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ECLAC

ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN

FOCUS

Magazine of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)



ABOUT ECLAC/CDCC

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established in 1948 to support Latin American governments in the economic and social development of that region. Subsequently, in 1966, the Commission (ECLA, at that time) established the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain to serve all countries of the insular Caribbean, as well as Belize, Guyana and Suriname, making it the largest United Nations body in the subregion.

At its sixteenth session in 1975, the Commission agreed to create the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body, which would function within the ECLA structure to promote development cooperation among Caribbean countries. Secretariat services to the CDCC would be provided by the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean. Nine years later, the Commission's widened role was officially acknowledged when the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) modified its title to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Key Areas of Activity

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat) functions as a subregional think-tank and facilitates increased contact and cooperation among its membership. Complementing the ECLAC/CDCC work programme framework, are the broader directives issued by the United Nations General Assembly when in session, which constitute the Organisation's mandate. At present, the overarching articulation of this mandate is the Millennium Declaration, which outlines the Millennium Development Goals.

Towards meeting these objectives, the Secretariat conducts research; provides technical advice to governments, upon request; organizes intergovernmental and expert group meetings; helps to formulate and articulate a regional perspective within global forums; and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels.

Areas of specialization include trade, statistics, social development, science and technology, and sustainable development, while actual operational activities extend to economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, assessment of the socio-economic impacts of natural disasters, climate change, data collection and analysis, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean also functions as the Secretariat for coordinating the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The scope of ECLAC/CDCC activities is documented in the wide range of publications produced by the subregional headquarters in Port of Spain.

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EDITORIAL TEAM:

Director	Diane Quarless, ECLAC
Editor	Alexander Voccia, ECLAC
Copy Editor	Denise Balgobin, ECLAC
Coordinator	Abdullahi Abdulkadri, ECLAC
Design	Blaine Marciano, ECLAC

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Produced by ECLAC

CONTACT INFORMATION

ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
PO Box 1113, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Tel: (868) 224-8000
E-mail: spou-pos@eclac.org Website: www.eclac.org/portofspain

**DIRECTOR'S DESK:**

IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN THE CARIBBEAN

Caribbean countries are now fully and enthusiastically committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is considerable evidence of the dedication with which Member States are pursuing the SDGs. The subregion, in general, is better-placed to implement the global agenda today than it was a year ago.

In an effort to assist the Caribbean in jump-starting its implementation of the SDGs, ECLAC Caribbean organized a Symposium on mainstreaming the SDGs in national development planning. Twenty-two Member States and Associate Member Countries of ECLAC Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) participated in the symposium held in Kingston, Jamaica, in February 2017. This meeting provided a subregional platform for member States to identify obstacles to the effective implementation of the SDGs at the national level. These were mainly related to the lack of institutional frameworks for national ownership of the global agenda, limited capacity for planning and implementing comprehensive and integrated national development plans, and a dearth of data to inform sustainable national development. ECLAC and its international development partners are working assiduously to address such challenges to implementation of the SDGs in the Caribbean.

It is already established that national ownership is critical to the successful implementation of the SDGs, and that mainstreaming the SDGs in national development plans is a sine qua non for an integrated approach to development planning, that aligns the global agenda with national development priorities. However, the fact that most Caribbean countries do not have a current long-term national development plan, represents a challenge for sustainable development planning in these small open economies. Cognizant of this reality, ECLAC is focusing attention on providing technical assistance to Caribbean countries in setting

up national institutional arrangements for implementing the SDGs in a coherent, integrated and coordinated manner that ensures national ownership. This was the principle objective of ECLAC's workshop to accelerate SDG implementation in the Caribbean, held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in May 2017. ECLAC is also pursuing a German Development Corporation (GIZ) funded project on planning for the implementation of Agenda 2030 for sustainable development with six Caribbean country beneficiaries. The overarching objective of this project is to ensure that Caribbean countries incorporate the SDGs into their planning, management and monitoring processes according to national priorities.

We are also supporting the United Nations Development Programme-led Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) missions in the Caribbean, through the assessment of the national statistical systems and their capacities to produce data to support SDG implementation and monitoring. The insufficiency of data identified as an obstacle to SDG implementation also presents a particularly severe challenge to National Statistical Offices in the Caribbean, in monitoring and reporting on progress towards the achievement of SDG targets and goals. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, in collaboration with the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Unit of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ECLAC, has been leading an initiative to define a minimum core set of SDG indicators that Caribbean countries should aim to produce. Once finalized, this core set should provide

the basis for targeted capacity-building activities in the area of data production and dissemination for sustainable development in the subregion.

