



UNHQ, New York

IPM Partnerships Fair

26 February–2 March 2007

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IPM Partnerships Fair Thematic Discussion Measuring and Reporting Contributions to Implementation: Challenges and Lessons Learned



(Left to right) Ton Boon Von Ochssee, Netherlands Ambassador for SD, Patricia Chaves, Head of Partnership Team, DSD/UN DESA, Jonathan Margolis, US Special Representative for SD, Ivan Vera, IAEA, Indicators for Sustainable Development

Patricia Chaves, Head of the Partnerships Team, DSD/UN DESA, opened the second session of the CSD-15 IPM Partnerships Fair thematic discussions, on 27 February in Conference room 7.

She highlighted the objectives of the session, namely, to consider the challenges and lessons learned by partnerships in their efforts to measure and report their contributions towards the implementation of sustainable development goals and commitments. She stressed the importance of measuring and reporting partnerships results for accountability, transparency and promotional purposes. Ms. Chaves pointed out, however, that CSD partnerships are a very diverse group and that finding common and meaningful indicators to measure outcomes can be a challenge.

H.E. Mr. Ton Boon von Ochssee, Ambassador for Sustainable Development from the Netherlands, opened his presentation by stressing the importance of partnerships as a key result of the WSSD. He indicated that partnerships are one of the central modalities to address sustainable development. Governments have recognized the need to work together with different partners and stakeholders to implement sustainable development commitments. Ambassador Boon von Ochssee noted that his Government has been particularly supportive of the public-private partnership model and has 50 partnerships underway in water, health, energy, transport and agriculture, among others. He added that partnerships bring constructive dialogue between stakeholders, allowing for the exchange of knowledge and

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“Partnerships are one of the central modalities to address sustainable development. Governments cannot work alone.”

Ton Boon Von Ochssee, Netherlands
Ambassador for SD

innovative ideas to support Governments deliverance on their commitments.

Ambassador Boon von Ochssee outlined several key steps related to the establishment of a strong and sustainable partnership, from finding ways for all partners to understand each other, including full understanding of shared risks, objectives and goals, to the importance of committing to small and manageable steps, ensuring that the partnership can reach its goals and scale up from there.

With respect to choosing partners, Ambassador Boon von Ochssee suggested for Governments to choose partners who truly have a stake in the project, including civil society representatives/ organizations, who can help to catalyze action, provide “glue” to the partnership’s relationship, stimulate innovative ideas and assist in communications with stakeholders. He also added that it is important to help other stakeholders, such as civil society and business organizations, to establish partnerships with their counterparts in the countries where the partnership is working.

In planning the work plans for partnerships, Ambassador Boon von Ochssee said that looking beyond the immediate and short term needs is essential to develop a clear understanding

of the longer-term objectives and activities of the partnership. To be successful, he added, any partnership should establish a close relationship with the Government of the country where the partnership is working in, as well as a good understanding of any applicable international and national legal frameworks that could present challenges.

Ambassador Boon von Ochssee stressed the point that each partnership should identify a leader/focal point to manage information as well as to report the results achieved. He indicated that this issue is of particular importance when facing with changes in Government and officials may need to demonstrate concrete outcomes of the partnership to make a strong case for its continuation. He noted that the Netherlands will be providing a report of the outcomes of their partnerships at the CSD-15.

Ambassador Boon von Ochssee summarized his remarks with the following suggestions for the success of partnerships:

1. Choose strategic sectors
2. Start small, develop momentum and add additional partners and activities over time
3. Involve relevant stakeholders more directly in the partnership

4. Understand that each partner has specific values applicable to the relationship

5. Keep momentum - the Government should usually take the leading role in keeping the partnership on track

6. Discuss work plans from the outset, so all partners understand and contribute to identify the objectives

7. Look ahead to next steps - develop a view of the future well in advance

8. Identify a lead partner, who will communicate roles, deadlines, coordinate meetings, etc

9. Clearly identify responsibilities of stakeholders

Ambassador Boon von Ochssee concluded his remarks reminding participants of the importance for Governments officials to constantly communicate to ensure that partnerships are designed to be compliant with procurement laws or other regulations in other countries. He indicated, for instance, the need to be cognizant of the layers of bureaucracy and its regulations that exist in the European Union which can impact the development of partnerships.

Jonathan Margolis, the US Special Representative for Sustainable Development at the US State Department, opened his remarks on measuring and reporting contributions by partnerships with the following anecdote. It was at CSD-9, where the US delegation had been reminded of the importance for each individual to make a measurable impact. Late one evening in the negotiations, a US representative pointed out that the word ‘affect’ in the paragraph under consideration should have been changed to ‘effect’. The change was suggested by the US and adopted in the document and the representative who suggested the change felt he/she had

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satisfied the mandate to make a “measurable” contribution to the negotiations.

At the WSSD, Dr. Margolis went on to explain, the US government emphasized that words are good, but actions are better. He noted that the US was highly supportive when the idea for partnerships

*“Words are good.
Actions are better.”*

Jonathan Margolis, US Special Representative for SD

was put forward as an outcome of the Summit. Partnerships were seen by the US as one way to be held accountable on sustainable development implementation.

