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Deutsches Institut für
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DIE Workshop | Documentation Report

„The Governance Challenge of Integrated SDG Implementation”

27 September 2021



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Introduction

Aims and scope of the event

With the 2030 Agenda, the international community has established an ambitious, interlinked goal system that serves as a guide for a sustainable global transformation. The successful implementation of the Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires that the complex interactions between the SDGs and their associated 169 targets are taken into account. This poses new challenges to political institutions and processes: Profound institutional reforms and innovative governance approaches will be needed in order to implement the 2030 Agenda in a way that maximizes synergies and minimizes trade-offs between the SDGs and their targets. Against this background, since 2017, the German Development Institute (DIE) is conducting a research project entitled "Implementing the 2030 Agenda: Integrating Growth, Environment, Equality and Governance", funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The aim of the project is to identify and investigate central interlinkages and interdependencies between the SDGs and provide evidence-based advice to policy makers and practitioners in development cooperation on devising approaches and action strategies towards integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The project also seeks to exchange and disseminate knowledge about SDG interdependencies and their appropriate governance within the international academic community concerned with sustainability transformation.

On 27 September 2021 the project team presented findings of their research in a digital workshop entitled "The governance challenge of integrated SDG implementation" to a diverse international audience of over 100 participants from the fields of academia, policy making and development cooperation from all regions of the world.

Discussion and debates at the event centred around challenges that an adequate governance of SDG interdependencies is faced with as well as on the lessons that can be extracted from key findings of the research project for the improvement of policy coherence and the effectiveness of development interventions.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, another focus of the discussion was the potential of the 2030 Agenda to act as a framework of post-pandemic recovery efforts to build back better towards a sustainable, resilient and inclusive global society that leaves no one behind.

In this documentation report, we provide discussion highlights from the different sessions of the workshop and links to publications of the research team for further readings.

The Project “Implementing the 2030 Agenda: Integrating Growth, Environment, Equality and Governance”

Research Team



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Keynote Speakers, Panelists and Respondents



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Workshop Agenda

13:15 – 13:40

Introductory Plenary Session

Welcome by the Chair (Dr. Anita Breuer, DIE)

Keynote Speeches:

- Prof. Anna Katharina Hornidge, DIE
- Dr. Ingolf Dietrich, BMZ

Inputs:

- Dr. Daniele Malerba, DIE: "Introduction of DIE's SDG project and its overarching research questions"
- Dr. Anita Breuer, DIE: "The Relevance of Governance for Integrated SDG implementation: A spotlight on SDG 16"

14:20 – 15:20

Parallel thematic sessions

Session 1: Synergies and trade-offs in the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus under conditions of climate change

Input: Dr. Srinivasa Srigriri, DIE: "Synergies and trade-offs in the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus under conditions of climate change"

Respondent: Mr. Christopher Wenzel, BMZ,
Q&A

Session 2: Synergies between climate protection and social protection

Input: Dr. Daniele Malerba, DIE: "How to eradicate poverty and accomplish other „social“ SDGs within environmental boundaries?"

Respondent: Stefan Beierl, GIZ
Q&A

Session 3: Synergies and trade-offs related to poverty and inequality

Input: Dr. Pooja Balasubramanian, DIE: "Revisiting the Growth-Poverty nexus: A multi-dimensional lens"