These ongoing activities, and others due to be implemented starting in 2018, are designed to facilitate and accelerate the pace of implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean, and there are already signs of progress in this regard. Belize, the first Caribbean country to do so, presented its Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations General Assembly in July this year. The Bahamas and Jamaica have signed on to present their VNRs in 2018. All three have essentially completed the drafting of their respective national development plans and are actively giving consideration to operationalizing them. Aruba has constituted its SDG Commission under the Office of the Prime Minister to oversee SDG implementation in that country; Saint Lucia is finalizing the establishment of its SDG National Coordinating Committee, and many other countries are presently considering the institutional arrangement most suitable for their circumstances. Also encouraging is the number of countries with ongoing processes towards finalizing or drafting a comprehensive national development plan. Trinidad and Tobago is in the process of finalizing its Vision 2030; Guyana is currently drafting its Green State Development Strategy, and Anguilla, Grenada and Sint Maarten are at various stages of initiating the drafting of their national development plan.

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THE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Abdullahi Abdulkadri and Candice Gonzales*

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, now serves as the central rallying point for nations in charting their sustainable development path.

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes national ownership in its recognition of the sovereignty of each State and the State's primary role in the economic and social development of the country. To that end, Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review of the progress made in implementing the SDGs and the associated targets.

The follow-up and review process of the SDGs occurs at the global, regional, national and subnational levels. At all levels, the process is country-led and country-driven, and provides an opportunity for taking stock in relation to the progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and towards the achievement of the SDGs.

THE HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

At the global level, the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the main platform for follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The HLPF meets in a four-year cycle under the auspices of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Within each cycle, annual thematic meetings are held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations to review specific aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

including, conducting an in-depth review of the progress made on specific SDGs. The HLPF is informed by an annual progress report by the UN Secretary-General on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Sustainable Development Report (GRSD) prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the UN.

The 2016 meeting of the HLPF with the theme "Ensuring that no one is left behind" was the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and offered an opportunity for cross-cutting review of the implementation of the SDGs. For the remaining three years of the current cycle, the following themes have been chosen and the listed SDGs slated for review:

2017
 Theme: Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world
 Goals: 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14

2018
 Theme: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies
 Goals: 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15.

2019
 Theme: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality
 Goals: 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16.

Goal 17 on the means of implementation will be reviewed every year.

For the 2017 HLPF meeting, thematic reviews of SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14 were prepared by the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA) of the United Nations with input from the entities of the UN system and other relevant international organizations. The reviews provided a global perspective on the status of progress in the implementation of each SDG, including detailed analysis of the interlinkages of the Goals and factors that contribute to, or define a particular Goal, the stage of implementation or attainment of specific targets, and the challenges to their implementation. They also included analysis of the implications for policy, as well as, recommendations for accelerating progress towards achievement of the Goals. In addition to the Secretary-General's report and the GRSD, these background documents provided the basis for discussing the progress made in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world during the July 2017 meeting.

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS (VNRs)

Apart from the global review of the SDGs, a major part of the annual meeting of the HLPF is the presentation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) conducted by member States.

These VNRs serve to facilitate peer-learning by nations and include sharing of experiences on successes,

* Abdullahi Abdulkadri is Coordinator and Candice Gonzales is Research Assistant in the Statistics and Social Development Unit of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in order to help accelerate the implementation of the Agenda globally.

Twenty-two countries presented their VNRs to the HLPF in 2016 and another 43 countries, including Belize – the only Caribbean country to have prepared a voluntary national review to date, presented their VNRs to the HLPF in 2017. For the 2018 review, The Bahamas and Jamaica will join 46 other countries in presenting their VNRs.

The VNRs do not follow a strict format but UN Resolution A/RES/70/1¹ provides some guiding principles for the follow-up and review processes at all levels. These principles, as stated in paragraph 74 of the Resolution, stipulate that:

(a) They will be voluntary and country-led, will take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and will respect policy space and priorities. As national ownership is key to achieving sustainable development, the outcome from national-level processes will be the foundation for reviews at the regional and global levels, given that the global review will be primarily based on national official data sources.

(b) They will track progress in implementing the universal Goals and targets, including the means of implementation, in all countries in a manner which respects their universal, integrated and interrelated nature and the three dimensions of sustainable development.

(c) They will maintain a longer-term orientation, identify achievements, challenges, gaps and critical success factors and support countries in making informed policy choices. They will

help to mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, support the identification of solutions and best practices and promote the coordination and effectiveness of the international development system.

(d) They will be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders.

(e) They will be people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.

(f) They will build on existing platforms and processes, where these exist, avoid duplication and respond to national circumstances, capacities, needs and priorities. They will evolve over time, taking into account emerging issues and the development of new methodologies, and will minimize the reporting burden on national administrations.

