally binding but will instead rely on political will and persuasion, evaluation will be crucial to assess how programmes and policies are contributing to results and to establish incentives for effectiveness, transparency and accountability. Evaluation can help "ensure that we are doing the right things, doing these things right, and doing them on a scale that is making a difference," according to the report.

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1711>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/uneq-report-calls-for-strong-evaluation-in-post-2015-development-agenda/>

The report's introduction highlights that, since the

High-Level Event Discusses Women's Empowerment, Education

6 March 2015



UN General Assembly (UNGA) President Sam Kutesa convened a high-level thematic debate to galvanize further commitment and action toward

achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in the context of the post-2015 development agenda on 6 March 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York. At the same occasion, the Office of the UNGA President together with UN Women hosted the 2015 Global Observance of International Women's Day, under the slogan: "Empower women, Empower humanity. Picture it."

Many participants emphasized the importance of: gender equality for eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development; Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls; and integrating gender as a cross-cutting issue in the next development agenda.

In the opening remarks, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said gender equality and women's empowerment should have a central place in the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD 3), the discussions on the post-2015 development framework that "will culminate with the Special Summit on Sustainable Development" and the Paris Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 21). He called for the outcomes of these processes to reflect a "renewed commitment to the goals of Beijing." On the post-2015 agenda, Ban highlighted the need to make further progress by 2020, and achieve gender equality by 2030.

http://www.un.org/pga/060315_hltd-gender-equality-empowerment-women-girls-transformative-post-2015-agenda/

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/high-level-event-discusses-womens-empowerment-education/>

Global Updates

LAC Holds Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

20 March 2015, New York, US.



At a two-day meeting of countries from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the LAC Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD), which convened from 19-20 March 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, US, discussed the post-2015 development agenda and financing for development (FfD), among other issues. The LAC meeting was the first in the series of RFSDs taking place until May 2015 to discuss sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda.

The meeting was organized by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in connection with the Commission's 30th session of the Committee of the Whole.

In the opening session, Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru and Chair of the Committee of the Whole, emphasized poverty

eradication and the global partnership for development as ECLAC's overarching priorities for post-2015 development agenda.

In a session on the post-2015 development agenda and the synergies between regional and global processes, Antonio Prado, ECLAC Deputy Executive Secretary, reviewed the current economic and social environment of the ECLAC region in relation to the post-2015. He said the regional context, which has been one of economic downturn since 2010, must be acknowledged when considering the agenda's implementation.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2015/eclac>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/lac-holds-regional-forum-on-sustainable-development/>

UNECA Assesses Convergence between African Priorities, SDGs

13 March 2015, New York, US.



The post-2015 development agenda “provides a unique opportunity to ensure that pertinent and specific challenges and aspirations are elevated for global consideration and action,” according to a progress report released by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) at the 21st Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of Southern African (ICE), which convened from 12-13 March 2015, in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. ‘The Post-2015 Development Agenda, Agenda 2063, the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and the COMESA Medium Term Strategic Plan: Assessing Convergence’ assesses the alignment of African continental, sub-regional and national priorities with the post-2015 development agenda.

African and sub-regional priorities and national aspirations “resonate with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015

development agenda,” according to the report, which emphasizes that the 17 SDGs generally reflect the Common African Position (CAP) and other priorities. The report notes, however, divergence on issues related to peace and security, sexual orientation, comprehensive sexual education, colonial domination and foreign occupation.

In the process of finalizing the SDGs, the report recommends: ensuring that climate change issues “are tackled substantively given their link with agriculture;” promoting realistic indicators applicable to all countries; and developing tracking mechanisms for the goals, including a platform for annual evaluation and sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

<http://www.tralac.org/images/docs/7104/ice-progress-report-on-the-implementation-of-regional-international-agendas.pdf>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/unece-assesses-convergence-between-african-priorities-sdgs/>

UN, SDC Officials Discuss Achieving SDGs

11 March 2015, Geneva, Switzerland



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Participants discussed the role of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) in redefining the development landscape, as well as steps needed to change development's modus operandi to ensure achievement of the SDGs, at an event organized by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Graduate Institute of Geneva and the Swiss Confederation on 11 March 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The event, with the theme of 'From Vision to Implementation: How can we make the SDGs a reality?', also considered how new development actors will work with the traditional development sector to achieve the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda.