Respondent: Jon Jellema, CEQ
Q&A

15:40 – 17:10

Closing Plenary Session

Presentations of main key messages from the 3 parallel working groups

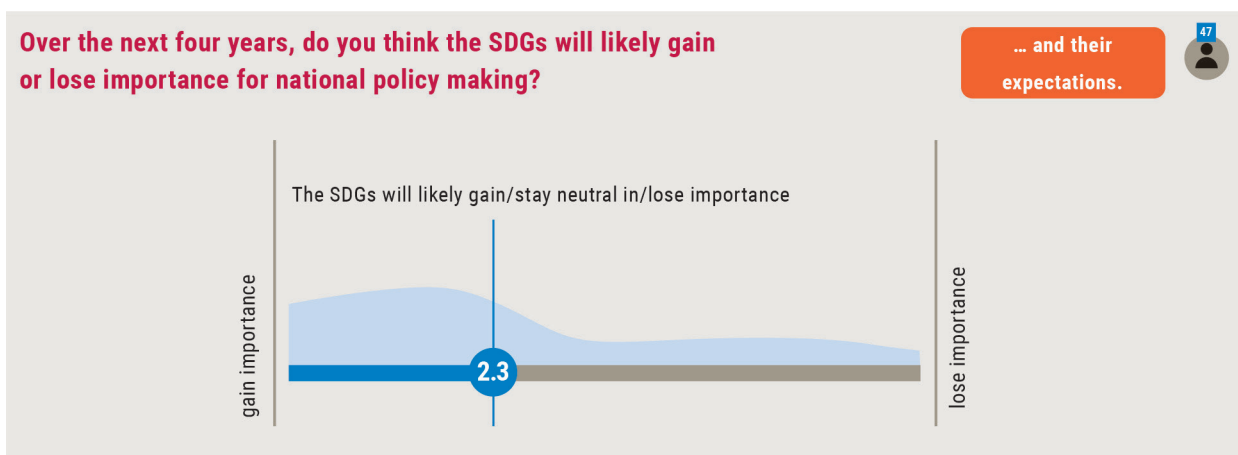
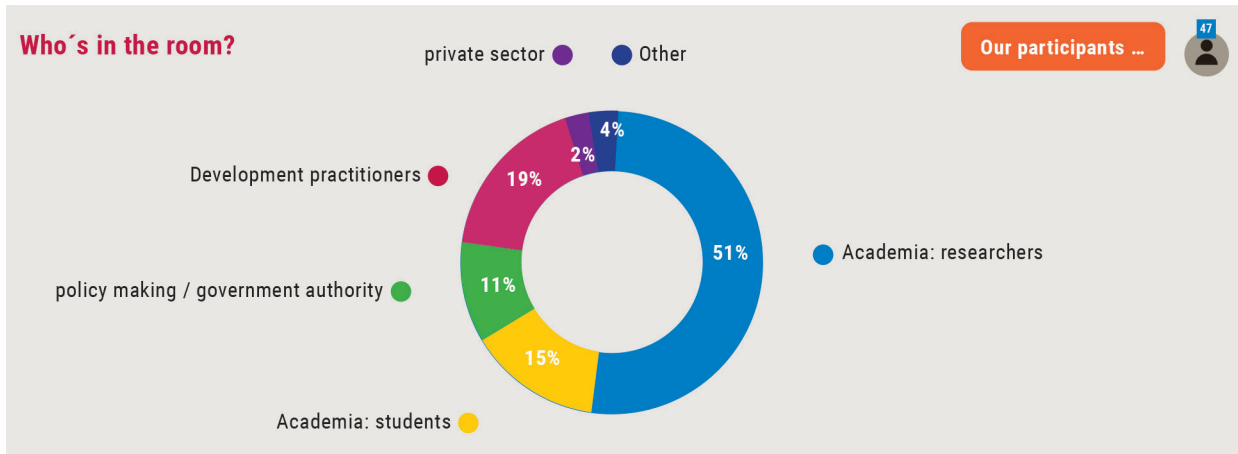
Panel discussion: „The Relevance of Integrated Sustainability Governance for Post-Pandemic Recovery“

Moderator: Dr. Imme Scholz, DIE

Panelists: Ambassador David Donoghue (ODI), Ingolf Dietrich (BMZ)
Ivonne Lobos (SEI)