(g) They will be rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations and data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

(h) They will require enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries, including the strengthening of national data systems and evaluation programmes, particularly in African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and middle-income countries.

(i) They will benefit from the active support of the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions.

In addition, while non-binding on member States, guidelines for a voluntary common reporting structure for the VNRs have been proposed.² The guidelines suggest the following format for the report:

1. Opening statement
2. Summary
3. Introduction
4. Methodology and process for preparation of the review
5. Policy and enabling environment
 - (a) Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals
 - (b) Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks
 - (c) Integration of the three dimensions
 - (d) Goals and targets
 - (e) Thematic analysis
 - (f) Institutional mechanisms
6. Means of implementation
7. Next steps
8. Statistical annex
9. Conclusion

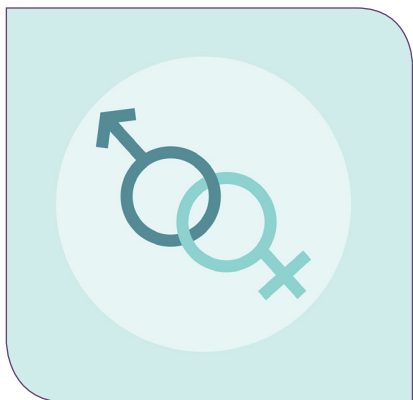
By and large, the VNRs that have been presented thus far to the HLPF center on how countries have implemented the SDGs in the national context, including SDG mainstreaming, SDG awareness raising, stakeholder engagement, establishment of an institutional framework for SDG implementation, and resource mobilization for the implementation of the SDGs. Moreover, the reviews have also highlighted the importance of following up and monitoring the implementation of the SDGs, and underscored the data challenges that are anticipated to accompany the implementation of the global SDG indicators framework.³

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¹ Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Paragraph 84 http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

² See annex to the Secretary-General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, A/70/684

³ UN DESA, 2016 Synthesis of Voluntary National Reviews, Division of Sustainable Development.



ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH EQUALITY IN THE CARIBBEAN: THE CRITICAL ROLE OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Lydia Rosa Gény*

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls play a central role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in the achievement of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated 169 targets.

At the recently concluded session of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in July 2017, it was emphasized that “gender equality and the empowerment of women was not merely a goal (SDG 5), but a prerequisite for prosperous societies and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”¹. *In fact, the 2030 Agenda is designed to be people-centred, universal and transformative, with integrated and indivisible goals and targets, balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development- the economic, social and environmental.*² With such an ambitious scope, one might ask: how can this new Agenda really have an impact on the lives of people? The implementation of the Agenda definitely requires a paradigm shift in terms of mindset, strategic vision and the *modus operandi* for policy and decision making.

The 2030 Agenda asserts that “the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities”³, thereby placing emphasis on achieving gender equality as both an objective in and a solution to effectively achieving sustainable development.

Since the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals in the subregion, some progress has been made in legal and normative frameworks with the adoption of laws targeting women, and the development of national gender policies in a few countries.⁴ There has also been an increase in the representation of women in leadership positions in governments. Notwithstanding these positive trends, women still face other challenges which continue to constrain their ability to fully enjoy the entire spectrum of human rights, hindering their ability to fully contribute to national development.⁵

There are continuing obstacles to Caribbean women’s full economic autonomy and participation in productive and paid activities. Significant disparities exist between educational achievement and employment, as evidenced by the higher unemployment rates for women despite their higher educational achievements, in addition to gender wage gaps in favour of males. Women continue to have limited access to and control over productive resources, including lower levels of business ownership.

Gender occupational stereotypes and discriminatory practices in the labour market as well as sexual division of labour, which reinforces unequal responsibilities for unpaid domestic and care-related work, hinder the economic autonomy of women.

In addition, Caribbean women of all ages cannot effectively contribute to sustainable development if their physical autonomy remains weakened by unequal access to health and social care services, notably reproductive and sexual care, leading to high percentages of teenage pregnancy. At the same time, Caribbean women have higher prevalence rates of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. They are also subject to different forms of violence and abuse during their life cycle, including during migratory processes, without having access to effective legal remedies. Furthermore, women and girls are more vulnerable during disaster and emergency-related situations to which the Caribbean is highly susceptible.

