



**Dialogue of the Executive Secretaries of the
Regional Commissions with the UN General Assembly Second Committee**

General Assembly seventy-first session

Friday, 28 October 2016, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

CR-2, UN Headquarters, New York

One Year of SDGs: Where the Regions Are

Concept Note

Objective

To take stock of the starting positions in the regions at the first year of the SDGs in selected key focus areas and share experiences on national and regional efforts to move forward with effective implementation and follow up and review of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including the SDGs.

Expected outcomes

Member States and other stakeholders will have a better appreciation at the first year of the SDGs of the starting positions, status of national and regional efforts, gaps and challenges of the 2030 Agenda implementation, follow-up and review at national and regional levels, in selected focus areas. The national and regional efforts actively deployed by the Regional Commissions (RCs) and their partners to address these gaps and challenges will be highlighted. The event will promote interregional peer learning by sharing experiences from the regions, including on national and regional efforts and partnerships among member States, regional and subregional organisations and other stakeholders, to deliver on the transformative and ambitious agenda.

Focus areas

- (1) Institutional arrangements to ensure integration and promote inter-sectoral coordination, leverages multi-disciplinary synergies and enhances policy coherence
- (2) Statistical capacity and efforts to develop effective approaches to measuring progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including building coordinated approaches to data collection and analysis
- (3) Adaptation and alignment with national and regional contexts and development strategies of Member States
- (4) Financing in support of 2030 Agenda, resource challenges and innovative financing
- (5) Partnerships, engaging diverse stakeholders, thematic and regional coalitions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Background

Although the era of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reached its end in 2015, a number of the MDGs fell short of completion. A comprehensive analysis of the MDGs implementation conducted at both regional and global levels¹ demonstrated that although significant achievements have been made on many of the MDG targets worldwide, progress has been uneven across regions and countries. The MDGs agenda remains “an unfinished business”.

In comparison with the MDGs, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents a more robust and comprehensive approach to addressing challenges of sustainable development. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) allow for a broader consideration of the drivers of progress for particular goals and define spaces for wider policy intervention and the formulation of appropriate strategies. The 2030 Agenda includes a strong component on the follow-up and review, which is a prerequisite for more effective implementation. It recognizes the significance of the regional dimension of development and the important role of regional organizations and platform in the implementation, follow up and review.

The UN Regional Commissions² (RCs) provide an important inclusive platform to support their member States to translate global commitments into regional transformative strategies and agendas by driving the integration and inclusivity considerations in national policies, programmes and budgets, and by piloting the 2030 Agenda implementation. The functional structures of the RCs are well-suited to provide countries with integrated policy advice for sustainable development and enhance coherent, effective and efficient system-wide support. The Statistical Committees of the RCs offer a holistic institutional framework to steer the regional statistical agenda. The RCs continue also to provide analyses and policy advice for Member States on alternative and innovative sources of financing for the 2030 Agenda implementation; and promote partnership with other parts of the United Nations and other stakeholders.

As recognised in the 2030 Agenda, the RCs have a key role both in terms of implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the regional level given their universal coverage, convening power, intergovernmental nature and strength, and broad-based cross-sectoral mandate and expertise. They already convene the Regional Fora on Sustainable Development (RFSDs) in their respective regions,

¹ UN Millennium Development Goals Report (2015), http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/; ECA.2016. MDG Report 2015 - Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals, <http://www.unece.org/publications/mdg-report-2015-assessing-progress-africa-toward-millennium-development-goals>; ESCAP.2015. Making it Happen in Technology, Finance and Statistics for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, <http://www.unescap.org/resources/making-it-happen-technology-finance-and-statistics-sustainable-development-asia-and>; ESCWA. 2016. Arab Sustainable Development Report, <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/arab-sustainable-development-report-2015>; ECLAC. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: an opportunity for Latin America and Caribbean, <http://www.cepal.org/en/node/37170>; UNECE. 2016. Looking Back, Leaping Forward Moving from MDGs to SDGs in Europe and Central Asia, <http://www.unece.org:8080/index.php?id=43928>.

² Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC); Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP); Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESWA)



which are inclusive platforms involving member States, regional and international organisations and multiple stakeholders from civil society, private sector, local level and academia. They provide critical bridge in supporting implementation and follow up on the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs, between the national and global levels, and valuable platforms for peer learning, identifying trends and gaps, in addition to addressing and aligning with regional priorities and agendas.

Modality and participation

The Chair of the General Assembly Second Committee will deliver opening remarks. The Executive Secretaries of the five UN Regional Commissions will make presentations. Interactive rounds of discussions with the floor will follow.