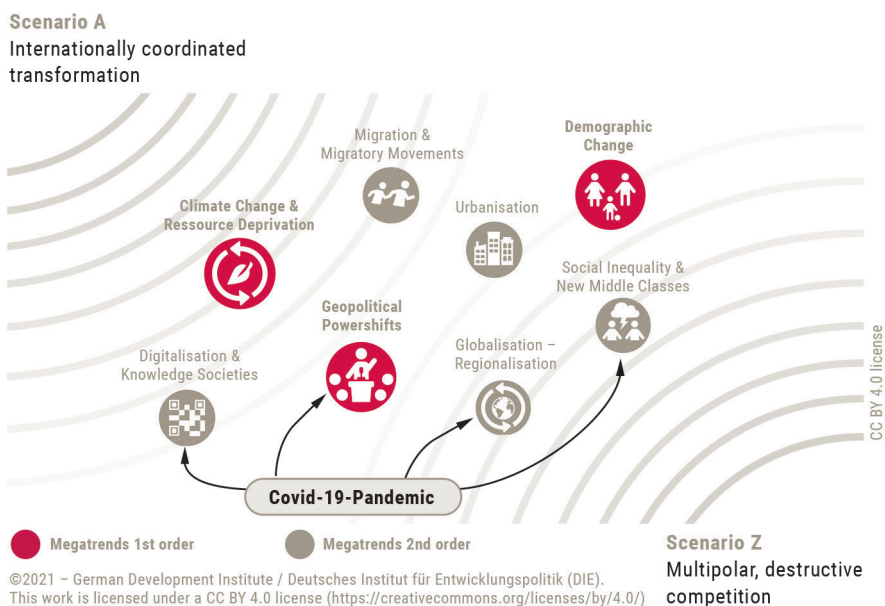
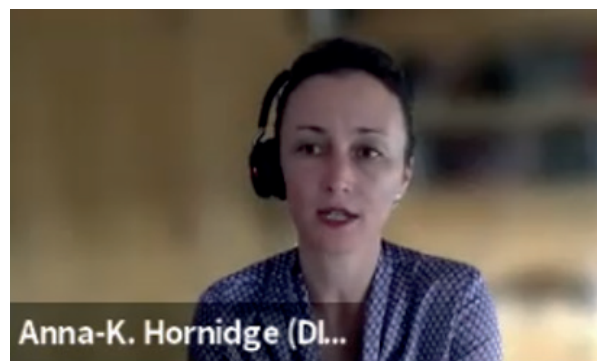
Wrap-up and farewell by the chair

Summary of Introductory Plenary Session



In her opening keynote, DIE's director, **Prof. Anna Katharina Hornidge**, elaborated on global challenges and megatrends such as demographic change, climate change, resource deprivation, geopolitical power shifts, and digitalization.

Based on this, she proposed seven guidelines that German development policy should follow in order to address these challenges of the future and contribute to the global common good.



The keynote by **Dr. Ingolf Dietrich**, Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda of BMZ, focused on the critical role of SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions in efforts to achieve a resilient and sustainable post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery. Referring to alarming developments observed in the context of the pandemic, such as democratic backsliding and decreasing access to justice, Dr. Dietrich stressed the need to put good governance at the centre to guide global transformation. He further emphasized the importance of the policy-science interface and the need for scientific research to produce actionable policy advice in order to support evidence-based development policy making and effective implementation in line with the 2030 Agenda.



Following the opening keynotes, an input by **Dr. Daniele Malerba**, provided an overview of the central research questions and aims of DIE's research project "Implementing the 2030 Agenda: Integrating Growth, Environment, Equality and Governance".



In her input "The Relevance of Governance for Integrated SDG implementation: A spotlight on SDG 16" **Dr. Anita Breuer** presented key findings and policy implications from three research endeavours with a focus on the political-institutional pre-conditions for effective SDG implementation and the role of governance for sustainable development. In a nutshell, research findings show that a) there is robust cross-national evidence that the governance

principles enshrined in SDG 16 contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality; b) horizontal accountability for SDG implementation remains under-institutionalized in most countries; c) the institutional design of national bodies for SDG implementation often fails to adequately support cross-sectoral coordination between different policy sectors and the engagement of sub-national governments and civil society stakeholders.



For further readings see:

UNDP OGC & DIE (2021): How Qualities of Governance Institutions Matter for Reducing Poverty and Inequality. A Systematic Literature Review on SDG 16 Interlinkages with SDG 1 and SDG 10. The full report will be launched in early 2022. A preliminary summary of key messages is currently available under https://www.sdg16hub.org/system/files/2021-07/Interlinkages%20summary_FINAL.pdf

Breuer, A. and Leininger, J. (2021): Horizontal accountability for SDG implementation: a comparative cross-national analysis of emerging national accountability regimes. *Sustainability*, 13 (3). <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/13/7002>