Sustainable development can no longer ignore women’s voices and contributions by excluding them from the exercise of power and from decision-making processes. Considering

* Lydia Rosa Gény is Gender Focal Point at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

¹ High-level Political Forum On Sustainable Development, President’s summary of 2017 session, June 2017. Available from : https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16673HLPF_2017_Presidents_summary.pdf

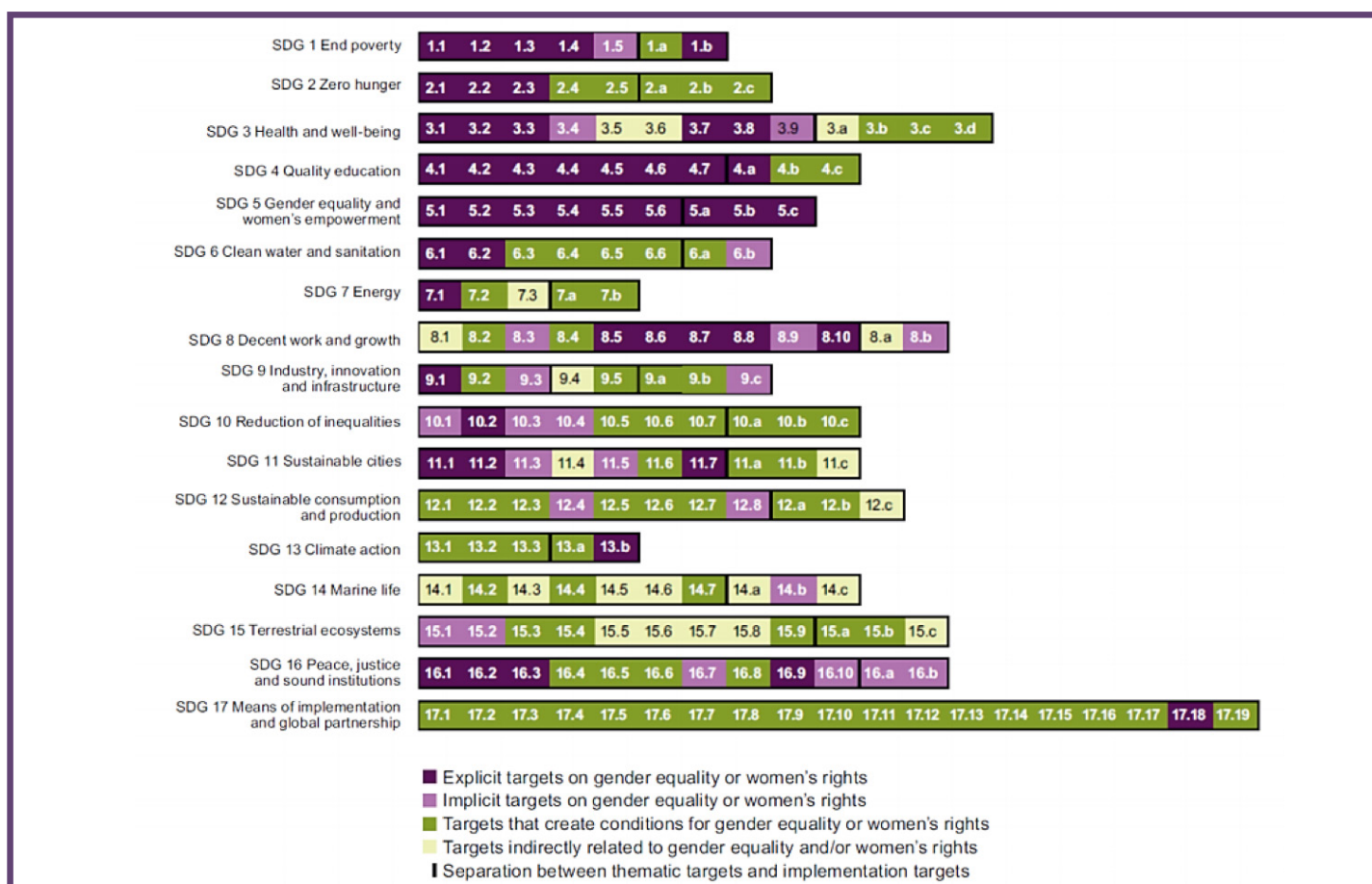
² United Nations (2015), *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, A/RES/70/1. Available from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

³ Ibid. para. 20

⁴ ECLAC (2017), *Gender equality plans in Latin America and the Caribbean Road maps for development*.

⁵ ECLAC (2015), *Caribbean synthesis review and appraisal report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*

Figure 1. Proposal for mainstreaming gender equality in the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Equality and Women's Autonomy in the Sustainable Development Agenda (LC/g.2686/Rev.1)*, Santiago, 2016, Figure 1, updated at 8 March 2017.

their demographic weight and their societal role, Caribbean women still have unequal access to decision-making positions in all branches and at all levels of government, which makes gender parity democracy in the subregion difficult to attain.⁶

There is therefore need for a paradigm shift in policies, backed by decisions at the different levels of government, to harness existing and potential human and financial capital of women in the subregion. Mainstreaming gender, with a rights-based approach, should be seen as an indispensable strategy in achieving this end. Therefore, in implementing national development frameworks, governments should consider women's

as well as men's challenges and contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, to ensure that no one is left behind in the process of national development.

