

HLPF 2018 Highlights: Tuesday, 10 July 2018

HLPF 2018 continued on Tuesday at UN Headquarters in New York. In the morning, thematic reviews were held on: transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies – building resilience; and advancing science, technology and innovation (STI) for the SDGs. In the afternoon, the review of SDG implementation continued, with a session on SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy).

Transformation Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies – Building Resilience

Inga Rhonda King, ECOSOC Vice-President, chaired this session. Moderator Emily Wilkinson, Overseas Development Institute, noted that disasters and crises often have their roots in economic models or urban development patterns.

Panelist Isabelle Durant, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), highlighted better infrastructure, debt forgiveness, and technology advances as paths to improve the resilience of vulnerable countries.

Panelist Dereje Wordofa, UN Population Fund, identified investments in educating the young; tackling gender-based violence; strengthening health systems; and understanding population data as building blocks for resilience.

Panelist Jeb Brugmann, 100 Resilient Cities, noted that long-term structural issues complicate Puerto Rico's recovery efforts.

Panelist David Smith, University of the West Indies, underlined investments in human capital to address the climate-related challenges specific to small island developing States.

Lead discussant Vuk Žugić, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, proposed looking at resilience through the lens of the 2030 Agenda's "Five Ps" – people, prosperity, planet, peace and partnerships.

Lead discussant Marikris de Guzman, Asia Disaster Risk Reduction Youth Network, shared insights from the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including the need to move past big infrastructure and technological solutions to focus on people-centered policies.

From the floor, the EU described its approach to resilience building, including tailor-made approaches involving all levels of government, and focused on transformation. INDONESIA noted challenges in building synergies and coherence between national and sub-national responses. The PHILIPPINES said people-centered DRR measures are integrated into the national development plan given that disasters cost the country US\$3.8 billion annually. SOUTH AFRICA called for synergies with the loss and damage and adaptation provisions of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

In response, Durant said synergies between stakeholder efforts should be in place before disasters strike. Wordofa highlighted efforts in Indonesia to use data for better emergency preparedness

and response. Brugmann described decentralization efforts through local capacity building but noted an important role for national governments in identifying long-term solutions. Smith highlighted work on downscaling global models on climate impacts to local levels.

CHILE reported increased disaster risks in recent years, compounded by social risks such as inequality, and loss of jobs. KENYA highlighted national systems for local and national drought contingency planning, including a web-based early warning system for drought. SWITZERLAND noted global losses of US\$340 billion due to disasters in 2015, saying every dollar invested in DRR saves US\$5. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES called for inclusive development based on high-quality data. NGOs called for donor investments in strengthening resilience, the promotion of social cohesion, and inclusive social safety nets.

MALI, with MAURITANIA, noted challenges in mobilizing resources to deal with disasters. WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME described coordination efforts across UN agencies. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES called for the US\$1.4 trillion spent on the armament industry annually to be diverted to the SDGs. HONDURAS called for strengthened local governance and integrated efforts to build resilience. IRAN underlined the pivotal role of the UN system in helping developing countries access means of implementation.

In conclusion, Durant underlined the role of debt suspension and Wordofa noted the role of human rights in resilience building.

Advancing Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs

ECOSOC Vice-President Inga Rhonda King chaired this session.

Toshiya Hoshino, Co-Chair of the STI Forum, reported on the third annual meeting of the Forum, highlighting: engaging youth in sustainable consumption and production (SCP); the regulation of agriculture; and the critical role of roadmaps as tracking tools for governments.

STI Forum Co-Chair Juan Sandoval-Mendiolea noted that rapid technological change, of paramount importance for the SDGs, is now on the UN General Assembly agenda. He called for more ethical considerations in the deployment of technologies.

Moderator Norma Munguía Aldaraca, Foreign Affairs Ministry, Mexico, called for efforts to address the inequalities brought about by rapid technological change, and invited the STI Forum to play a role in drafting public policy.

Panelist Endah Murniningtyas, Co-Chair of the group of scientists for the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), described four main STI issues to be explored in the 2019 GSDR: the role of STI in understanding the complexity of SDGs, interlinkages and trade-offs; the need to improve the link between science and policy; science's contribution to SDG monitoring; and increasing the interdisciplinarity of science for sustainable development.

Panelist Nebojša Nakićenović, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, said three billion people have been left behind by the "fourth industrial revolution," but STI policies could also

make the transformation towards inclusive and equitable societies affordable and effective. He highlighted that STIs can have an important role in human capacity building, education, and SCP.

Panelist Carsten Fink, World Intellectual Property Organization, introduced the World Innovation Index, with 80 indicators that include the political environment, education, and infrastructure.

Lead discussant Ernest Foli, Forestry Research Institute, Ghana, said an African regional multi-stakeholder workshop on the role of STI in implementing the SDGs in Africa highlighted that Africa's transformation will come from within, and investments in infrastructure, education, and diversifying people's skills need to be increased.

