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# VNR LABS

## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

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VNR Lab 11

**Building Back Better for All: Anchoring the 2030 Agenda in national development plans and strategies**

**13 July, 13:00 – 14:00 (EST)**

The COVID-19 crisis has had far reaching impacts on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable and the Sustainable Development Goals, undermining decades of development efforts. Even before the pandemic, the world was not on track to achieve the SDGs, particularly the poorest countries who already were grappling with lack of resources, significant development challenges, and the effects multiple global crises and shocks. In 2020, extreme poverty rose, with an additional 119 to 124 million people pushed back into poverty.<sup>1</sup> Further, 255 million full-time jobs were lost, and an additional 101 million children and youth fell below the minimum reading proficiency level, wiping out the education gains achieved over the last two decades. These reversals have exacerbated existing inequalities within and among countries. The slowdown associated with COVID-19 has also done little to slow the climate and biodiversity crises. Further, the COVID-19 crisis caused the worst recession in 90 years, dealing a heavy blow to the ability of countries and the international community to mobilize the means of implementation required to support SDG transformation. Except for the increase in foreign aid in 2020, all other major flows of income for developing countries – trade, foreign direct investment and remittances declined because of the pandemic. Further, domestic resources remain under increased pressure.<sup>2</sup>

Although progress in these areas has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, lack of progress is not due to the COVID-19 pandemic alone, but are the result of long standing fragilities, rising inequalities and social exclusion that countries have failed to adequately address. Hence, the risks of inaction have now been laid bare by the pandemic. More importantly, the pandemic and the imperative to get back on track has reignited interest in development planning, including scenario planning that supports decision making by going beyond immediate responses to challenges such as the COVID-19 crisis. There is greater interest in development planning that captures broader, longer-term global, regional and national trends that influence development strategies and planning scenarios that have a bearing on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. To build back better for all, countries should accelerate efforts to fully integrate the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs into national policy frameworks, including at the sub-national level. Interest in has been Integrating the 2030 Agenda into national and sub-national policy frameworks will advance urgency and ambition, mobilize all stakeholders to embrace the SDGs, and supercharge ideas into solutions that accelerate SDG achievements in the remaining 9 years. Integrating the 2030 Agenda into national plans and strategies also has the added advantage of ensuring the systematic monitoring

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<sup>1</sup> [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27610SG\\_SDG\\_Progress\\_report\\_2021.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27610SG_SDG_Progress_report_2021.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/newsroom/covid-19-spending-helped-to-lift-foreign-aid-to-an-all-time-high-in-2020-but-more-effort-needed.htm>

and reporting on SDGs and other national development priorities. The 2019 SDG Summit called on countries to “mainstream the 2030 Agenda into our national planning instruments, policies, strategies and financial frameworks”. The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) and other sources provide examples of approaches taken by countries to integrate the 2030 agenda into national plans and strategies. Countries are also integrating regional and continental agendas into their plans, for instance the 2063 Agenda of the African Union.

The integrated and interlinked nature of the SDGs needs to inform and guide their mainstreaming into national planning frameworks. The transformational vision of the 2030 Agenda depends on such an integrated approach, which involves identifying possible synergies and trade-offs between SDGs and their associated targets as well as developing context specific integrated approaches to ensure effective implementation.

This lab will share experiences and lessons learned by countries with the integration and mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda, including approaches that account for the interlinkages between the SDGs. It will explore approaches to integration that go beyond alignment and the application of tools and models to facilitate the understanding of interlinkages.

#### **Moderator**

- Mr. Amson Sibanda, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, DESA

#### **Presenters**

Four speakers will explore progress made and challenges encountered with the integration into national plans of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

*The experience of integrating the SDGs into development planning in Ecuador*, Mr. Jairon Merchán Haz, National Secretary of Planning, Ecuador

*The German Sustainable Development Strategy*, Dr Stefan Bauernfeind, Head of Division, Sustainable Development, Federal Chancellery, Germany

*Comoros – development planning in SIDS context*, Mr. Abdourazak Ibrahim, Director General of Planning, Comoros

*Integration of SDGs into NDPs – data from the GPEDC*, Ms. Rebekah Chew, Policy Specialist – Development Effectiveness, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP

#### **Q&A**

- The presentations will be followed by an interactive discussion with the participants.

#### **Guiding questions**

- How can VNRs and national development planning processes be mutually supportive?

- How have development plans and strategies been adapted to address the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery?
- What has been the experience with tools and engagement processes for assessing interlinkages between the SDGs?
- What institutional changes have helped contribute to the integration of the SDGs?
- How can plans and strategies help make countries more resilient to global crises and shocks such as COVID-19?

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/r/hQVeyVhn97>