In promoting gender mainstreaming, the United Nations calls for an assessment of "the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and

men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality".⁷

Countries in the subregion have already committed to mainstreaming gender, and their engagement has recently been renewed by adopting the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030,⁸ which is complemented by an ECLAC proposal for mainstreaming gender in all SDGs (Figure 1).

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⁶ ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. See <http://oig.cepal.org/en/autonomies/autonomy-decision-making>

⁷ ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2

⁸ This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the regional gender agenda since the first session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Havana in 1977.



QUALITY EDUCATION: A POWERFUL TOOL IN ATTAINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Leeanna Seelochan*

Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that form the center-focus of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Goal 4, on Quality Education is arguably one of the most powerful enablers of positive change the world has to offer.

Through education, sustainable development can be enhanced by breaking the cycle of poverty, promoting upward economic mobility, reducing inequalities, reinforcing gender equality, fostering tolerance and peace, and empowering people to live healthier lives. As such, SDG 4 seeks to *ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning* whilst its 10 associated targets¹ allude to how these can be accomplished.

Broadly, the targets of SDG 4 reinforce that quality education is a precursor to improving people's lives and contributing to sustainable development. For most Caribbean countries, improvements in basic literacy and universal enrolment at primary-level education have been achieved. However, at the higher educational level, school enrolment has not been as impressive. For example, on average, less than 15 per cent of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) citizens have been reported to access tertiary-level education.² Also, there is a high level of secondary school dropouts which contribute to the low levels of tertiary education attainment. These low levels of higher education achievement have implications for the economies of Caribbean SIDS, especially given the high emigration rates of skilled professionals, high job turnover rates in

key technical government positions, and relatively low wages in the public sector.

Improving access to quality education, as SDG 4 aspires to do, is, therefore, an essential step in tackling the developmental challenges of the Caribbean subregion.

FUNDING

In response to the economic downturn being experienced by most Caribbean countries, governments have cut expenditures, including funding for tertiary education.

For instance, Trinidad and Tobago has implemented severe cuts in the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses Programme (GATE), which affects students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as students older than 50 years.³ In implementing these changes, the government hopes to stimulate Human Capital Development by improving the alignment of students' prospective best-fit jobs and their overall performance.⁴

However, as well-intended as this policy change might be, similar initiatives make the attainment of SDG 4 more challenging. Moreover, Target 4.b calls for an increase – rather than a decrease

– in the number of scholarships for enrolment in higher education. To alleviate student financial constraints and improve employability, scholarships could be prioritized in areas that not only improve the scientific and technological knowledge base of the labour force, but also in emerging and creative fields that nurture innovativeness. For example, in 2014, the local Fashion Industry employed over 1465 persons and generated in excess of TT\$266 million in revenue.⁵ As currently proposed, changes in GATE will not give priority to careers in fashion and design, although the creative industry has the potential to enhance economic well-being, especially through self-employment and job creation.

SPECIALIZED SKILLS AND TRAINING

Target 4.4 of the SDGs calls for a substantial increase in the number of youth and adults who have employment and entrepreneurship skills, including technical and vocational skills, by 2030. It promotes a more practical pedagogy that enhances skills acquisition, suitable for each citizen, regardless of age.

The focus on skill acquisition addresses the current phenomenon of education through certification, whereby graduates

* Leeanna Seelochan is a Research Assistant in the Statistics and Social Development Unit at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

¹ See <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

² See <http://entornointeligente.com/articulo/10243859/JAMAICA-CARICOM-38-7C-Less-than-15-per-cent-of-Caribbean-nationals-accessing-tertiary-level-education-07072017>

³ See <http://www.guardian.co.tt/news/2016-08-05/cuts-over-50-students-unfair>

⁴ See <http://www.transforme.gov.tt/human-capital-development>

⁵ See <http://tradeind.gov.tt/index.php/issue-areas/creative-industries/>

do not necessarily possess functional skills commensurate with their level of certification.

Target 4.7 aims to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development by 2030. Therefore, the SDGs provide an opportunity to assess the education systems in the Caribbean, and to introduce innovative pedagogy at all levels of education that would address the skills gap that exist in a sizeable proportion of school leavers.

INFRASTRUCTURE

There is a need to establish the necessary expertise and infrastructure to drive technical and vocational innovations. Target 4.a highlights the importance of building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender-sensitive and that provide safe, inclusive and effective learning environments.

