# THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Working Group Report

# Introduction & Facilitation

IBON International

# Sustainable Development Goals

- One of the key outcomes (if not THE most important outcome) of Rio+20 is the agreement to come out with a set of sustainable development goals

- First proposed by the government of Colombia during the UN General Assembly on September 2011

- The UN Secretary-General in his opening to the General Assembly in 2011: "Let us develop a new generation of sustainable development goals to pick up where the MDGs leave off."

- Such an approach, say proponents, could allow the MDGs' focus on poverty reduction to be matched by complementary targets on the environment.

# Colombia's Proposal

- Overarching goal: Poverty eradication
- Principles: based on Agenda 21; JPOI; CBDR
- Indicative list
  - Food security: production, access and nutrition
  - Integrated water management for SD
  - Energy for SD
  - Sustainable and resilient cities

# Other proposals

- **DPI** 17 overlapping themes (SCP, climate, energy, biodiversity, water, oceans, forests, Agriculture, cities, investment, indicators/GDP, access to info, participation, redress, environmental justice, health)

- **UN Panel on Sustainability:** 10 issues (food security, water, energy, green jobs, decent work & social inclusion, SCP, cities, climate change, biodiv and oceans, disaster risk reduction and resilience)

- More elaborated on principles: universal in character, covering challenges to all countries, express a global strategy for SD, incorporate issues not covered by MDG, comprehensive, reflect 3 dimensions, benchmarks, deadline of perhaps 2030, engage all stakeholders, scope for review

# Rio+20 Mandate (Para 248)

- Establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly.

- An open working group constituted no later than at the opening of the sixty-seventh session (Sept 2012) of the Assembly and shall comprise 30 representatives, nominated by Member States from the five United Nations regional groups, with the aim of achieving fair, equitable and balanced geographic representation.

- At the outset, this open working group will decide on its methods of work, including: developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society, the scientific community and the United Nations system in its work, in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience.

- It will submit a report, to the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly (Sept –Dec 2013), containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action.

# Workshop objectives

1. List and explore issues around SDGs
2. Key entry points and roles for stakeholders and governments
3. Next steps and solutions

# Structuring the discussion [50 minutes]

- **On Content and Scope** [20 minutes]
  - Comprehensiveness (3+ dimensions) vs. focus on priorities (such as poverty eradication or environmental goals); tradeoffs between various sets of priorities
  - Concrete measurable results vs. structural and transformative goals
  - Ends vs. means
  - Universality vs. equitability, differentiation and policy space
  - People's goals (aspirational and inspirational) vs. gov't goals (political pragmatism; short-termism)
- **On Process** [20 minutes]
  - Convergence of many processes with a bearing on sustainable development agenda towards post-2015 (MDGs and the Post-MDG process, Rio & post-Rio, the Monterrey consensus, the G20, the Doha Round of the WTO, etc. )
  - National and international level processes
  - Roles of stakeholders (consultation, participation, esp. of Southern and grassroots groups)
- **Next steps:** setting the stage for multi-stakeholder engagement [10 minutes]
- Wrap-up

# Discussion Proper (Part 1)

# Content & Scope

- Making sure that SDGs incorporate ecological sustainability
- Accountability vs. ambition --? Goals stated in outcomes in terms of changes in institutional mechanisms
- Not feasible to achieve true sustainability within commitment period; differentiating that from long-term
- Culture of peace
- What criteria can we use to prioritize?
- Measures and indicators for measuring progress for accountability – there are existing
- principles-based approach; metrics
- CS Reflection Group
  - Identify overall thematic priorities
- Need principles
- Some important goals being struck donw because not measurable or no common statisctics available
- Problems also with goals/categroies that are aritificially delineated – miss the interconnections
- Common goals for humanity that mobilizes not just govts
- Use of social media/ internet' people power centered ; question of awareness and access to information
- Measure what is being done (e.g. resources allocated)  inputs not outputs
- Refer to existing surveys on people's priorities. We can't have perfect consultation process that is perfectly inclusive given finite processes

# Process

- We have short timeline to arrive at pol consensus for new development agenda/paradigm/model
- Streamline the way we consult?
- Bring consultation where consultations never happen
- Civil society led consultations to ensure we capture needs from the grassroots
- There is consultative process but not clear what happens after (in the pol process)
- How to ensure that global HLP listens to 56 national processes (up to March 2013) and up to 100 by 2015 -- Worldwewant2015.org → national focal points
- No mechanism for consulting marginalized and impverished
- Who has right to participate in decision-making? Equal voice
- MAG proposal from the MGS (to provide formal interface for stakeholder input to GA process)
- But also influence at UN level and at the National level
- Online consultations can help
- IISD information services on post-2015 uncsd.iisd.org/post215-L
- Measurements process may be distinct but should be related to goal-setting process
- Fragmentation is also a problem; behind it the battle for funds → coalition bldg
- Inside-outside process
- Coalition-building
- How do we avoid N-S polarization