He shared a second anecdote related to one of the partnerships they had launched, the Water for the Poor Partnership, which had announced \$1 billion of spending over the first three years. A year later when the US reported back to the CSD, they were proud to report spending over \$380 million of their budget and were therefore ahead of schedule. An NGO representative asked the US to explain what they had spent the money on and what were the results, to what the US could not easily answer. Dr. Margolis explained that meetings of 15 government agencies over the next year tried to come up with a satisfactory answer facing the dilemma of identifying what constituted a good indicator of the success of the program - was it the number of hook-ups to water? How would these be measured - by household or by individual or community? Did a hook-up to an untreated water source count?

Dr. Margolis indicated that it took a considerable effort to find a measure that they were confident was a good representation of the impact the

partnership was making: the US spent \$900 million and had provided 13.4 million new hook-ups to clean drinking water. These numbers constituted featured results of the partnership.

He added that the same approach was applied to other partnerships that the government was involved in. Information on these partnerships can be found at www.sdp.gov. Additionally, Dr. Margolis indicated that the US is now taking the same approach to the boards of other international partnerships where they are members to try to convey the idea that concrete metrics are essential to evaluating the contributions of partnerships.

Dr. Margolis noted that partnerships typically have been reporting on the number of meetings, members or training sessions they have as well as the number of countries they are working in. This information, however, can only demonstrate levels of activity, but not the impact the partnership is having. He stressed the importance of linking these efforts more directly to the Millennium Development Goals. In that way each partnership could measure the contribution they are making to quantifiable targets.

Dr. Margolis outlined the efforts now underway with the US government, the Stockholm Water Initiative and the German government as the President of the EU, to encourage donors/partners to compare metrics on delivery of fresh water in an attempt to develop common language and measures. It is his hope, he added, that this effort will begin to impact the policy discussions at CSD, to move the discussion to a higher level of detail, beyond the realm of words and into the realm of results.

Dr. Ivan Vera, of Planning and Economic

Studies Sections of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) opened his remarks making reference to the Energy Indicators for Sustainable Development, a CSD registered partnership, in which the IAEA is the leading partner. The objectives of the partnership is to provide an analytical tool to be used by countries to monitor progress towards nationally defined goals on energy for sustainable development, to assess their energy systems, to evaluate their energy policies as well as to identify priority areas, formulate energy programs and strategies within the context of sustainable development.

He indicated that the Partnership specifically committed to define a set of energy indicators, to develop methodologies and guidelines for their use, to demonstrate their applicability and to assist countries in the implementation of this analytical tool.

The Energy Indicators for Sustainable



“Concrete metrics are essential to evaluating the contributions of partnerships” explains Jonathan Margolis, US Special Representative for SD

Development partnership, composed of national and international partners, identified seven countries (Brazil, Cuba, Lithuania, Mexico, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Thailand) to participate initially in demonstrating the applicability of the indicators. A report was produced Energy Indicators for

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"This effort is neither quick nor easy, nor is it a one-way process. It is a continuous process that requires effective communication"

Ivan Vera, IAEA

Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Methodologies, which identifies 20 energy indicators related to social, economic and the environmental issues, domains of sustainable development, and developed specific criteria for

methodologies and guidelines.

Dr. Vera indicated the difficulty in reaching consensus on defining measuring criteria. He emphasized the importance of measuring success of a partnership based on its agreed objectives. He proposed to work on an output and expected outcomes defined initially according to work plans and timetables which could form the basis to measure how well the partnership is progressing. He noted that sustainability is relative which depends on nationally defined sustainable development goals, criteria and relevant indicators. Criteria for capacity building activities need to respect nationally defined values and goals. This effort is neither quick nor easy, nor is it a one-way process. It is a continuous process that requires effective communication. He concluded indicating that achieving meaningful outcomes of the Energy Indicators for Sustainable Development Partnership has taken over 4 years of collaborative effort and more time is necessary to assess its full impacts.

Partnerships Website Redesigned

The Partnerships Team is pleased to announce the launch of a redesigned CSD Partnerships Website in time for the opening session of the IPM Partnerships Fair.

The redesigned home page is intended to increase the visibility of active partnerships and to facilitate access to relevant information about CSD partnerships. It provides direct links to newly registered partnerships as well as to recent partnerships updates. An additional new element is a news section which links directly to recent news items posted on partnership's websites.



CSD Partnerships Website:
www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships

We welcome your Feedback!

The CSD Secretariat continues to work on improving its on-line services, including the CSD Partnerships website features and the database functions, to facilitate the consideration of partnerships in CSD discussions as well as highlighting the innovative contributions of CSD partnerships.

We welcome your feedback in order to improve the quality of our services on disseminating information on CSD Partnerships, as mandated by the CSD. Please feel free to send your comments at beyondwssd@un.org.

In the Partnerships Fair Today (Wednesday February 28)

Local Action - Global Impact: Recognizing the Contributions of Local Partners

Lead Discussants:

- ◆ Mr. Michael Kelly, World LP Gas Association, LP Gas Rural Challenge
- ◆ Andy Yager, UNDP, LP Gas Rural Challenge
- ◆ Hon. Mary Jane C. Ortega, Mayor of San Fernando, La Union, Philippines
- ◆ Griet Verbeke, Flemish Department of Environment, Nature and Energy, nrg4SD

10:00 am - 12:00 pm Conference Room 7