In this context, the establishment of the SMART Technology Teaching Lab at the Teaching and Learning Complex of The University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine Campus— which aims to create “blended programmes” that fit within the current digital landscape⁶ - offers a good example to replicate across the subregion.

To derive the most benefit from such investments, adequate provisions needs to be made for teachers who are equipped to use these modern learning facilities. This aligns well with Target 4.c, which calls for an increase in the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training.

In this regard, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, which involves Caribbean nationals spending a period on time in Japan to teach the English Language to Japanese students in pre-primary to secondary school, is popular in the subregion. For the period 2016-2017, approximately 150 Caribbean nationals participated in JET.⁷ Perhaps a similar programme of exchange could be considered wherein Japan nationals would visit the Caribbean to share linguistic and technological training, with hopes to improve technical education and employment opportunities in the technology sector.

ACCESSIBILITY

There is also the need to ensure gender parity in education. In 2016, Jamaica displayed a gender gap in employment which exceeded 7 per cent. The rate of unemployment for males was slightly below 10 per cent while females' unemployment reached 17.6 per cent.⁸

Meanwhile, in 2009-2010, males accounted for 28.8 per cent of the UWI Mona campus' student population while females accounted for 71.2 per cent.⁹ This disparity suggests that females are either not being trained for the existing job market or encounter discrimination in hiring. Target 5 seeks to eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education. It reinforces equitable accessibility to the education system and labour markets, which should be translated into policy.

As member States prepare for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2019 during which SDG4 will be reviewed, countries of the Caribbean have an opportunity to take early stock of how they plan to ensure inclusive and quality education for all, and to promote lifelong learning for all citizens by the year 2030. ■

⁶ See https://sta.uwi.edu/resources/documents/UWI_AnnualReport_14_15.pdf

⁷ See http://jetprogramme.org/wp-content/themes/biz-vektor/pdf/countries/2016_jet_stats_e.pdf

⁸ See pp 1. http://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/ndeg_22_desempleo_eng.pdf

⁹ See pp 14. <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/opair/statistics/2009-2010/UWI+Statistical+Review+2009-10.pdf>



ILO'S ENGAGEMENT IN MONITORING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

Diego Rei*

The SDG indicators are the foundation of the monitoring process designed to ensure the realization of the Goals and targets set out in Agenda 2030. The UN Statistical Commission has agreed on a global indicator framework comprising 232 indicators to monitor the SDGs' 169 targets.

In line with Agenda 2030's guiding principle of "leaving no one behind", SDG indicators are disaggregated by gender, age, income, geography, occupation and other aspects of social identity.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has accepted, within the UN system monitoring framework, to be the custodian agency for 14 indicators (three of which are monitored jointly with other UN agencies) while also contributing to four additional ones. The Custodian agency is responsible for collecting and harmonizing data from global, regional and national sources, and for contributing to annual SDG reports and review processes.

Out of the 14 indicators for which ILO is the custodian agency, eight belong to Tier I. These are indicators for which an established methodology exists, and data are already widely available. Three indicators belong to Tier II. These are indicators for which a methodology has been established but for which data are not readily available for all regions. Three belong to Tier III. These are indicators for which an internationally agreed methodology has not yet been developed or is not widely accepted or discussed and only scarce information is available.

The text box to the right provides a quick overview of the indicators and tiers:

Box 1. Indicators for which the ILO serves as the Custodian (or is involved in)(and related tier).

Custodian

1. 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable **(Tier II)**
2. 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions **(Tier I)**
3. 8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person **(Tier I)**
4. 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non agriculture employment, by sex **(Tier II)**
5. 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities **(Tier II)**
6. 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities **(Tier I)**
7. 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training **(Tier I)**
8. 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age **(Tier I, ILO with UNICEF)**
9. 8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status **(Tier I)**
10. 8.8.2 Level of national compliance of labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual

* Diego Rei is an Employment and Labour Market Specialist with the International Labour Organization Decent Work Team and Office of the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean will continue to assist Caribbean member States in any process related to the SDG monitoring framework. For any enquiry, do not hesitate to contact: ilocarib@ilo.org

The ILO's assistance to Caribbean States has focused on indicators under Tier II, in line with country requests. Two guiding principles have informed these efforts. Firstly, since fully fledged and specific surveys tend to be very resource-intensive, the ILO has sought to ensure that the broadest range of baselines is available for the highest number of countries through analysis of available data. Secondly, the ILO has supported endeavours aimed at extending data availability through the design of complete and cost effective surveys. To date, these efforts have resulted in the implementation of activities in the following three main areas.

