Session 2: Shaping the world for 2030: From vision to transformative action

26 June 2015, 10.45 am – 1.00 pm

This is a watershed year for poverty eradication and sustainable development. It is the target year for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs rallied the world around a common 15-year agenda to tackle poverty and other social ills. It is also the year when the Member States of the United Nations will agree on the blueprint for sustainable development for the next 15 years when they gather at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July, at the UN summit on the post 2015 development agenda in September, and at the Conference of Parties on climate change in December.

It is clear that the MDGs agenda is not completed. According to the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014* the world still has 1.2 billion people living their lives in extreme poverty. In 2012, a quarter of all children under the age of five years were estimated to be stunted due to malnutrition. Global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) have continued their upward trend; emissions in 2011 were almost 50 per cent above their 1990 level. On average 13 million hectares of forest are lost every year, many species are being driven closer to extinction and water resources are becoming scarcer – just to name some challenges the world faces.

The Rio+20 Conference in June 2012 launched an unprecedented open and inclusive intergovernmental process to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs). In July 2014 a General Assembly Open Working Group agreed by acclamation on a set of 17 proposed universally applicable Sustainable Development Goals[1]. While building on the foundation of the MDGs, the SDGs capture a wider range of development issues. They aim at tackling key systemic barriers to sustainable development such as inequality, unsustainable consumption patterns, inadequate infrastructure and lack of decent jobs. The environmental dimension of sustainable development is fleshed out in goals on oceans and marine resources and on ecosystems and biodiversity, thus bringing core issues of the global commons into the goal and target framework. The importance of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies is also addressed. Finally, SDGs also set out the basis for strengthened means of implementation and a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development.

The SDGs and their associated targets have been incorporated into the zero-draft[2] of the outcome document of the September summit on the post-2015 development agenda. The draft outcome, which is currently being negotiated, would also include a political declaration, means of implementation and a follow-up and review framework.

The availability of adequate means of implementation will determine whether the new agenda's promise of transformation can be translated into reality. The Addis Ababa Conference will play an important role in this regard. A discussion note prepared for the World Bank/IMF Spring meeting 2015, *From Billions to Trillions: Transforming Development Finance*, points out that to meet the investment needs of the SDGs, the global community needs to move the discussion from "Billions" in ODA to "Trillions" in investments of all kinds: public and private, national and global, in both capital and capacity. Without these resources the blueprint cannot be translated into action.

Possible questions for discussion:

1. How well have the negotiation processes so far captured the ambition level needed for global sustainable development? How can we resolve outstanding issues?
2. What are the key issues for success when turning the global vision into transformative action?
3. How can we ensure that the HLPF supports the implementation of the new agenda in all countries?

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[1] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html

[2] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7261Post-2015%20Summit%20-%202%20June%202015.pdf