# Discussion Proper (Part 2)

# Content & Scope (Part 2)

- Statistical Commission of ECOSOC will be preparing data for SDGs
- Other processes entry points = UN Stat Commission, Bhutan, Busan,
- Means of implementation is crucial – define resources required to achieve SDGs
- Must include climate issues; UNFCCC part of conversation
- B2015 criteria for goals
  - vision for overall framework; principles
  - Criteria:
    - Priority: Rights-based; priority for impoversihed and marginalized; Structural
    - Accountability: measurable; with baseline; relevant to national and international level when aggregated; disaggregated; monitoring
    - clarity: understandable to public as well as experts and policy makers
- SD needs to deal with conundrum of resource limits/ envi boundaries ➔ question of distribution and north-south differentition; role of international cooperation & means of implementation
- Is poverty eradication being de-prioritized vis-à-vis envi goals
- Civil society is also means of implem.
- Sustainable communities – goals that should also be relevant at local level (community or local level)
- Reconceptualizing SusDev = buen vivir goals ➔transformational paradigm
- Inputs should be from the ground; common goals;
- UN's mandate is standards setting.  Rights is the minimum floor for SDGs
- Inequalities ==: disaggregated/ differrentiated
- Systemic issues like banking and financial system is important

# Process (part 2)

- How to make sure that political mandate is responsible to future

- How to create conditions for political decision-makers to make long-term commitments when they merely have 4 year terms or 6 years?

- What about participation of civ society in conflict states?

- 100 observers in the UN GA, e.g. IPU = parliaments important stakeholder and also at national level

- How can we create a process decoupled from electoral cycles

- Resource-efficiency reporting → force politicians to talk about these issues; changes awareness on the part of the public as well

- Corporate capture of UN (and governments).  Informal influence on decision-making.  Question of transparency as well

- Access to information and participation

- How to ensure complimentarity of global thematic consultation processes and national dialogues

- Holding govts accountable; Campaigning; e.g. citizens budgetiing, planning, etc,

- How to get right to speak in negotiations → starting with the SDGs; use precedent of CSD

- Local and national processes is not just valuable for inputting into the global process. Can be for implementation at national and local level

- We have to weigh value of invsting so much of our time in this process of consultations but what about participation in decision-making? At national and international level.  So we need also accountability and participation mechanisms at national level as well as regional (and from here influice also G77, EU, etc. or regional agreements)

- SDGs not even mentioned in the post-MDG consultations.  Need convergence

- Do we allow UN to co-opt our name to legitimize their decisions

- MAG not ncecessrily for consensus positions

- Multi-stakeholder processes

# Wrap-up

# On Content and Scope of SDGs

- Need transformational vision or conceptualization of development and SDGs should reflect this

- Given the wide range of issues involved or relevant to SD, we need criteria for prioritizing goals. We can refer to some existing papers on this, e.g. CS Reflection Group; CAFOD/ Beyond 2015 proposed criteria

- But international HR norms and standards should be the absolute minimum for any of these goals

- Measurable goals important but many important goals are not measurable or easy to measure; also must not lose sight of interconnectedness of these goals.  We should have separate process for setting goals and process for developing appropriate metrics

- Goals can be not just in terms of outcomes but also in terms of "inputs" (what changes need to happen in terms of laws, regulations, mechanisms, resource allocation, etc.)

- Need to confront conundrum of pursuing poverty eradication, econ development in the face of resource limits or planetary boundaries and gross inequalities → therefore must address issue of differentiation in goals but also having goals that will reduce inequalities in various dimensions;

- SDGs should also take into account the necessary means of implementation to achieve these goals and also systemic issues (like banking and financial system reforms)

- Existing scientific studies and surveys are important source of info on peoples' priorities

# On Process and key recommendations

- Take advantage of ongoing consultations processes at national, international and online. But how to ensure complementarity of all these processes

- Consultations not enough. **Need to claim our right to participate in decision-making and crafting the development agenda at the national, regional and global level.** One proposal is the MAG at the global level (building on MGS structure. But should address weaknesses of MGs, including underrepersentation of southern and social movements)

- Should take advantage of many access points aside from SDGs – the HLPF, the UN Statistical Commission; etc.

- Country-level processes are important not just in terms of inputting into the global process; or influencing negotiations at the international level, but important in themselves. We should push for multistakeholder processes of formulating national development strategy or policies; participatory budgetting; citizens monitoring of development programs and devt assistance; etc.

- There is also potential for engagement at the regional level for possible regional agreements

- But there is question of how to impact political processes effectively (given short-term electoral cycles; corporate capture; etc.). Important to combine inside engagement and outside campaigning

- In all this there is crucial question of ensuring participation of grassroots groups. Question of resourcing, messaging and also building on what these groups and movements are already working on; e.g. Campaign for Peoples Goals

- Coalition-building among civil society = connecting existing platforms and initiatives; striving for consensus on particular issues. Sharing of information is obvious starting point but also important to have opportunities or a process of trust-building among civil society

# Thank you