

Informal Breakfast Dialogue on Agenda 2030
SDG Thematic Review Series: SDG 13
Tuesday, March 26th 2019 8:30-9:45 AM

Co-convened by the Bahá'í International Community, Women's Environment and Development Organization, Climate Action Network and World Resources Institute in collaboration with UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development Goals

- Three risks resulting from ill-conceived policy - (1) least well-off are not always reached by policy; (2) not enough measures to target the furthest behind (ex: some gaps don't account for or address gender inequalities); (3) least well-off are displaced owing to climate change ("green gentrification") and cannot afford market prices of new housing.
- Work needs to be done to identify the most vulnerable and how to enact policy that reaches them.
- Most governments focused on mainstreaming guidelines related to target 13.2. We need to help Member States build on interlinkages between global and national levels, and to reinforce efforts.
- What do we consider transformative? A lot of what has been proposed is to use the mechanisms of a system that has gotten us into this problem to get us out of it. This may be part of the strategy but it cannot possibly be the entirety of it.
- Consultation with local communities: how do you ensure that people will be involved in consultations regarding processes that will most affect them?
- There is a concern that only SDG15 (biodiversity) takes animals into account. We cannot save the planet unless we take into consideration every living creature. Many do not even understand what biodiversity is. Member states talk about forests when referring to SDG15, but not biodiversity in its completion. How do we deal with the fact that nobody understands what biodiversity means?
- Many important elements of sustainability are missing from the conversation (SDGs). Another issue stems around decoupling. We cannot solely seek efficiency as the solution to the profound economic and environmental impacts of the current global structures.
- Magnitude of changes will rely on citizen push and citizen demand (e.g. automakers switching to electric). How will we achieve a different way of doing democracy? Most people find the topic of climate change depressing. How can we approach the agenda in a way that is perhaps more engaging; where people feel compelled by the possibility of enacting change? We need to strike a balance between pragmatism/reality and hope/opportunity in order to galvanize rather than enervate populations.
- Recycling policies have ceased in many places. How do we change our consumption economics? There is a concern regarding small island states. How is every culture valued?
- A struggle lies within how we raise awareness, and global acceptance that climate change is happening. How do we ensure we're speaking the same language when we say things like climate change and climate action? Attempts at dialogue are happening, but not fast enough or frank enough. We are beginning to see movements of youth engaging in a frank and unapologetic way, yet we need deeper conversation surrounding what climate change requires.

¹ **Member States:** Australia, Ireland, Senegal. **United Nations Entities:** UN DESA, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. **Civil Society:** ACT Alliance, CARITAS Internationalis, Childhood Education International, Company of the Daughters of Charity, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Presentation Association, My World Mexico, National Space Society, BGO Committee on Sustainable Development, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Thinking Animals United, World Animal Net, WEDO, World Resources Institute.

- The question of education is very important. There is a crisis within civil service at the national level in many countries. We need to re-educate civil service around all of this. Our leaders need to be educated for transformative leadership.
- It's detrimental that we're not taught about these things in high school--how serious climate change is and how we can enact change. Starting at the local level is critical, especially within public schools. One example of young people taking initiative is of a local high school that staged a walkout. We need more focus on the science of climate change, and not just the policies surrounding it. We need to get out of the UN and bring these issues to our local communities.
- Indigenous people and local communities have innate wisdom and knowledge--those in touch with nature, and earth. Their knowledge differs from that which we often prioritize at the UN -- how can we tap into their knowledge so that biodiversity can be preserved?
- We require a higher level of political ambition. Europe, for instance, has a goal of being climate neutral by 2050.
- The number of climate refugees will inevitably grow, and how this is addressed is critical. Hope is linked to what individuals can do. We are finding alternative ways to tackle these issues. Inaction costs more than action, yet the cost of action is still high.
- Identity is at the heart of this. If our identity is peddled as an economic actor--one who consumes and competes with others for capital accumulation--these problems will compound. How can governments invest in curriculum that support a different kind of identity around service, compassion, and stewardship? Similarly, how can they invest in robust public media that encourages different patterns of behavior?
- How do we tap into universities and other existing organizations to start moving and taking steps?
- It's imperative to think about all of the SDGs as indivisible, and equally important. Review of SDGs set up in a way that can make it difficult to see them as interlinked.
- Learning that stemmed from implementations of the Sendai framework require reflections from more of our interrelated consequences of our actions. How different sciences can come together to help us understand these consequences is very important. The Sendai framework instrument implements articles 7 & 8 of Paris agreement. These are fundamental instrument to make sure that people are not left behind.
- Transformation, citizen engagement and mobilization were main themes; not only in terms of tweaking existing models, but radically changing the foundation of economic systems we've developed over two centuries. We need to stop promoting growth at the expense of natural world. How do we achieve this in practice? We need to be very honest about where to invest interests when formulating our policies.
- Ethical question about sharing the catastrophic facts of what can happen if we don't make change. Need much more awareness, and tools and data accessible to all. We are beyond the point of preserving the morale of human beings, we now require transparency with people of what's at risk. We need mobilization at the scale of what we had in WWII. Patterns of our daily lives need to change. Our relationship to consumption must alter completely.
- We have to relocate some production systems. There is also a need for more decentralized systems. A shift in power towards more local authority/action, for instance. Adding the democracy dimension into the landscape.
- There are a series of events related to climate action. An upcoming meeting in Copenhagen, for instance is related to process. Discussion in at a more multi-stakeholder environment.
- We can hope all these different events addressing these important matters will help forge a greater willingness to take action and result in greater action on the ground.
- Gaps we need to address: ambition, equity *and persuasion* gap. How do we understand the point of view of someone who doesn't understand us? Critical to persuasion is understanding why someone views something differently, not advancing more aggressively our own perspective.

- Transition from old jobs to new jobs is not always straightforward. It becomes more difficult to retrain and learn new skills at later stages in life.
- Persuasion gap even after we've educated all of the youth: they may still be outnumbered by those who have short-term interests. (Maybe change voting age from 18 to 16!) Young people need to be empowered so that transitions can happen much more quickly.
- Coalition of the willing needs to be louder, stronger, and deeper. All of us can and must do this.