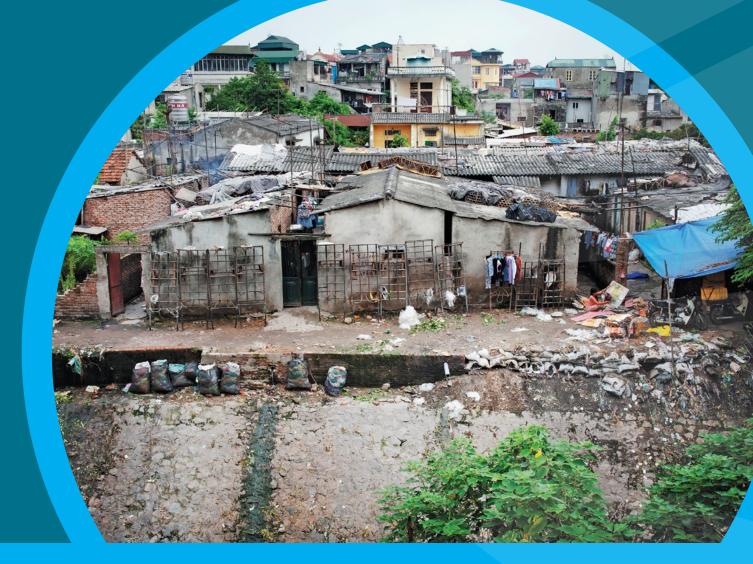# Leaving No One Behind:
Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development

A Shared United Nations System Framework for Action

**United Nations System
Chief Executives Board for Coordination**

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
G⊙ALS

Innovative forms of accountability useful for the Sustainable Development Goals

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This Annex considers different initiatives aimed at promoting accountability through inclusive and participatory SDG follow-up and review processes.

- **The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign is a system-wide effort to coordinate advocacy and civic outreach** by giving voice to citizens and civil society, and encouraging them to engage in and monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local and national levels. One important innovation is the global My World 2030 online platform, which engaged more than eight million people in the lead-up to the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today, it continues to keep people engaged on the new Agenda and collects globally comparable disaggregated citizen-generated data, which are at scale and are nationally representative. It is envisioned that this platform will enable citizens to contribute to SDG reports, and will help to build dialogue between parliamentarians, local governments, mayors and citizens to ensure a "people's perspective" on how to implement the new agenda at different levels and on the monitoring of national policies and services that directly impact their lives.

- **The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (UN Youth-SWAP) provides strategic guidance to the United Nations system as a whole in its work on youth. It was elaborated by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD)**, on which the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) serves as permanent co-chair alongside a rotating co-chair from among IANYD membership. A Monitoring and Evaluation framework guides the online reporting from United Nations entities at the global level and United Nations country teams on United Nations entities' individual and collective efforts to advance youth development. Country- and regional-

level and topic-based reports can then be issued as useful tools for government, youth organizations and partners. This accountability tool provides the United Nations with an opportunity to bolster inter-agency collaboration and guide further programming on youth issues in the context of the 2030 Agenda. **The United Nations Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health has an Independent Accountability Panel,** which will encourage an increased role for "citizen's hearings" as well as an increased role for parliamentary committees and national human rights and judicial institutions. It will also use standardized and user-friendly scorecards, updated frequently with locally available disaggregated data, which will provide insights into progress at the national and subnational levels. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners have also developed citizen-led, social accountability platforms such as U Report, social audits and citizen report cards in addition to briefings or town hall meetings on tracking of results.

- **The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and a number of other agencies that are members of the United Nations Development Group's Human Rights Working Group and United Nations country teams are strengthening participatory mechanisms, including national human rights institutions and standing national coordination bodies, at the country level for follow-up on human rights recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms.** These bodies can also review and ensure that national SDG plans of action and progress achieved are aligned with human rights standards and respect human rights principles of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

- **The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is working to ensure the participation of local actors in the follow-up and review process, with a focus on organizations representing the interests of rural people** – farmers' organizations, indigenous groups, etc. – to ensure that their voices and perspectives are part of the process. The United Nations system in general must create spaces for those most at risk of being left behind and traditionally underrepresented including smallholder farmers, rural women, rural youth and Indigenous Peoples in order to voice their concerns and needs.