Breuer, A., Leininger, J., König-Reis, S. (2021): Key players in accountable SDG implementation: national human rights institutions. DIE Briefing Paper 16/2021. https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/BP_16.2021_v2.pdf

Breuer, A., Leininger, J., Brøsbol, K., Belly-Le Guilloux, L., Sefa, B. (2021): Key players in national SDG accountability: the role of parliaments DIE Briefing Paper 15/2021. https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/BP_15.2021_v1.1.pdf

Breuer, A., Leininger, J., Tosun, J. (2019): Integrated policymaking: choosing an institutional design for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). DIE Discussion Paper 14/2019. https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_14.2019.pdf

Summary of Parallel Sessions

Session 1: Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus under conditions of climate change



“Coordination is crucial to manage the interdependencies among the goals to secure water, energy, food and ecosystems. Multiple social, political and institutional factors determine the type and effectiveness of coordination.”

Srinivasa Srigiri
German Development Institute /
Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

In the session on the ‘Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus under the conditions of climate change’, **Dr. Srinivasa Srigiri** presented the results of two studies of governance mechanisms in Jordan and Ethiopia in managing the interdependencies among the WEF nexus related SDGs. The studies conclude that the social and ecological dimensions of sustainability are insufficiently integrated into national economic growth strategies in both country

cases. The poor integration of the different dimensions (economic, environmental, and social) of sustainable development is not just a result of lack of financial and technical capacities but also insufficient and ineffective institutions and governance mechanisms. Both countries require institutional reforms with respect to rights over land and water resources to accompany the investments in technologies and infrastructure for improving water supply and its use efficiency.

In his response to Dr. Srigiri’s presentation, **Mr. Christopher Wenzel** (BMZ) emphasized the importance of water governance for achieving the 2030 Agenda, which still does not get the attention it deserves. He further mentioned the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders and understanding their mind-sets for achieving the desired changes. In the ensuing Q&A session, the discussion focused on how the institutional change that is required for sustainability transformation can be achieved, especially with regards to water governance. A couple of options that were discussed include, making sectoral reforms part of the negotiations for bilateral cooperation with partner countries and making the provision of assistance to develop technical and financial capacities conditional on sectoral reforms. Another more long term option discussed was the strengthening of alternative discourses that promote rational and efficient use



of water, which should result in abandoning policies that provide perverse incentives to the overuse of scarce water resources. However, it is also important to realize the limits for achieving the required institutional change in the context of development cooperation.

For further readings see:

Srigiri, S., Breuer, A., Scheumann, W. (2021): Mechanisms for governing the Water-Land-Food Nexus in the Lower Awash River Basin, Ethiopia: ensuring policy coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. DIE Discussion Paper 26/2021. https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/DP_26.2021.pdf

Dombrowsky, I., Hägele, R. et al. (2021). Natural Resource Governance in Light of the 2030 Agenda. The Case of Competition for Groundwater in Azraq, Jordan. **DIE Discussion Paper. forthcoming February 2022.**

Breuer A., Oswald Spring, U. (2021). Agenda 2030 y nexos entre seguridad de agua, energética y alimentaria: el caso de Huexca, Morelos. Veredas. Revista del Pensamiento Sociológico (40), 61 – 93. <https://veredas.xoc.uam.mx/index.php/2020/12/03/agenda-2030-y-nexos-entre-seguridad-de-agua-energetica-y-alimentaria-el-caso-de-huexca-morelos/>

Breuer A., Oswald Spring, U. (2020). The 2030 Agenda as agenda setting event for water governance? Evidence from the Cuautla River Basin in Morelos, Mexico. Water 12 (2) <https://www.mdpi.com/2073-4441/12/2/314>

