



UN Expert Group Meeting on SDG 17

“Strengthening and Harnessing the Means of Implementation through Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to Drive Transformation Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies”

12 June, 2018

Background Note

Overview

According to a recent estimate by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) will cost up to USD 175 trillion over the next 15 years.¹ This will require unprecedented level of development finance, coupled with structural transformation of development paradigms and cooperation strategies by countries of all income and development levels in the long run.

SDG 17 on “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” sets out five sub-goals in the areas of finance, technology, capacity-building, trade and systemic issues². The 19 targets of the SDG 17 cover a broad range of related issues including not only traditional official development assistance (ODA), debt relief and trade access, but also key “operational” dimensions such as: domestic resource mobilization; capacity-building; and policy and institutional coherence; and data, monitoring and accountability. SDG 17 cuts cross all other 16 SDGs and has a key role in driving the implementation of each goal and the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development as a whole.

A commonly held position is that since the time of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a number of developing countries have been making targeted efforts for more effective domestic resource mobilization and private sector development. This, consequently, has led to an increasingly complex and dynamic landscape of Mols and diversified actors to be mapped out and partnered with at the country level. The inter-linked and inter-dependent nature of the present global challenges also call for more coherent, coordinated collaboration efforts at global level.

The challenge is much greater than just increasing the quantity of Mols, but also in enhancing their qualities, coherence and synergistic results to expedite the implementation of the SDGs. This is where the tremendous potential of partnerships should be harnessed, together with policy, institutional and broader systemic efforts.

This background note is intended to inform the Expert Group Meeting on SDG 17, which is held on 12 June, 2017 in New York to better account the complex and diverse realities of the multi-stakeholder partnerships in the implementation of SDGs in focus (SDGs 6,7,11,12 and 15, which will be under review in

1 For more information, see: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/high-level-conference-on-ffd-and-2030-agenda/substantive-background/index.html>

2 Systemic issues constitute: policy and institutional coherence; multi-stakeholder partnerships; and data, monitoring and accountability



2018 HLPF). The note aims to scan some of the good examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships in bringing concrete contributions to enhancing the Mols in the implementation of the SDGs in focus.

Finance

Acknowledging the growing complexity of development financing landscape, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda underlines how development finance policies should be anchored in cohesive, nationally owned sustainable development strategies and supported by integrated national financing frameworks (INFF).³ Currently, developing countries are facing challenges in assessing and harnessing all financing inflows (international, domestic, public and private) and their mixes and linking them with sustainable development needs. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can play a catalytic and complementary role in mobilizing and aligning these resources with concrete sustainable development results.

While there exist scarce systematic data and empirical evidence on the impacts of partnerships on the quantity and quality of development finance mobilized, there are note-worthy examples and practice-based observations that can be duly taken into account.

For instance, according to the UN-Water GLAAS 2017 Report, the cross-border public-private partnerships (PPPs), involving different developing country governments and companies based in the Netherlands, have generated over 70 million USD of additional

investment in WASH programme and resulted in the implementation of 22 projects in 17 countries⁴.

UN-Habitat notes the good decentralized development cooperation in Brazil with improved financing and urban governance practice, with its local expenditures equal to 8.3 per cent of its GDP (the highest level in Latin America), driven by effective partnerships between national and local authorities, together with multi-stakeholder partnerships with civil society and local communities through systematic and transparent engagement mechanism.⁵

In Germany, a number of multi-stakeholder partnerships have been supported by the national government encouraging them to contribute towards promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns to impact global supply chains; the examples of these partnerships include the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles; the Forum for Sustainable Palm Oil; and Cotton made in Africa⁶, among others. The 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Patterns (10 YFP) highlights that one of the biggest challenges in implementing the SDG 12 is to secure more active engagement of the private sector and financial institutions, including through demonstrating the concrete economic case for their investment and shift towards SCP patterns.

In case of some SDGs, such as SDG 15, multi-stakeholder partnerships do not seem to have been widely utilized as a key instrument including in the area of global advocacy: one of the possible reasons for this is the broad, cross-

³ Op.9

⁴ World Health Organization, "UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) 2017 Report: Financing Universal Water, Sanitation and Hygiene under the Sustainable Development Goals", Geneva, 2017.