- **The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is creating a monitoring and review mechanism to follow up on the implementation of industry-related targets and goals** in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly, those in SDG 9, adopted by UNIDO member States at the end of 2016.

- **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is coordinating global reporting on some difficult-to-measure SDG indicators, especially those addressing "hidden phenomena"**, such as illicit financial flows and indicators for which there is no agreed-upon methodology.

- **The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IFAD and World Food Programme (WFP) are involved in monitoring progress towards the achievement of SDG 2 and related goals**, on the information provided through the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) Reports at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). This Committee is the foremost inclusive, international and

intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. The Committee includes representatives of Member States, United Nations agencies and bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations and their networks, international agricultural research systems, international and regional financial institutions, and representatives of private sector associations and private philanthropic foundations.

- **FAO actively promotes inter-agency convergence in key policy areas related to the decent work agenda in rural areas.** In particular, FAO has a longstanding partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO), is an active member of the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA), and collaborates with other international organizations such as UNIDO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), IFAD and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through joint programmes. In June 2014, FAO became an official member of the Global Migration Group (GMG). It is also an active member of the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) and directly contributes to its United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (Youth-SWAP). In particular, FAO, together with the ILO, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN–Habitat) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) lead on the Youth-SWAP Measure 2.3: "Countries assisted in developing comprehensive and evidence-based employment and livelihoods programmes targeting disadvantaged youth". In addition, FAO is part of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth (DJ4Y) and its Strategy, which was launched in February 2016, at the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum.

- **UNDP operates a Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC),** chaired at the highest level of the organization, which monitors the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy by calling on bureau directors and chiefs of units to report on progress in mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment into their activities. GSIC also serves as a peer review group, ensuring that bureau directors systematically integrate gender equality in each area of work. The Chair annually presents key GSIC recommendations to the Executive Board.

- **UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)** analysed the implications of leaving no one behind and found that there is a need to better understand the dynamics by which people move in and out of poverty.[1] UNDP and UNCDF help countries analyse the underlying drivers of exclusion as well as the risks that prevent people from staying out of poverty. This analysis focuses on labour markets, education, social protection, systems of care and access to financial and physical assets.

- **UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES)**, which came into effect on 1 January 2015, are a significant innovation—not just for UNDP, but also for the United Nations system. UNDP was the first and only United Nations agency, fund or programme to embed a series of social and environmental indicators within its accountability structure, quality standards and assurance process. This is a practical measure that can be more widely adopted to improve the quality and consistency of related programming.

- **UN Women has developed the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP),** the first unified accountability framework for gender equality, which over the past four years has led to unified

monitoring within over 90 per cent of all United Nations entities. However, this framework is not being used by other organizations beyond the United Nations system. It constitutes an innovative method to better embed and mainstream gender equality into all functions of an institution in a new and different way. It has yielded consistent results in terms of an unprecedented level of uptake, systematic monitoring and uniform reporting over several years. In 2015, almost 75 per cent of United Nations entities reported having gender policies, up from 40 per cent in 2012. The implementation of the UN-SWAP has been catalysed by a network of over 300 focal points, twice the number of members in 2012, spread across the United Nations system. The harmonization of accountability systems and the sustainability of networks supporting them are unprecedented in a system as complex as that of the United Nations.

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[1]   See UNDP/UNCDF paper, "Getting to the last mile in least developed countries", Chapter 1, "Why some are left behind — inequalities and social exclusion" (2016) http://www.uncdf.org/getting-to-the-last-mile-in-least-developed-countries-migration