

Partnership Data for SDGs (PD4SDGs)

Briefing on the PD4SDGs initiative during the UN General Assembly 2nd Committee
3 April 2018, 13:15-14:30, Conference Room 11, UNHQ

Organizers:

Division for Sustainable Development, UN-DESA, UN Office for Partnerships, UN Global Compact

Welcoming remarks

Ms. Lucie Bringham, Chief of Office, United Nations Office for Partnerships

The purpose of this briefing is to 1) share knowledge with member states on the Partnership Data for SDGs initiative, building support for the use of established criteria for measuring partnerships and commitments, and 2) provide a platform for Member States and stakeholders to exchange views on how this initiative can add tangible value for respective groups.

H.E. Sven Jürgenson, Chair of the UNGA 2nd Committee, Permanent Representative of Estonia

Multi-stakeholder partnerships are recognized as important vehicles to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Partnerships have been central to many recent UN conferences, notably RIO+20, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conferences and the 2017 Ocean Conference.

One of the central tenants of our sustainable development agenda is the recognition that goals cannot be achieved without a joint effort from all actors. SDG 17 in particular speaks to the importance of encouraging and promoting effective partnerships. The success of multi-stakeholder partnerships depends on many factors; one of the most important is knowledge sharing on progress. Partnership data for the SDGs (PD4SDGs) can help communicate this progress.

As an example, over 1,400 commitments have been made towards SDG14, and this number is still growing. Likewise, the need to collect information on partnerships and deliverables is also growing. The PD4SDGs initiative will allow us to have a baseline for global comparability. It will also bring greater transparency, coherence, impact and comparability of the work carried out by multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments by promoting a system-wide use of the established SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource-based, with clear Time-based deliverables – criteria.

Presentation: Partnership Data for SDGs Initiative

Mr. Ola Goransson, Partnerships Coordinator, UN DESA

The Knowledge Hub on the Partnerships for the SDGs website is a key collaborative initiative that conveys the pronounced increase in voluntary commitments. This increase has been tracked on the website, which showcases a global registry of partnerships and voluntary commitments. There was notable growth in the number of partnerships after certain events that featured the importance of partnerships: 2012 (Rio), SIDS and the Oceans Conference. Overall impact of partnerships collected on this platform will be analyzed and reviewed at the High Level Political Forum in July 2018.

The definition of partnerships and commitments needs to be clear throughout the process of capturing partnerships. The SMART definition of partnerships ensures that several dimensions of the submission are captured that can speak to its nature. These dimensions include SDG linkage, time-based deliverables, resources, and contact information. This type of data capture allows us to move

away from partnership descriptions that are not SMART: for example, simply stating “we are working on improving the underwater cultural heritage” is inadequate.

An analysis on the Oceans conference commitments included a projected timeline of deliverables and outcomes. This exercise identified targeted areas for outreach as well as a 3% global increase of marine protected areas as the calculated aggregate impact. We were able to render partnership data into useful insights on our progress.

Implementations

Ms. Heidi Savelli-Soderberg, Programme Officer, UN Environment

As mandated, a report on Marine Litter and Microplastics included an analysis of voluntary commitments. The report looked at where in the intervention chain commitments were made, whether commitments were SMART and the potential impact of commitments. The group effectively used the partnerships hub as a base for their work. By 2019, the UNEA group will have a report featuring a section on voluntary commitments.

Ms. Amber Barth, Decent Jobs for Youth, International Labour Organization

Multi-sectoral partnerships have been integral to the *Decent Jobs for Youth* initiative at the International Labour Organization. Institutions, government private sector and academia have all been involved. The *Decent Jobs for Youth* filled a need that was created after the 2008 financial crisis and was mandated by the General Assembly out of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. It represents an ambitious global youth employment strategy that aims to provide coherence to the many youth initiatives globally. Today, the Decent Jobs for Youth initiative involves 22 UN entities, City Foundation, Nestle and the governments of Spain and Luxembourg.

To join, members must commit to 4 guiding principles which address the quality of jobs, rights-based approaches and evidence-based best practices. When a potential member signs up on the *Decent Jobs for Youth* network, they need to describe how their partnership meets the SMART criteria. Meetings do not fulfill the current criteria. In addition, 5 deliverables must be selected that should represent the quality and quantity of impact. Pledges must also include a description of the nature and timing of support, and be supplemented with an estimated timeline, with the minimum commitment being at least one year. Identifying and measuring the tangible nature of partnership outcomes is difficult. However, through long term policy changes and capacity building, we can enable this measurement.

Mr. Angus Rennie, Senior Manager, UN Partnerships & Relations, UN Global Compact

I commend our partners in this initiative for trying to understand the scale, nature and characteristics of impact. This is a priority identified by the Secretary-General himself. On the UN Business Action Hub, SMART principles have been integrated into the proposals, commitment and projects featured on the platform. As businesses approach the UN Global Compact, or consider how they can contribute to the SDGs as a whole, it is crucial to understand, in parallel, the dimensions by which businesses are engaging with and advancing the SDGs.

Closing remarks

H.E. Sven Jürgenson, Chair of the UNGA 2nd Committee, Permanent Representative of Estonia

With such ambitious goals and promising vision, this initiative currently certainly needs increased engagement, broader outreach and greater exposure across the many groups affected by this work. With so many stakeholders, we need a common baseline as a means to unify our efforts.