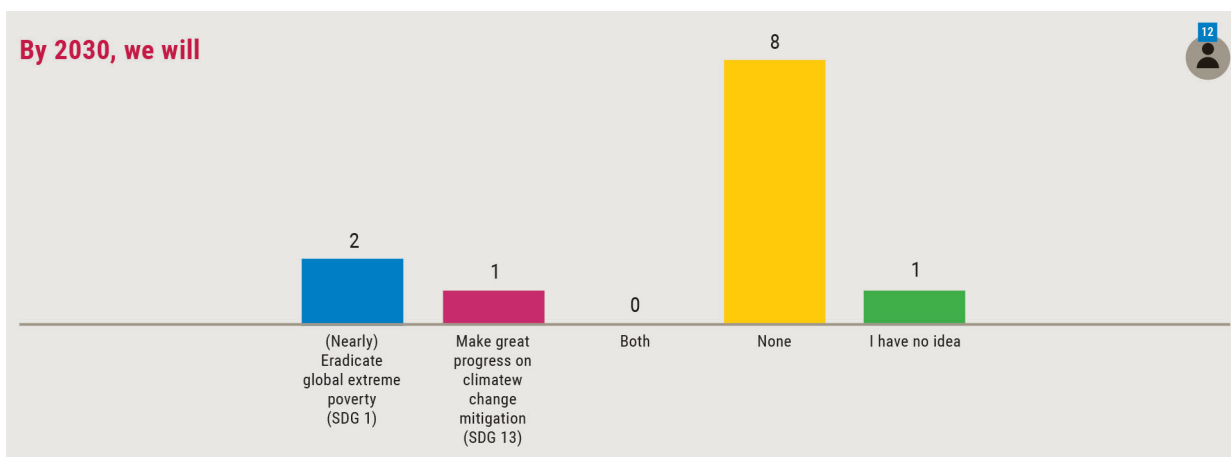
Session 2: Climate protection and social protection



“Climate mitigation and green transformations need to be just and inclusive. To achieve these joint socio-environmental goals, social protection plays a critical role.”

Daniele Malerba
German Development Institute /
Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

Dr. Daniele Malerba initiated the session on “Climate protection and social protection” with an interactive activity by asking participants in the audience about their expectations regarding the achievement of poverty eradication and substantial climate change mitigation by 2030. As can be seen from the chart below, the majority of participants felt that, as it currently stands, neither of these goals will be attained by 2030.



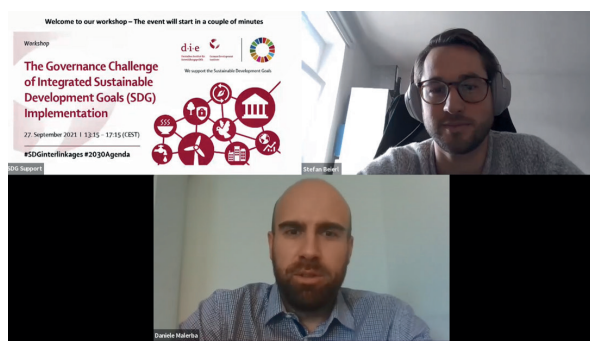
Dr. Malerba then presented key findings from his research on interlinkages between socio-economic and environmental SDGs. He pointed out that while many countries still struggle to achieve socio-economic and environmental success simultaneously, good policy mixes can contribute towards harmonizing these goals. Fiscal environmental reforms that comprise both carbon taxes and social protection mechanisms are a case in point: By using just part of the revenues from a carbon tax for social protection spending, poverty and inequality can be effectively lowered. Based on a study on global energy transitions, Dr. Malerba furthermore explained



that opportunities created by green structural change, such as new and better jobs, will not automatically benefit the poorest. Therefore, inclusive social protection measures need to be implemented in order to make sure that the 2030 Agenda’s principle to “leave-no-one-behind” is respected.

Session 2: Climate protection and social protection

In his response to Dr. Malerba's presentation, **Stefan Beierl (GIZ)** provided an overview of the initiatives that the German Agency for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ) is undertaking in the social protection sector, including publications and training courses. Mr. Beierl emphasized that thus far the focus of the international development community has been more on the interlinkages between social protection and climate change adaptation. Nevertheless, social protection is also key for climate change mitigation.



During the subsequent Q&A session, the point was made that international development financing plays an important role when it comes to harmonizing social protection and climate protection efforts. Climate funds need to be less restrictive in their rules, and allow that funding of social protection programs are linked to climate change. The discussion also touched upon the need to better represent social parameters and social protection policies in climate models.