"The challenge is how to turn the SDGs into meaningful results to people," Michael Møller, Acting Director-General, UN Office at Geneva, declared as he opened the event. He stressed 2015 as an important new year for adopting several new global frameworks, including on disaster risk reduction (DRR), financing for development (FfD), the post-2015 development agenda and climate change.

http://graduateinstitute.ch/events/_/events/corporate/2015/from-vision-to-implementation-how

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/un-sdc-officials-discuss-achieving-sdgs/>

UNIDO, GEF, IIASA Project to Identify Sustainability Solutions

11 March 2015, Vienna, Austria



International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) announced the launch of Nexus Solutions for Sustainability, a project to identify integrated solutions to energy, water, food and ecosystem security on 11 March 2015 in Vienna, Austria.

The Nexus Solutions project aims to address gaps in achieving agreements and goals on financing for development, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and climate change, particularly regarding how the goals can be addressed jointly, the costs of inaction, and how problems in one area may affect others.

The project will seek to identify integrated solutions in regions facing energy and land use challenges, economic and demographic changes, and increasing climate change. The three organizations will also work together to provide policy guidelines and make strategic recommendations to governments.

<http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/11100>

<http://www.unido.org/news/press/unido-gef-and-iiasa.html>

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/unido-gef-iiasa-project-to-identify-sustainability-solutions/>

EU Development Funding Enters into Force, Signals Support for SDGs

2 March 2015, Brussels, Belgium



The EU's 11th European Development Fund (EDF) has entered into force with a total of €30.5 billion in financing, according to a statement by the European Commission's (EC) High Representative and Vice-

President Federica Mogherini, and Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica. The EDF will finance the EU's development cooperation projects in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and with Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) to assist countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Key areas supported by the EDF will include: sustainable development, including rural development

and sustainable agriculture; environment; energy; food and nutrition; and health and education. The EDF will also support work related to democracy, good governance and the rule of law. In the statement, Mogherini and Mimica emphasize that these key areas represent "how the EU and its member states are clearly signaling support to the future post-2015 SDGs."

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-4518_en.htm?locale=en&mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWf9wsRokvqXNc%2B%2FhmjTEU5z16eorWKO1h4kz2EFye%2BLIHETpodcMTcVhNbzYDBceEJhqyQJxPr3DJNUN0ddxRhbkDQ%3D%3D

<http://sd.iisd.org/news/eu-development-funding-enters-into-force-signals-support-for-sdgs/>

China Updates

More European countries to join AIIB

27 March 2015

The membership of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is set to expand further, with France, Germany and Italy reported to have all agreed to join the China-proposed institution upon 14 March 2015. The decision of the three European countries, which was revealed by British newspaper the Financial Times and yet to be officially announced, came in the wake of Britain's application last week to be a founding member of the 50-billion-U.S.-dollar bank.

Moreover, Luxembourg, Switzerland, South Korea, Turkey and Austria have also formally applied to join the AIIB as prospective founding members upon 26 March 2015.

Meanwhile, Australian leaders have been lining up in the past few days to voice support for joining the AIIB, which marks a conspicuous U-turn from the cabinet's previous stance.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), an international financial institution that will provide

support to infrastructure projects in Asia, is expected to be formally established by the end of this year.

"The AIIB is an open and inclusive multilateral development bank. China welcomes all countries to join and make contributions to the infrastructure improvement in Asia," China's Vice Finance Minister Shi Yaobin said on 25 March.

Up to 26 March 36 countries have applied to jointly build the bank as founding members. The application deadline is 31 March.

