

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Summary of 10th Session

Contents

General outline	1
Migration	1
<i>Means of implementation</i>	2
<i>Peaceful societies, rule of law and capable institutions</i>	2
Other issues.....	3
Way forward.....	4

Between the 31st of March and 4th of April 2014, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals convened its tenth formal session. This was the second of the group's meetings in its intergovernmental 'negotiation' phase.

General outline

The main objective of this session was to have a structured discussion on each of the Focus Areas contained in the co-chairs' paper. Governments were invited to outline their priority sub-area / targets under each Focus Area, and to think about how these could be clustered or merged. Generally, this was the approach that governments took to the discussion, with many interventions getting down to technical details and providing suggested wording for goals and targets, or supporting specific elements of the OWG Focus Areas document. That said, the co-chairs did note that, over the course of the week, the number of proposals had actually expanded, rather than reduced, and they therefore urged delegates to concentrate on narrowing the number of focus areas and targets to a more manageable number.

Migration

This session continued the trend that began during OWG9, with more and more governments highlighting migration in a number of different contexts. It now appears that migration has received more attention in the last two sessions than it did during the dedicated population dynamics discussion last year, signaling a significant and noticeable change in the level of traction migration is receiving amongst delegations. This session of the OWG in particular represented a major leap forward in terms of making space for migration in the new development agenda. Key references included:

- **Italy** (for Spain and Turkey) called for migration to be better integrated in the new agenda and argued that it should be considered in the areas of education and employment. This was also a view shared by Bangladesh, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador and Nigeria.
- **Slovenia, Montenegro and Benin (for LDCs)** stressed the importance the rights of migrant workers and displaced persons, including in the context of facilitating transition from informal to formal work.
- **Brazil** (for Nicaragua) called for the issues related to migration in outlined in FA 19 (Peace and non-violent societies) to be moved to FA11 dealing with employment. They also argued for retaining trafficking in persons as an issue in FA 19, but with expanded language to include a target on "ending child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and slavery".

- A number of countries singled out migrants as a group deserving of particular attention regarding access to health care (Greece, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of CARICOM).
- **China** (for Indonesia and Kazakhstan) noted the need to clarify the notion of “resilience” in the context of urbanization and migration.
- **Bangladesh** made statements in relation to a number of Focus Areas providing general support to the importance of including migration in the P2015 agenda.
- Regarding Focus area 1 on Poverty eradication, there was strong support for retaining a target on social protection for vulnerable groups, within which migrants are mentioned.
- **France** (for Germany and Switzerland) supported targets on promoting policies for “planned, well managed and legal migration, reducing the transaction costs of remittances and developing policies to mitigate brain drain” under FA12 (Promoting equality) in order to foster convergence between countries.
- **Pakistan** called for a target to increase by 10% qualified labour migration to developing and developed countries.

Means of implementation

- **Peru** (for Mexico) argued for eliminating targets under 18) d) and e) (related to remittances) because we should not see these funds as being guaranteed, as they are private funds and we cannot ‘decide’ to use these funds for development.
- **Benin** (for LDCs) argued for targets to reduce all costs within the migration process, including transaction cost of remittance flows and enhancing the development impact of migration. they noted that it would be important to create an enabling environment to maximise the benefits of migration, including by deepening short-term, circular migration, particularly for people from LDCs.
- **The Netherlands** (for Australia and the UK) noted that well-managed, safe and legal migration could be an important enabler of sustainable development.
- **France** (for Germany and Switzerland) noted that ensuring safe and regulated migration while encouraging its contribution to SD, reducing remittance costs and brain drain would be important aspects of means of implementation and global partnerships.
- **Italy** (for Spain and Turkey) fully supported the actions mentioned in FA18) d), especially reducing the transaction cost of remittances.
- **United States** (for Canada and Israel) stated that the international community needs to direct ODA more strategically, and to capture additional financial flows, including by reducing remittance costs, boosting savings, and addressing illicit flows.
- **Japan** noted that although ODA will continue to play an important role in development, private finance will also be key. They therefore supported element 18)d) of the focus area document (mobilizing additional financial resources from multiple sources such as remittances).
- **Egypt** promoted an approach that would create an international enabling environment for development, which would include elements such as recommitting to ODA; cutting illicit financial flows; and eliminating barriers to remittance flows
- **Sweden** stated that enhancing the benefits of migration is very important. There is a lot that can be done to support this, including promoting reducing remittance costs, portability of skills, combatting discrimination.
- **Lebanon** highlighted human capacity building as an important consideration, including through provision of education and training activities and support for research and development activities. In that context, the Lebanese delegate also noted that diaspora communities are important in this respect. We view that investing in the facilitation of transfer of skills, knowledge etc. will be essential, as will a target on reduction of remittance costs.