For further readings see:

Malerba, D., 2019. Poverty-energy-emissions pathways: Recent trends and future sustainable development goals. *Energy for Sustainable Development*, 49, 109-124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esd.2019.02.001>

Malerba, D., 2021. What Are the Distributional Implications of Climate Policies? Recent Evidence from Developing Countries. Bonn. https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/BP_3.2021.pdf

Malerba, D., Gaentzsch, A. & Ward, H., 2021. Mitigating poverty: The patterns of multiple carbon tax and recycling regimes for Peru. *Energy Policy*, 149, 111961. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2020.111961>

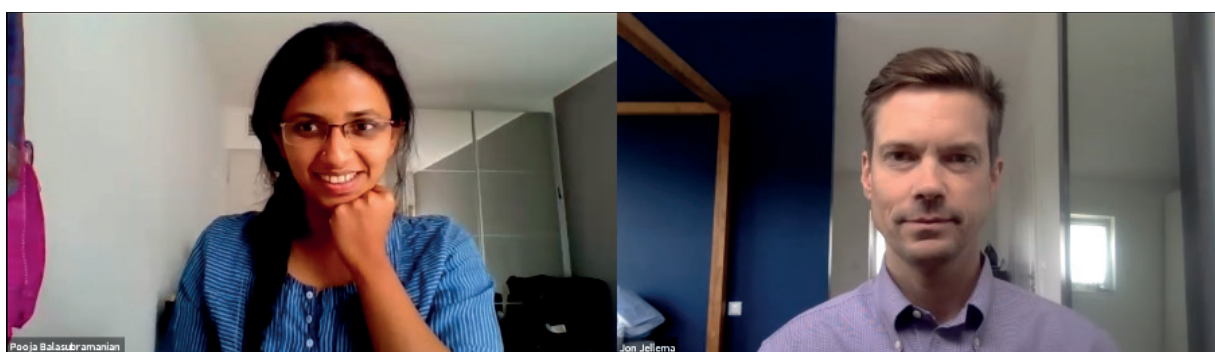
Malerba, D. & Wiebe, K.S., 2020. Analysing the effect of climate policies on poverty through employment channels. *Environmental Research Letters*. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/abd3d3>

Session 3: Poverty and inequality



In the parallel session on "Poverty and Inequality", Dr. Pooja Balasubramanian focused on the inter-linkages between three SDGs: SDG 1 (reducing and eradicating poverty), SDG 8 (economic growth) and SDG 10 (reducing inequality). She suggested two important areas where policy intervention is required, which include a) focusing on inequality when considering the poverty and economic growth relationship. B) incorporating multidimensional

poverty that includes the provision of healthcare (water and sanitation), education and decent work for all as an important index for poverty measurement.



She presented key findings from her current research that focuses on the relationship between economic growth and multidimensional poverty. Preliminary findings show that economic growth alone is not able to contribute to reducing poverty. Furthermore, the relationship is heterogeneous varying across countries and over time.



Dr. Balasubramanian's presentation was complemented by a response from **Dr. Jon Jellema (CEQ)** and a discussion with the audience. Dr. Jellema emphasized the need to identify different growth paths for countries, particularly focusing on the green growth policy mandate. He highlighted the need to generate revenues for social protection coverage to ensure that any growth trajectory is inclusive.

For further readings see:

Burchi, F., et al 2021. An individual based index of multidimensional poverty for low and middle-income countries. Journal of Human Development and capabilities. <https://www.die-gdi.de/externe-publikationen/article/an-individual-based-index-of-multidimensional-poverty-for-low-and-middle-income-countries/>

Burchi, F., Malerba, D., Montenegro E, C., Rippin, N., 2020. Assessing trends in multidimensional poverty during the MDGs. Bonn. <https://www.die-gdi.de/externe-publikationen/article/assessing-trends-in-multidimensional-poverty-during-the-mdgs/>

Klasen, S., 2008. Economic Growth and Poverty reduction: Measurement issues using Income and Non-Income Indicators. World Development, 36(3). <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X0700215X>

Summary of Closing Plenary Session

Panel discussion: „The Relevance of Integrated Sustainability Governance for Post-Pandemic Recovery”

Moderator: Dr. Imme Scholz, (DIE), Panelists: Ambassador David Donoghue (ODI), Dr. Ingolf Dietrich (BMZ), Ivonne Lobos (SEI)



Asked about the crucial aspects to support developing countries to sustainably recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, **Dr. Ingolf Dietrich** referred to the 2030 reform strategy of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) that defines five core areas of German development cooperation: (1) peaceful and inclusive societies, (2) a world without hunger, (3) training and sustainable growth for decent jobs, (4) responsibility for our planet – climate and energy, (5) protecting life on Earth – the environment and natural resources.

