



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under the auspices of ECOSOC

Session 10 a - “Reaching out to the world – Communicating the Agenda”

1 July 2015, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

United Nations Member States are currently negotiating a transformative 15-year agenda for sustainable development that will aim to end poverty, promote prosperity and well-being for all, protect the environment and address climate change. The agenda will be adopted at a summit in September 2015. It will have a set of sustainable development goals (SDG) at its core. Those will apply all countries, developed and developing.

The scope and ambition of this post-2015 development agenda means that it can only succeed if it is understood and actively supported by governments at all levels as well as by members of parliament, international organisations, civil society organisations, the private sector, media, other actors and societies at large. Communicating the agenda will therefore be critical. It should ensure that the agenda inspires and gives hope to people from all walks of life and cultures in all countries. It must engage all actors and harness creativity and innovation.

The political declaration that will be part of the post-2015 development agenda¹ is seen as an important tool for communicating the agenda. Crafting an inspiring and clear narrative will be important. Its core values and principles should be transferable into local and national realities of people around the globe. The determination to “leave no one behind” is a motto of the agenda. It also implies that communication strategies should aim to reach all people. Communication is thus required at the global, regional, national and local levels. A broad engagement and intense public consultation has characterized the elaboration of the new agenda. This inclusiveness and outreach should also accompany implementation.

Lessons learned from communicating the MDGs will need to be considered. New communication opportunities result from technological developments, including the unprecedented connectivity and ability to reach individuals. With over 7 billion cell phone subscriptions globally and 3.3 billion people connected to the internet², the capacity to interact and share information with the world has grown tremendously. At the same time the billions of people who remain offline and those who lack the means to participate in the global conversation must also be included.

Possible questions for discussion:

- How can we communicate the post-2015 development agenda so that it is clear to the peoples of the world and inspires and engages them? What are the key challenges to do so and how can we address them?
- What lessons can be drawn from communicating the MDGs for communicating the SDGs? What can be learned from communication efforts in other areas?
- What innovative tools and new ways of communicating can be harnessed to convey the new agenda, keeping in mind the digital divide and other barriers?

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7261Post-2015%20Summit%20-%20202%20June%202015.pdf>

² http://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press_releases/2015/17.aspx