

High-Level Political Forum
Summary of Discussions on "Implementation"
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Mr. President,
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important session of the HLPF. I will present a summary on the "Implementation" section of the discussion, which, we noted, includes our collective readiness to "hit the ground running" when the agenda is finalized.

Communication

Let me begin with the area of communication, which we acknowledged will be a critical component of successful implementation. We emphasized that implementation begins the moment we turn the HLPF over to "we the peoples" and transition from our years of planning into tangible action. To use a social media term, implementation is when post-2015 goes viral. When the SDGs are adopted in September we want everyone to feel like a stakeholder. To do that our message must be understandable. One presenter used a phrase to illustrate this: "we must speak human." We also recognized that while silos should be avoided they are not inherently bad, since each sector and stakeholder has different spheres of influence. What we need, therefore, is for silos to be working together like pistons in an engine, so as to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.

Communication will have to happen in all countries and at all levels, down to the local grass roots level where implementation takes place on the ground. It needs to reach all groups, including women and youth. The voice of civil society and major groups should also be heard. Classic civil society mobilization techniques can be combined with the new social media to create effective communication campaigns. Storytelling and the creation of usable content will be important in ensuring that the agenda and the Goals can be distilled into something that people can understand, identify with and act upon. We recognized that the complexity of the agenda reflects the complexity of global challenges and opportunities. Lastly, some delegations emphasized that it was important that the organisation utilize multiple languages and not just English in order to spread our messaging far and wide.

Implementation in General

Mr. President,

We said that in our implementation efforts we should learn from the lessons of the MDGs experience - both its successes and shortcomings. There needs to be national ownership, even as we implement a universal and inclusive agenda that seeks to address inequalities between and within countries. There also needs to be transparency and accountability, which is an area in which the HLPF can play an important role. The HLPF can also provide policy guidance to help forge links between the different elements of the agenda. It could, for example, request regional commissions, governing bodies of UN entities and the entire system to undertake a review of their policies in order to better support the implementation of the agenda.

Institutional Framework

On the matter of the institutional framework, we acknowledged that there needs to be system-wide coherence and complementarity between the Forum and other existing bodies and institutions. It will be necessary to create a multi-level architecture that can support implementation. A multi-level perspective must be reflected within the sub-regional, cross-regional and trans-boundary approaches. One suggestion was that the facilitation of regional forums on sustainable development by the regional commissions could be a powerful way to identify regional specificities and transmit recommendations to the HLPF. The importance of harmonizing policy cycles and aligning institutions at all levels cannot be overemphasized. Equitable and transparent governance will play a key role at local, national, regional and global levels.

Multiple stakeholders

Mr. President,

We recognized that implementing this transformative agenda will be impossible without engaging multiple stakeholders. Innovative partnerships with business, public enterprise, civil society organizations and academia at local, national, regional and global levels will be vital to ensure successful implementation. We referred to these as partnerships "in freewheeling combination", recognising that the SDGs will be universal. However, various partnership approaches and pathways will necessarily reflect differences between country circumstances and cultures. The HLPF can provide guidelines for these partnerships to better align policies and organizational strategies.

Engaging multi-stakeholders should be initiated from the start of implementation thereby continuing their engagement throughout the development of the agenda. We should ensure the continuation of this dynamic two-way interaction and provide space for feedback and engagement.

We noted the important role that local government, at the sub-national level, can play in localizing the implementation of the agenda, thus taking it to the front lines.

We also noted that parliaments have an important role to play in national leadership and implementation. Yet, like other important actors, they have not yet been properly included in the process of operationalizing the agenda. Parliaments can be critical relays for communication and education for sustainable development and could play important roles in national reviews. They have oversight over budgets, oversee executive bodies and monitor their effectiveness and bring different views together. Strong, well-equipped parliaments embody effective institutions that can play a crucial role in tracking and measuring progress.

We discussed engaging business and the private sector, noting that their participation in implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will be indispensable. The business sector hosts much of the creativity and human capital needed for the implementation of the new agenda. In the post-2015 era, they could be strategic partners of governments, as well as agents of change and solution providers.

In order to channel the energy of the private sector into achieving sustainable development, there is a need to communicate the agenda to them in language they are familiar with. This will help them make the case for sustainability through the creation of long-term investments that will yield investment returns as well as ensure broad-based socio-economic benefits and engender positive societal changes.

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) can serve as useful tools for implementation. They can work well if they are well negotiated and if there is a balance of gains and risks both for the public and private sector. Partnerships must be built on mutual trust and continuous dialogue. This will help to avoid situations wherein "profits are privatized and losses are socialized". Accountability and transparency of business are important dimensions. As such, properly designed governmental regulation and industrial codes of conduct are important to ensure corporate social responsibility, whereby business operations are in line with agreed principles of human rights, international labour standards and national labor laws, including decent work, the payment of living wages and participation in an equitable tax system.

Leaving no one behind

Mr. President, Ministers,

I close my summary on an important note about implementation that was thoroughly stressed last week, which is, "leaving no one behind". This principle underpinning the post-2015 development agenda should guide our implementation. Governments must respond to this commitment with policies that support individuals throughout their life course, with non-discrimination and inclusivity serving as a guideline during implementation. Marginalized and disadvantaged groups, including children, youth, the old, women, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities, among others, need to be given adequate attention. This will require the use of disaggregated data to ensure everyone is accounted for. It also means reviewing all policies for their impacts on various sub-groups of the population in an effort to go beyond averages, even within groups, so as to better take account of the heterogeneity within our populations.

Mr. President, there were so many important points made on this matter of implementation that it was impossible to present them all in this brief time. I do hope, however, that this summary has captured the main points and emphases that Ministers will be able to consider and engage upon in its segment of the HLPF.

Thank you.