Firstly, the ILO has supported the efforts of member States to collect data on specific dimensions for which no data exists thus far. Survey questionnaires have been tailored to compute indicators 1.1.1 (in Guyana), 8.3.1 (in Guyana and Suriname), 8.5.1 (in Guyana and Cayman Islands) and 10.4.1 (in Guyana and Cayman Islands) during

the past twelve months. In Guyana, ILO assistance was carried out within the framework of a fruitful collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank. In addition to the above, in Suriname ILO is financing a national child labour survey (3600 households) within the context of a United States Department of Labor (USDOL) financed project 'Country level engagement and assistance to reduce child labour (CLEAR)'. The survey will facilitate the collection of representative data concerning indicator 8.7.1.

Secondly, ILO carries out capacity building activities aimed at highlighting the importance of applying a standard methodology to design data-based policies. For example, capacity development trainings have been carried out to support the development of labour market policies designed on the basis vulnerabilities identified through indicators 8.6.1, 8.3.1, 8.5.1 and 8.5.2 in Barbados, Sint Maarten and Saint Kitts and Nevis in 2017. On a related

note, it is interesting to highlight that in the Caribbean, notwithstanding the (relatively low) frequency of some household surveys, current questionnaires could – in principle – allow for the retrieval of some information on a number of SGD indicators related to Goal 8.

Thirdly, the ILO is supporting Caribbean member States through interventions which will ensure that conditions for suitable and meaningful data collection are put in place. Ongoing capacity building courses related to reporting on the implementation of international labour standards, or on requirements of specific ILO Conventions, will allow the computation of indicator 8.8.2. Similarly, the labour administration application (LAA) software that ILO developed over past years – and which is currently utilized by a number of countries –, may promote the use of administrative sources for computing, or at least cross checking, of indicators 1.3.1 and 8.8.1. ■

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IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN THE CARIBBEAN

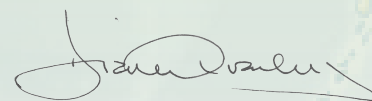
This edition of the FOCUS is dedicated to providing you with a comprehensive picture of the global framework for Agenda 2030 implementation, monitoring and review. It will provide helpful information for those countries considering a submission of a VNR; it will discuss the challenge of integrating important cross-cutting issues, such as, gender equality into national development planning and SDG implementation. It will also provide the information and experience of a custodian agency – in this case the ILO – to demonstrate the contributions being made by individual organs, agencies, funds and programmes of the UN, in support of SDG

implementation. It is intended to make our readers more aware of, and conversant on, this dynamic, transformative development process, in which we are all invested for the enhanced well-being of the peoples of our subregion.

Despite the initial slow pace of SDG implementation in the Caribbean during the first year of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the subregion is now poised to accelerate the implementation of the global agenda. In actualizing this, the subregion should not lose sight of the unique opportunity that the 2030 Agenda presents—an opportunity to build functional institutions. Be it in

development planning; national statistical system; gender mainstreaming; or climate resilience, the SDG provides a good platform for development to be integrative and long-term, to be sustainable and inclusive, and for development to leave no one behind.

Yours in Focus



Diane Quarless

THE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

FORUM OF THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

At the regional level, a Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD) has been established under the auspices of each UN Regional Commission to coordinate regional reviews of the 2030 Agenda.

In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) at its 36th session in Mexico in May 2016 adopted the Mexico Resolution that established the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development as the LAC RFSD. The Forum had its first meeting in Mexico City, Mexico, during 26-28 April 2017. At this meeting, ECLAC presented the first “Annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.”⁴ The report situates the sustainable development efforts of countries of the region within the new international context and proffers the keys to a renewed role for LAC in the international system. The report also provides an in-depth review of the institutional arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda in the countries of LAC, as well as a status review of the statistical mechanisms for measuring the SDG indicators in the region.

Apart from providing a platform to discuss regional progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

the Mexico City meeting facilitated the exchange of ideas among countries, and provided an opportunity for LAC countries that submitted their VNRs in 2016 to share their experiences in preparing their reviews with those countries due to present their VNRs to the HLPF in 2017. Likewise, the countries presenting their VNRs in 2017 reported on their progress and benefitted from the feedback received from meeting participants who comprised of high level government officials, senior United Nations officials, academia, representatives of the private sector, and a diverse group of civil society representatives.

NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEVELS

Aside from stakeholder engagements that are held as part of the SDG mainstreaming process in each country, national and subnational reviews of the progress of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have not featured prominently, if at all, in the Caribbean.

These national and subnational reviews are meant to be regular and inclusive reviews which draw on contributions from different non-State actors, including the indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector, academia, youth groups, and other stakeholders. As more Caribbean countries sign up for VNRs in future years, national and subnational reviews are expected to become common, thereby reflecting broad inclusivity in the VNRs that are submitted to the HLPF.

