

# Ensuring inclusion, resilience and sustainability in the implementation of the SDGs

Joan Carling, Indigenous Peoples' Major Group

# CONTEXT

- Ensuring inclusion, Resilience and sustainability are necessary elements to achieve the 2030 Agenda for development with the pledge of “leaving no one behind” as provided by the 2030 Agenda
- The inclusion of 9 Major Groups and other stakeholders in the global process of the SDGs is a positive step from the MDGs
- The commitment for balanced implementation of the 3 dimensions of the SDGs– social, environment and economic paves the way for a more integrated and cohesive approach to sustainable development
- Acknowledgement of the need to respect and protect human rights in the SDGs sets a positive framework for achieving the SDGs
- Need for strong partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs

# Ensuring inclusion: From commitment to Transformational Actions

- Marginalized groups need to be well informed on the SDGs to facilitate their participation— requires resources and targeted outreach in appropriate forms and languages understood by them (*millions of indigenous peoples are still not aware of the SDGs so how can they even participate*)
- Institutionalized mechanisms of participation and representation in SDG processes for sustained engagement of marginalized sectors and groups and effective participation in decision-making (indigenous peoples, women, persons with disabilities, youth, elderly, small farmers and workers) are necessary to ensure sustained and meaningful participation in the whole process of development— planning, implementation and monitoring ( not simply consultations). *Many if not most countries have not set up effective mechanisms for sustained participation of marginalized groups and consultations if undertaken were held in the capital and largely with NGOs who can fund their participation or have link to government officials. There are emerging good practices of broad civil society participation including indigenous peoples such as in Norway and Denmark*
- Participation of and engagement with marginalized groups should be underpinned by the respect and protection of their rights, roles and contributions-- need to ensure access to information, freedom of expression, assembly and organization; entitlements based on their economic, social and cultural rights, the collective rights of indigenous peoples and specific rights of women, persons with disabilities, the young and the elderly (*an increasing number of States are becoming authoritarian and those who are critical of government development projects with adverse impacts to people and the environment are tagged as anti-development or terrorist leading to arrest, detention and extra judicial killings in a number of countries and where access to justice hardly exist. Majority of victims of extra judicial killings of land and environment defenders are indigenous leaders* )

# Ensuring inclusion

- Integration of the needs, priorities, interests, aspirations and contributions of marginalized sectors and groups including indigenous peoples in the development plans and actions through their effective participation in decision-making and their meaningful participation in implementation and monitoring ( top-down approach and centralized decision-making and monitoring are still dominant in the SDG process– indigenous peoples are still invisible in many of the VNRs/ National Development plans )
- The establishment of the multi-stakeholders platform and partnerships should not weaken or diminish the rights and entitlements of marginalized groups in relation to the interest and agenda of the private sector, investors, and vested groups with economic power and political power
- Provision of technical and logistics support and appropriate forms of capacity building to facilitate the effective participation of marginalized groups at all levels– local to global – this requires allocation of resources
- Building partnerships with marginalized sectors including indigenous peoples as rights holders and development actors in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs– supporting community development plans/ initiatives, capacity building, data-gathering etc
- Indicators for the effective inclusion of marginalized sectors/groups are needed for monitoring progress and gaps by ensuring data-disaggregation by ethnicity, sex, age,
- **INCLUSION should lead to the empowerment of marginalized groups as central actors in sustainable development– goes beyond consultations**

# Resilience and Sustainability

- Policy cohesion , and specific measures and mechanisms for enforcement including measures for social and environmental protection and combatting climate change for resilience and sustainability ( people and nature as interdependent)– **there is lack of political will and enforcement mechanisms in many national action plans**
- Economic targets and strategies need to be strictly guided by social and environmental sustainability ( **people and environment over profit, strict regulations to unsustainable mass production and consumption, extractive industry, massive commercial agriculture etc**)
- Formulation and effective implementation of Policies on sustainable use and management of natural resources accounting for sustainable livelihoods for marginalized groups– sustainable and participatory landscape management approach (as opposed to narrow conservation measures which have adverse impacts to rights and livelihoods) **ie. Forest in the hands of indigenous peoples is better managed and conserved as compared to those by State and big conservation groups**
- Integration of Participatory and community-based approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation (over technological fixes) and support for sustainable livelihoods and capacity building in building their resilience
- Acknowledgement, Integration and enhancement of different forms of knowledge including traditional and indigenous knowledge in building resilience and sustainability to be integrated in development plans and actions
- **The active and direct participation of marginalized groups using their knowledge in development processes are necessary in building resilience and sustainability in achieving the SDGs**

## Enabling environment for ensuring inclusion, resilience and sustainability and integrated approach to achieving the SDGs

- Effective governance systems and mechanisms of transparency, accountability, equity, respect and protection for human rights and access to justice including in the means of implementation -- investments, trade and public-private partnerships
- Participatory decision making with the effective inclusion of marginalized groups for addressing their specific needs, integrating their priorities and aspirations for sustainable development
- Effective participatory mechanisms for monitoring including with data-disaggregation
- Policy cohesion for balanced implementation of the three dimensions of the SDGs– social, environment and economic within the framework of respect and protection of human rights, social equity and measures for environmental protection and sustainability; and sustainable use of resources for the people over profit (requires paradigm shift from the dominant economic system and domination)