⁵ For more information, please see: <https://unhabitat.org/books/world-cities-report/>

⁶ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), "Multi-stakeholder partnerships in the context of the 2030 Agenda", Bonn, 2017



sectoral nature of the SDG 15, since multi-stakeholder partnerships tend to be most impactful for addressing more narrowly-defined development challenges.⁷

The examples from a number of developing countries show how systematic dialogue platforms engaging multi-stakeholder partners can help to (i) better mobilise contributions from various actors outside the government; (ii) help the government better grasp of and address the real constraints to effective financing strategies; (iii) develop more integrated financing framework based on the holistic financing picture; and (iv) facilitate the non-state domestic actors and development partners to adapt their cooperation and investment practice in line with the sustainable development priorities of developing country governments.⁸

Technology

The Report of the Secretary-General on “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals” estimates that the high-speed fixed-broadband penetration has reached 6 per cent of the population in developing countries, compared to 24 per cent in developed countries, which could further widen the already existing inequalities.⁹

While the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is expected to make an important contribution, different modes of development cooperation, including North-South, South-South, tri-angular and decentralized, are to be effectively mobilized geared towards bridging the critical capacity

gaps in science, technology and innovation between and within countries. In this connection, the multi-stakeholder partnerships can facilitate more broad-based and demand-driven cooperation efforts in developing and transferring technologies and related expertise.

For instance, the flagship initiative of Rwanda for information-rich and knowledge-based economy entitled “SMART” is currently under implementation, supported by multi-stakeholder development cooperation actors involving the bi-lateral development cooperation agencies, academia in development partner countries, trans-national technology firm and private agencies in Rwanda. This multi-stakeholder approach to development cooperation provides the catalytic impetus in driving solutions for a wide range of concerns in building robust ICT infrastructure, including integrated transport, long-term investment and financial interoperability, smart utilities and public safety and security.¹⁰ The Energy Technology Development and Demonstration Programme (EUDP) of Denmark also engages with both domestic and cross-border multi-stakeholder stakeholder partners to provide support in developing renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency technologies, conversion technologies and integration of energy systems.¹¹

The UN Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum) aims to provide a dedicated space for multi-stakeholder partners to matchmake the demands and supplies of science, technology

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ For more information, please see: http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/democratic_governance/RBAP-DG-2017-Financing-SDGs-in-ASEAN.pdf

⁹ E/2018/64. Op. 21

¹⁰ Columbia University & Ericsson, “ICT and SDGs Final Report: How Information and Communications Technology can Accelerate Action on the Sustainable Development Goals”, New York, 2015.

¹¹ For more information, please see: https://ens.dk/sites/ens.dk/files/Stoette_vedvarende_energi/call_eudp_2018-1.pdf



and innovation and build the collaborative networks to develop, transfer and disseminate the relevant technologies around thematic areas including SDGs 6,7,11,12 and 15.

In addition to the STI Forum at the global level, the recent Report of the Secretary-General on “Trends and progress in international development cooperation”¹² also notes other key platforms, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation 2016–2020 and the Southern African Development Community’s strategic framework on science, technology and innovation for 2015–2020, supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Capacity-building

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda¹³ calls for enhanced international cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships to provide more targeted capacity support for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing states (SIDS), African countries and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS Conference) in 2014 resulted in the announcement of 300 multi-stakeholder partnerships and the establishment of the SIDS Partnership Framework. The Framework is expected to monitor the contributions of partnerships towards the sustainable development of SIDS, in particular in the areas of financial, policy,

institutional and technological capacity-building.

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) facilitates multi-stakeholder knowledge partnerships to build policy and technical capacities in the area of integrated water resources management among governments, UN entities, bi- and multi-lateral development banks, research institutions, NGOs and the private sector including from developing countries with special concerns.¹⁴

The Renewable Energy Policy for the 21st Century (REN21) is another example of multi-stakeholder knowledge partnerships in the field of energy that brings together a variety of knowledge providers from various countries to produce annual progress report and other thematic publications. This multi-stakeholder learning platform allows the stakeholders to pool and build the expertise and related capacities on renewable energy.¹⁵

The promotion of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns requires significant capacity-building in the areas of developing SCP policies and measures for private sector management; adapting to technological changes; and managing information system. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as the UNIDO/UNEP-supported Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production Network, have a strategic role to play in carrying out more targeted capacity development activities in developing countries.

The South-South and tri-angular cooperation play a strategic, complementary role in building policy, institutional, technical and human resources capacities including through technical cooperation that involves non-state

¹² E/2018/55. Op. 31

¹³ Op. 115

¹⁴ Global Water Partnership (GWP), “GWP Annual Progress Review for 2017”, Stockholm, 2017. Also see: https://www.partnerschaften2030.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Viadrina_EN_WEB.pdf

¹⁵ For more information, please see: https://www.partnerschaften2030.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Viadrina_EN_WEB.pdf



stakeholders. There is a growing recognition for the need to develop the legal and institutional frameworks for fostering and embedding multi-stakeholder approaches in South-South and triangular cooperation.¹⁶

Trade

The SDGs include 20 trade-related targets that require effective public-private partnerships (PPPs) based on multi-stakeholder approach to drive more sustainable growth across the borders and regions.

The Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, a non-profit joint venture led by the International Chamber of Commerce, the World Economic Forum and the Center for International Private Enterprise in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), establishes a new model for trade facilitation reforms by placing business at the heart of a unique public-private co-creation process to identify and design border and customs reforms. While many Aid-for-Trade projects can lack in-depth consultation with multi-stakeholders before launch, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation rethinks the way to deliver Aid-for-Trade, including through putting global and local private sector companies in direct consultation with relevant border agencies from the very inception of project design. This multi-stakeholder co-creation approach significantly improved the targeting and effectiveness of aid and overall sustainable development outcomes.¹⁷

Policy and institutional coherence

The available data shows that 81 developing countries undertook monitoring exercise in 2016 to measure the development

effectiveness of MoIs: 82 per cent of the new development projects aligned their objectives with national sustainable development priorities, while more than half of them relied on parallel information and monitoring systems to assess the progress and results.¹⁸ Policy and institutional coherence is considered a systemic issue in the SDGs implementation, which could be effectively enhanced through multi-stakeholder solutions.

The Multi-stakeholder Partnership for Enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (the PCSD Partnership) uses its multi-stakeholder platform for sharing of contextualized knowledge and experiences to examine the policy implications of SDGs implementation efforts and build analytical capacity on policy coherence challenges. Engaging various stakeholders, the PCSD Partnership has also been mobilizing political will to adapt policy and institutional mechanisms in line with the 2030 Agenda and enhance the national monitoring efforts around the issue.

Data, monitoring and accountability

The joint data-collection, monitoring and assessment processes, which are regularly participated by governments and non-state multi-stakeholder partners is key to ensuring more results-oriented, transparent and accountable sustainable development.

For instance, the Global Environmental Management Initiative (GEMI) was established in 2014 to track progress on wastewater, water quality, water resources management and water-related ecosystems: this unique interagency initiative harnesses the potential of partnerships to enhance the coherent and

¹⁶ Op. 40

¹⁷ For more information, please see: http://tradeoutofpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Evidence_Global-Alliance-for-Trade-Facilitation-World-Economic-Forum-.pdf

¹⁸ E/2018/64



integrated data collection, monitoring and analysis of water and sanitation related SDG targets.¹⁹ The Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) has been co-designed by the multi-stakeholder processes²⁰ and used as a tool for policymakers to benchmark their national policy frameworks for sustainable energy against those of regional and global peers and identify opportunities to attract investment. With its 27 indicators, covering 111 countries and representing 96 per cent of the world population, the RISE provides a powerful tool to help develop policies that advance sustainable energy goals.²¹ Also, a worldwide database of SCP initiatives, which has more than 600 entries from all stakeholders, has been established through the multi-stakeholder knowledge partnership platform of the 10 YFP to expedite the implementation of the SDG 12.

Public-private partnership (PPP) is a crucial tool to make the data revolution work for sustainable development. The demands and supplies for data partnerships, including those in the area of big data, are surging. The new generation of data infrastructures, which are inclusive, transparent and accountable, are in growing demand at both country and international levels; multi-stakeholder data collaboration is expected to play an increasingly important role in filling the significant capacity gaps in this connection.²²

UN Expert Group Meeting on SDG 17

Reviewing the available literature and case stories on the subject – contributions of multi-

stakeholder partnerships towards strengthening and harnessing of Mols – suggests the pressing need for building further evidence and facilitating more in-depth policy discussion. In this context, the Expert Group Meeting has the below objectives:

- (i) To shed light on the “context-specific” Mol challenges different countries face and the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in effectively addressing these obstacles. The outcome of this policy discussion can be a useful input to countries’ efforts in developing or revising national development cooperation or / and partnership framework.
- (ii) To inform the global policy dialogue to better account the complex and diverse realities of Mols and support more targeted and differentiated multi-stakeholder partnership strategies to effectively enhance and harness the Mols.

Such contextualised policy discussion aims at providing more on-the-ground insights for concrete roles of multi-stakeholder partnerships as well as its policy implications for different fields of Mols. Below questions will further guide the envisaged discussions at the Expert Group Meeting:

19 For more information, please see http://www.unwater.org/publication_categories/gemi/

20 Including the World Bank, SE4ALL, the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP) and the Climate Investment Fund.

21 For more information, please see: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/538181487106403375/Regulatory-indicators-for-sustainable-energy-a-global-scorecard-for-policy-makers>

22 For more information, please see: <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2018doc/2018-partnership-forum-summary.pdf>



Focus Questions

- *What concrete contributions can multi-stakeholder partnerships bring to ensure that Mols are effectively mobilised and managed and that systemic changes are facilitated in support of the implementation of the SDGs 6,7,11,12 and 15? What are some of innovative examples in inter-linked areas of Mols?*
- *How can the UN play more effective roles – at global, regional and country levels – in promoting more demand-driven, results-based and accountable partnerships and discouraging unnecessary parallel structures and fragmentation for the effective implementation of the SDGs in focus?*

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