<http://english.cntv.cn/2015/03/17/ARTI1426595058397595.shtml>

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-03/25/c_134096965.htm

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-03/17/c_134073564.htm

http://www.chinadailyasia.com/business/2015-03/26/content_15244254.html

Upcoming Events

April 2015



1. 2015 Global Forum on Development

Dates: 1 April 2015

Venue: Paris, France

Description: : The Global Forum on Development, which will focus on the theme 'Post-2015 Financing for Sustainable Development,' will bring together experts and practitioners to discuss how different streams of finance work together, in advance of the third UN Financing for Development (FfD) Conference, which will take place in July 2015. Participants will discuss: how developing countries interpret the global policy agenda on the ground; how to realistically track goals and their financing; national constraints that affect development finance policy and practice; and the role of the private sector, foundations, institutional investors and other non-state actors in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

<http://sd.iisd.org/events/intergovernmental-negotiations-on-post-2015-development-agenda-third-session>



3. 66th Session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe: Committing to Action on Sustainable Development in Times of Change

Dates: 14-16 April 2015

Venue: Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Description: The 66th session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) will serve as the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development and give input to the 2015 high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF). The high-level dialogue of this meeting will discuss, inter alia: how to transform the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into guidelines, standards, regulations and policies so as to help countries to achieve the goals and take action at the regional level; and how to develop a framework for accountability and monitoring of sustainable development.

<http://sd.iisd.org/events/66th-session-of-the-un-economic-commission-for-europe/>



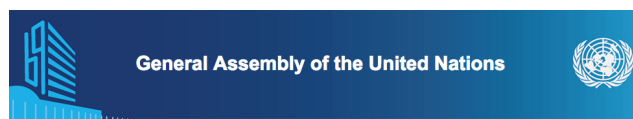
2. Second Drafting Session on Outcome Document of Third Conference on FfD

Dates: 13-17 April 2015

Venue: UN Headquarters

Description: The Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 13-16 July 2015. According to UN General Assembly Resolution 68/279, the first draft of the outcome document will be prepared by the co-facilitators on the basis of informal consultations, taking into account inputs from Member States, and presented by February 2015. The Preparatory Process as outlined in the road map issued by the co-facilitators in October 2014 will include three drafting sessions on the outcome document. The second drafting session will take place on 13-17 April 2015.

<http://sd.iisd.org/events/preparatory-session-ii-for-third-conference-on-financing-for-development/>



4. Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda – Fourth Session

Dates: 20-24 April 2015

Venue: UN Headquarters

Description: The fourth session of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda will take place on 20-24 April 2015. The session is scheduled to focus on Means of Implementation and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

<http://sd.iisd.org/events/intergovernmental-negotiations-on-post-2015-development-agenda-fourth-session/>

Voices



“This Let us never forget: as the Beijing Declaration so succinctly stated, ‘Women’s rights are human rights’. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential to our sustainable future.”

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s remarks to the General Assembly high-level debate on "Advancing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda" in UN Headquarters on 6 March 2015.

<http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=8434>

“The main objective of the SDG fund is to bring together U.N. agencies, national governments, academia, civil society and businesses to find ways in which we can reduce poverty, improve nutrition and provide access to affordable water and sanitation.”

Paloma Duran, Director of Sustainable Development Goals Fund wrote in “Bridging the gap: How the SDG Fund is paving the way for a post-2015 agenda” on 11 March 2015.

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2015/3/11/Bridging-the-Gap-How-the-SDG-Fund-is-paving-the-way-for-a-post-2015-agenda/#>

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/03/opinion-bridging-the-gap-how-the-sdg-fund-is-paving-the-way-for-a-post-2015-agenda/>



“This year, the UN’s 70th anniversary year, offers us a unique opportunity. This is the time for global leaders and peoples to redouble our efforts to eradicate poverty. All actors must work together, if we are to set the world on the path to a universal, transformative and integrated development agenda.”

Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson’s opening remarks at the 46th Session of the UN Statistical Commission in UN Headquarters on 3 March 2015.

<http://www.un.org/sg/dsg/statements/index.asp?nid=607>





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Resilient nations.*

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