“Overall”, Dr. Dietrich said “we see the 2030 Agenda as a compass to guide us out of the crisis stronger and more resilient than we entered it”. However, he also pointed to implementation challenges related to the complexity of the 17 SDGs and their 169 interlinked targets and the related need to prioritize action in initiative areas that hold the potential to act as catalysts and accelerate development in other fields. “Therefore”, Dr. Dietrich explained, “BMZ’s recover forward strategy should focus on training and education and governance as enablers of development.” Further focus areas to recover forward should include renewable energy, lower emissions, urban transport, digital infrastructure, and the conservation of biodiversity.

Ambassador David Donoghue emphasized the successful function of the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) as a venue where the presentation of voluntary national reviews (VNR) on progress in SDG attainment has produced political momentum for international support for the 2030 Agenda as a framework to support COVID-19 post-pandemic recovery. All countries who presented their VNR to the HLPF in 2021 included a dedicated chapter on the impacts of the pandemic on SDG achievement.

Furthermore, many countries stated intentions to align their national recovery plans with their national SDG implementation strategies, thus effectively treating them as a single or combined agenda. Notwithstanding this positive assessment, Mr. Donoghue also pointed to deficiencies in the way the HLPF is operating, which are partially due to budget constraints. In his opinion, *“a key issue will be the extent to which the UN’s big funders are willing to increase the budgetary allocation for the HLPF’s annual meetings. The large and valuable workload that the HLPF is being asked to undertake cannot be accommodated on its present resources.”*

Ivonne Lobos provided her perspective on the main challenges of adopting the SDGs as a framework for recovery at the local level. She pointed out that the ongoing pandemic has put territories and communities worldwide under economic and social difficulties, directly affecting sub-national efforts to achieve the SDGs. Local governments had to adapt and take critical decisions to protect their citizens. Specifically, budgetary resources had to be reallocated from various development sectors towards public health care (SDG 3) and social protection (SDG 1), which may potentially undermine progress on other SDGs. At present, however, most governments have not yet precisely evaluated the impact of the pandemic on the SDGs, and sub-national governments are still unaware which SDGs were most affected in their territories. Against this backdrop, Ms Lobos emphasized the critical role of the academic research community in studying and understanding the ramifications of different pandemic responses around the world on sustainable development: *“We must not only help understand the effects of response measures but also do our homework in designing and proposing integrated and coherent recovery paths – and be vocal about them.”*

Q&A session

In the ensuing Q&A session, participants from the audience elaborated further on the topics raised in the panel discussion.

Providing a perspective from the Global South, **Mr. Azamat Tashev (UNDP Uzbekistan)** suggested that key governance indicators to systematically and critically track countries' SDG progress should include: levels of corruption, accountability of decision makers, transparency in public spending and money lending, effectiveness and adaptability of public service, strengths of institutions (including independence of judicial systems), enabling environment for private sector participation, and ensuring security of investments and property rights.

Dr. David Horan (University College of Dublin) affirmed the need to strengthen the role and resources of the HLPF. He suggested that under a better funded HLPF, meetings should take place several times a year and include the periodic review of the six "transformations for sustainable development" put forth in the Global Sustainable Development Report 2019.

Prof. Raymond Saner (University of Basel and Centre for Socio-Economic Development, CSEND) pointed out that according to the IMF and UNCTAD the number of highly indebted developing countries is increasing dramatically. In view of decreasing ODA and low levels of revenue generation through taxes, the role of the private sector will be crucial for developing countries to cover the costs of post-pandemic recovery and SDG implementation. Public private partnerships (PPP) could be one possibility to bridge the financing gap. Yet in many countries, governments still struggle to understand the intricacies of PPP and the development of an indicator to measure progress on SDG target 17.17 (encourage and promote effective public, public- private, and civil society partnerships) has stagnated.

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