Stakeholder-Policy Cooperation in the Age of the SDGs:
What new approaches are required to be successful?

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Who we are.

- UNECE is one of five UN Regional Commissions.
- UNECE includes 56 member States in Europe, North America and Asia.

What we do as UNECE.

- UNECE sets norms and standard setting, e.g. for road safety.
- UNECE acts as a think-tank.
- UNECE has a convening function.
What we do as Sustainable Development and Gender Unit.
- Coordinating the SDG process in the region, including the organization of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region.

**REGIONAL FORUM**
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

- Multi-stakeholder conference for practical peer-learning
- Region’s official input to High-level Political Forum
- Save the date: 21-22 March 2019, Geneva
Introduction:

**Stakeholder-policy cooperation**

**What?**
- Groups representing key sectors of society work with official representatives and institutions on equal terms through policy dialogues and concrete collaborative activities.

**Why?**
- Increased legitimacy and ownership of decisions.
- Transformation processes require all actors.
- Increased likelihood of effective implementation.
Stocktaking:

The evolution of stakeholder cooperation

“One of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision making.”
Agenda 21, Preamble, Chapter 23.2.

Major Groups

- Women
- Children and Youth
- Indigenous Peoples
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Local Authorities
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Scientific and Technological Community
- Farmers
- Business and Industry
Post-2015 Process: Stakeholder engagement

Rio+20 Conference, 2012

Open Working Group, 2013-2014
- Member States
- Major Groups

Innovative, constituency-based system of representation
- Full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Synthesis Report by the UN Secretary-General
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

“All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan.” – 2030 Agenda

SDG 16.7 “Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.”

SDG 17.17 “Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships.”

The forum should “promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level.” (A/RES/67/290)

The forum benefits from “annual regional meetings, with the involvement of other relevant regional entities, major groups and other relevant stakeholders”. (A/RES/67/290)
The SDGs: Mechanisms for stakeholder engagement

Regional and global level
- Structured engagement mechanism through Major Groups.
- Comprehensive participatory opportunities for Major Groups at intergovernmental meetings (HLPF, RFSD).

Local and national level
- Modalities and mechanisms for stakeholder engagement vary from country to country.
- A rich diversity of stakeholders: governments, parliaments, civil society, private sector, academia etc.

Mechanisms for stakeholder engagement differ between local/ national and regional/ global level.
Potential barriers to stakeholder engagement.

- **Public**: Lack of SDG awareness
- **Stakeholders**: Restricted capacity to engage, Conflicting interests btw stakeholders
- **Governments**: Lack of institutional cultures towards engagement, Lack of channels for stakeholder involvement, Low levels of trust towards stakeholders
- **United Nations**: Restricted capacity to include all relevant stakeholders
A glimpse into the future: Multi-stakeholder cooperation

Where stakeholder engagement needs to be strengthened.

**National and local level**

- Stakeholders can play important role in increasing public awareness of SDGs.
- Stakeholders need to be included in the process of implementing, monitoring, and reviewing policies related to sustainable development, including VNRs.

**Regional and global level**

- Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in processes, e.g. private sector and academia.
- More opportunities for practical exchange between different stakeholders on solutions for SDG implementation.
A glimpse into the future: Multi-stakeholder cooperation

What needs to be done.
- Build capacity of civil society to be informed and engage.
- Build capacity within governments to engage with key national stakeholders, create institutional cultures and attitudes towards engagement and inclusion. Share successful mechanisms with other countries.
- Mobilize funds for stakeholder involvement.
- Build trust between stakeholders.

Where we want to be.
- Leave no one behind.
- “Whole-of-society approach”.
- Create a broad sense of ownership of 2030 Agenda.
Thank you!