CONCLUSIONS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promises not to leave anyone behind, and the follow-up and review process serves as a yardstick to gauge the extent to which the global community is progressing in keeping this ambitious promise.

Although voluntary in nature, the VNRs enable countries to take stock of the progress in implementing the SDGs at the national and subnational levels, and therefore serve as a valuable means of evaluating the national SDG implementation strategies, with a view to accelerating action plans or instituting changes where needed. With many Caribbean countries still at the very early stages of implementing the SDGs, this summary is prepared to provide some clarity on the SDG follow-up and review process, and it is hoped that in the very near future, more countries of the subregion will sign up to conduct their VNRs. ■

⁴ Available at: <http://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2017/en/documents/annual-report-regional-progress-and-challenges-relation-2030-agenda-sustainable>

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ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITH EQUALITY IN THE CARIBBEAN: THE CRITICAL ROLE OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

BENEFITS OF MAINSTREAMING GENDER

Mainstreaming gender in policy-making and development planning can bring the following benefits to Caribbean governments:

a) **Fostering intersectoral and inter-agency coordination, as well as coherence in attaining the SDGs in alignment with other international and regional commitments.**⁹ The goal of achieving gender equality should drive all parts of the Government, including those responsible for development planning, macroeconomics, social, environmental, information, sciences and technologies-related policies, in collaboration with the national machineries for the advancement of women. The incorporation of gender perspectives in national policies and strategies should not be seen as an added burden, but as a means of identifying the different challenges faced by women and men at all ages, which will help in adopting targeted measures to address existing challenges and in ensuring that both women and men can contribute to and benefit from national sustainable development.

b) **Promoting and implementing gender equality could strengthen financing for development.**¹⁰ Gender mainstreaming strategies could be used as the cornerstones for domestic resource mobilization, and for the identification of external public-private partnerships to finance programmes in areas of particular interest to stakeholders. Through gender-based budgeting, governments are able to

highlight public expenditures and the relative benefit that men and women derive from government-funded programmes. In this process of budgeting with a gender perspective, transparency and accountability help strengthen the case that the government may have for financing sustainable development with equality.

c) **Gender mainstreaming will strengthen national statistics systems.** The National Statistical Offices in the Caribbean would benefit from capacity building for the collection, processing, and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and the promotion of gender indicators in surveys, censuses and administrative records. Institutionalizing gender mainstreaming will ensure that instruments for the measurement of unpaid work through time-use surveys and collection of data on violence against women become systemized. These will help countries to promote evidence-based policies and measure the inequalities as well as monitor progress in the implementation of the SDGs and other international and regional frameworks with a gender lens.

d) **The adoption of a gender perspective will promote inclusiveness.** The creation or strengthening of channels for multi-stakeholders participation, including civil society organizations, feminist and women's movements, youth organizations, academia and the private sector in rural and urban areas alike will be facilitated when gender mainstreaming is established by governments. This participation at all

stages of the development planning, from its design, implementation and evaluation will build national ownership of the sustainable development agendas and translate these commitments to local progressive changes on the ground towards gender equality.

With 13 years to the target year of 2030 for achieving the SDGs, urgent and practical actions are needed to shift from the current culture of privilege and discrimination to a rights-based culture of equality. Mainstreaming gender in policies, strategies and national development plans will facilitate this paradigm shift and accelerate the pace towards achieving sustainable development in the Caribbean subregion by 2030. ■

⁹ International and regional frameworks include: international and regional human rights treaties - in particular the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, international political agreements, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action, the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 as well as the SAMOA Pathway for the Small Island Developing States, among others.

¹⁰ ECLAC (2016), Equality and women's autonomy in the sustainable development agenda, p.147

JUNE

1 - 2 June 2017

Caribbean preparatory meeting for the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons - Port of Spain, *Trinidad and Tobago*

20 - 21 June 2017

Training Seminar for Public Officers and Civil Society on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration - Saint George's, *Grenada*

23 June 2017

Training Workshop on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration - Roseau, *Dominica*

List of Recent ECLAC Documents and Publications

Listed by Symbol Number, Date and Title

LC/CAR/2017/3

June 2017

Evaluation report of the launch of the Energy Efficiency Indicators Database Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, and capacity building workshop on energy efficiency indicators

LC/CAR/2017/4

June 2017

Report of the Leaders Activating Research Networks workshop – Caribbean

LC/CAR/2017/5

July 2017

Report of the eighteenth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

LC/CAR/2017/6

August 2017

Report of the expert group meeting to consider an analysis of the art and craft sector and its potential for sustainable tourism development in the Caribbean



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ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

PO Box 1113, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Tel: 868-224-8000

E-mail: spou-pos@eclac.org

vrb.al/eclaccaribbean