Peaceful societies, rule of law and capable institutions

- **Palau** (for SIDS) noted that SIDS are at the front lines of climate change, and that the potential for displacement is very real and must be addressed.
- **UK** (for Australia and the Netherlands) reiterated their previous call (from OWG9) for targets on reducing IDPs and refugees. They noted that data is already collected in these areas.
- **Mexico** (for Peru) argued for targets to protect in an effective way the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, irrespective of migration status, especially women. In that respect, the delegate referred to the Rio + 20 and HLD outcome documents. They highlighted the responsibilities of origin, transit and destination countries in avoiding approaches to migration that could enhance their vulnerability.
- **Slovenia** (for Montenegro) stated that migration is a complex issue that should be addressed holistically. In this context, they highlighted the need to address the root causes of forced displacement, reduce the number of asylum seekers and deal with the issue of people displaced by climate change and environmental shocks.
- **Thailand** (for Bhutan and Vietnam) highlighted the need for to strengthen fight against human trafficking at all levels and through a multi-stakeholder approach.
- **France** (for Germany and Switzerland) focused on targets to improve global governance and to ensure an enabling environment, including in the areas of trade, reducing illicit flows, ensuring the legality of international migration. they also noted that guaranteeing the rights of refugees, and promoting reintegration, rights of displaced people, and building resilience to shocks and natural disasters. These issues must also be placed under other goals to address drivers of conflict.
- **Argentina** (for Ecuador and Bolivia) noted that issues related to migration are important, and could also be addressed under other goals such as health and population dynamics, education, and means of implementation.
- **USA** (for Canada and Israel) noted that lack of legal identity is important in a number of contexts. It can make people more vulnerable to trafficking.
- **Guatemala, Denmark** (on behalf of Ireland and Norway), **Romania** (for Poland), highlighted the issue of trafficking.
- **Liechtenstein** argued for a target on reducing the number of IDPs and combatting trafficking.
- **Finland** supported targets on reducing IDPs and refugees, combatting trafficking, and promoting well managed migration.
- **Barbados** (for CARICOM) noted a link between crime and violence and migration [in a follow-up bilateral discussion, they suggested this related to the return and integration of deported criminals.] Reduce number of IDPS – could be addressed on goal of economic growth or sustainable cities and human settlements.
- **Italy** (for Spain and Turkey) expressed appreciation for the reference to migration policies under area 19)H). They noted that the interdependence of migration and development should also be stressed under this area.
- **Timor Leste** (for Sao Tome Principe) argued for a target to decrease the numbers of and find durable solutions for IDPs, including for all kinds of shocks including economic and environmental disturbances.
- **Sweden** noted the importance of strengthening rule of law and protecting the rights of vulnerable people including refugees and displaced persons.
- **Greece** promoted targets on combatting trafficking and on well managed migration. they highlighted the interlinkages with similar targets in FA12 (equality) and noted that return and reintegration would be important elements of migration related targets.

Other issues

- There are a number of issues that have received strong support and consensus over the past two sessions, including poverty eradication (which is likely to become SDG No 1 in the new framework), education, health, and gender equality and women's empowerment, all of which are more likely than not to be the subject of stand-alone goals. Nevertheless, some aspects of these issues are the subject of ongoing disagreement, for example sexual and reproductive health and rights.

- Less clear is how issues such as equality will be incorporated, with views differing in terms of whether it should be the subject of a stand-alone goal or as an issue that should be subsumed under poverty, or as a cross-cutting issue.
- It generally appears that employment will be incorporated under a goal on economic growth.
- There continues to be disagreement over whether means of implementation should be addressed only as a stand-alone goal, or as both a stand-alone goal and a mainstreamed issue. Developed countries generally appear to be skeptical about applying means of implementation under each goal, noting that the activities needed to give effect to the new agenda will depend on the issue, context, and national circumstances and capacities. Determining means of implementation at the global level may therefore be counterproductive. Nevertheless, many developing countries continue to call for this issue to be mainstreamed. There is also some concern regarding the extent to which the OWG should address means of implementation, with many delegations highlighting the importance of other processes, such as the Monterrey Consensus, Doha negotiations and Financing Committee in that context.
- Although there is broad agreement on the importance of the focus areas on peaceful societies / rule of law and governance, there is no agreement on whether these issues should actually be included in the SDG framework. Some governments want to see two separate goals on these areas, while others believe that issues related to peaceful societies should be addressed by other organs of the UN, such as the GA or Security Council, or that rule of law and governance deal with issues that are better addressed at the national level, rather than in a global development framework.

Way forward

- May – Revised document will be provided by co-chairs on Easter Monday. Consultation based on revised Focus Area document. Want to begin to tease out in real terms the content of goals and targets. Statisticians will be invited to this meeting.
- June – co-chairs will produce their last revised document. Consultations to produce a refined set of SDGs and targets. Only editorial ‘tweaks’ to be addressed at this point. No line by line negotiations.
- July – agreement and adoption of SDGs and targets.
- August – SDG document to go to PGA / SG.