



Date: 17 April 2013

Conceptualisation of SDGs

MNE–SI speaking points for 2nd meeting of OWG SDGs

- Talking about conceptualisation of SDGs we have to recall the outcome document “The Future We Want” (FWW) and its main guiding principles on SDGs: respecting existing international law, political commitments (Agenda 21 JPOI, FWW, outcomes of major environmental, social and economic summits, MDGs), principles (Rio principles), different national circumstances and priorities.
- As already stated in our previous joint interventions, the goals need to be universally applicable, but flexible enough to allow for the differences among the countries in terms of the critical drivers for change. In this context, the goals should strive to address the values that underlie the political, societal and individual choices and can trigger the change in the existing patterns of consumption and production, lifestyles, participation and governance mechanisms.
- We shouldn’t forget the initial purpose of the proposal for elaboration of SDGs: the concern about the future of the planet and keeping the human development within the planetary boundaries. The process will have to step over ossified way of thinking and looking for compromises just to keep on the same track of business as usual. We will have to use our braveness, innovative sense and rely more on experts in different fields.
- The process of elaboration of SDGs should be coherent with other on-going processes, leading towards future overarching post-2015 framework.
- The post-2015 consultations, which were also carried in Montenegro, showed that the MDG-related issues are still of importance to all the stakeholders. Slovenian civil society also supports further work on the MDGs topics.
- For finding efficient guidelines to our future development we'll need to address root causes for current situation. As we want to change unfavourable patterns for our future development we will have to go two steps back and re-asses the current situation. This exercise will be successful only if we rely on scientific and research data, which will have to play a crucial role.
- When elaborating SDGs we will need holistic and integrative approach, as it is impossible to separate different dimensions of sustainable development in different goals. It is necessary to overcome "silo approach" and work towards integration of different dimensions in each SDG. Promoting a genuine integrative approach in the formulation of the Goals is a prerequisite for the strengthening of the inter-linkages among all three pillars of sustainable development in a balanced way.
- In this regard two underlying principles should also guide our work:
 - Human rights based approach, which allows us to secure the desired – sustainable and inclusive – future of the whole humanity, not just taking care of the basic needs.

Sustainable development is not possible without respecting and fulfilling human rights as set by international human rights law. The human rights based approach allows ensuring accountability of the authorities on one hand and the participation of people (rights-holders) on the other. Therefore it creates a reciprocal relationship aimed at improving the conditions and achieving sustainable development.

- Principle of prosperity, which is a complex concept, so we have to bear in mind different definitions of it by different communities. We also have to keep in mind that long-term prosperity requires long-term sustainability.
- Beside the above mentioned principles, we would like to highlight the importance of enhancing gender equality, empowerment of women and equal opportunities for all as well as the role of children and youth in achieving sustainable development. As major groups, women as well as children and youth, have a special interest in sustainable development. Its implementation has important positive impact on their lives.
- SDGs must be based on scientific evidence, balancing all three dimensions of sustainable development, addressing inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues and be measurable. Building from the scientific data, it will be of critical importance for the Goals to be measurable, but also extending conceptually beyond the existing measures of development and growth. We all realise that measuring development only through BDP and other quantitative data cannot provide an accurate presentation of reality, and it can even hide existing inequalities within populations, due to statistical implications, as it was the case with part of the MDGs which were focused more on the process outputs, rather than the quality of the achieved results (especially for the fields of education, health and environment). BDP approach cannot lead to the core of the problem, for this reason other different criteria and approaches to welfare concepts have to be taken into consideration.
- There have been many efforts on elaborating indicators for measuring progress in sustainable development within UN system, especially in the UN Statistical Commission. Rio + 20 also proposed further work on beyond GDP indicators; UN Statistical Commission adopted the plan of work on the issue at its last session. Calling for coherence we should connect this statistical work with the work on SDGs both connecting it during the process of elaboration and for forming concrete indicators for future SDGs.
- In this context, the differences within the countries in terms of the data collection/analyses constrains as well as the access to information and communication technology should be noted and taken into account.
- For SDGs to be more relevant to policy making in terms of both the content and the provision of timely information, they need to rely on a more disaggregate sets of data that reflect both the quantities as well as the qualities of the activities undertaken by all parties. The Goals, also, need to build on the strengths of the MDGs in terms of their limitations in number and high degrees of understandability and communicability.