In the discussion, INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION underscored the need to use STI to reach vulnerable groups. WOMEN said STI needs to be gender-sensitive and gender-responsive. CHILDREN AND YOUTH called for policies that address the privatization of knowledge and the socialization of costs. KENYA highlighted its national programmes for increasing digital literacy. The EU said the European Commission will increase its budget for science and innovation for 2021-2027 to €100 billion. SOUTH AFRICA emphasized its use of STI to increase social inclusion. NORWAY said its delegation includes representatives of Norway's scientific community. ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK announced the launch of a US\$500 million fund called "Transform" for STI for small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. BENIN announced the creation of an agency mandated to create a national innovation programme. FINLAND said women need to increasingly participate in STI development. TURKEY noted the launch of the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY highlighted the role of nuclear science and technology in development.

Responding, Nakićenović said STI enables smaller, decentralized systems that can contribute to rural development. Fink noted that women do not contribute as much as they should and could to innovation, due to systemic disincentives embedded in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Murniningtyas highlighted the role of social science in technological innovation.

Review of SDG Implementation

ECOSOC President Marie Chatardová chaired this session, which reviewed progress on SDG 7.

Heather Page, UN DESA, provided a statistical snapshot of progress on SDG 7, saying the number of people without electricity dipped below the "symbolic threshold" of 1 billion.

Moderator Adnan Amin, International Renewable Energy Agency, outlined positive developments in renewable energies since 2015, including that: China, India, and Saudi Arabia have committed to install hundreds of gigawatts of renewable energy; and declining costs favor the business case for renewables.

Panelist Siri Jirapongphan, Minister of Energy, Thailand, described policies that have enabled Thailand to ensure near universal access to energy.

Panelist Laurence Tubiana, European Climate Foundation, emphasized the centrality of clean transport and energy for industry.

Sheila Oparaocha, ENERGIA, called for gender action on: energy policies; roles in utilities; investment and entrepreneurship; and capacity building.

Ricardo Puliti, World Bank Group, highlighted the role of the private sector, policy, regulatory reform, and financial instruments to address private sector risk.

Lead discussant Hans Olav Ibrekk, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, emphasized gender and equity considerations related to SDG 7, and proposed an inter-governmental oversight mechanism for the Goal.

Lead discussant Cheng Mengrong, Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization, described China's global energy interconnection strategy to achieve efficiencies in energy transmission worldwide, linking clean energy bases to power loads.

Joan Carling, TEBTEBBA Foundation, called for new capacity in the private sector to address local needs and take into account the human rights of local communities.

Bangladesh, for LDCs, called for additional official development assistance, access to modern technologies, and investment to help LDCs achieve universal access to energy by 2030. KENYA said it increased national access to energy from 27% in 2013 to 71% in 2017. ISRAEL announced the installation of solar roofs on private and public buildings, and a ban on diesel and gas vehicles by 2030. ALGERIA announced the creation of jobs in renewables. GERMANY called for reducing the carbon intensity of economies through carbon pricing. SWITZERLAND described a national carbon tax to reduce the energy intensity of its construction sector. SWEDEN reiterated urgent calls for eliminating fossil fuel subsidies.

IRELAND introduced its Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme that highlights the links between energy efficiency and human health. CHILDREN AND YOUTH called for ensuring decent job opportunities and skills trainings in the renewables sector. UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME called for capitalizing on the synergies between SDG 7 and other SDGs. GUATEMALA noted the challenge posed by the dependence on fuel wood in rural areas, resulting in deforestation. SAUDI ARABIA said interventions on phasing out fossil fuel subsidies are not realistic and described a national strategy that considers renewables in the context of economic diversification. DENMARK invited reflection on how the UN can contribute to catalyzing investments in renewables. TOGO called for technology transfer to help the transition to clean energy. WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS called for protection of workers affected by the transition to renewables.

AUSTRIA presented a national climate and energy strategy to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 100% by 2030. INDONESIA presented national measures to achieve 100% electrification by 2020. MOROCCO described a national strategy to achieve energy consumption savings of 20% by 2030. REPUBLIC OF KOREA highlighted the role of regional cooperation in achieving SDG 7. UN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION highlighted the need for decarbonization and denuclearization. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO noted that only 19% of its population has access to energy and announced the opening of the energy sector to public and private investment in electrification. CAMEROON called for a holistic approach that allows security, development, and human rights to be pursued together. JAMAICA announced programmes for enhancing energy efficiency in the transport sector. WOMEN stressed the need for women and local communities to own their energy systems. UNCTAD highlighted the benefits of decentralized energy sources.

In response, Jirapongphan announced Thailand's plans to increase the share of renewables in its energy mix from 14% to 30% by 2036. Tubiana called for focus on understanding the social dimension of universal energy access. Puliti highlighted the need for integration, including through geo-spatial technologies. Amin noted that investment trends signaled the end of coal.

In the Corridors

Goals of a different kind distracted some HLPF participants in the corridors on Tuesday afternoon, as France faced Belgium in the World Cup semi-final on a screen in the Vienna Café. Meanwhile, in the conference room, delegates lauded new energy technologies that signal a slow defeat of the fossil fuel behemoth. At the same time, they worried about the fall-outs of rapid and disruptive technological change on SDGs and targets, and the emerging impacts of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, nanotechnology, and blockchain. The silos of STI and SDG 7 crossed paths briefly, highlighting once again humanity's conflicted relationship with technology. As some delegates noted, to avoid "own goals" of a technological kind in the future, equity, accountability, and accessibility will have to be the drivers of technological design.