

**Informal Breakfast Dialogue on Agenda 2030**  
**SDG Thematic Review Series: SDG 10**  
**Wednesday, 20 February 2019 8:30-9:45 AM**

*Co-convened by the Bahá'í International Community, Center for Economic and Social Rights, Global Call to Action Against Poverty, and WaterAid, in collaboration with UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development Goals<sup>1</sup>*

- Inequality undermines sustainability of economic development, as well as social cohesion and trust; presents major challenges to achieving SDGs – not just Goal 10, and to realizing human rights and the full potential of every human being
- Very challenging social issue in developing and developed societies; need to fight absolute and relative inequality. Requires multi-stakeholder approach, specific and tailor-made to different needs of various social groups in vulnerable situations (persons with disabilities, youth, older persons, women and girls, etc.)
- Republic of Korea and Turkey hosted 7th meeting of Group of Friends for SDG10 (19 Feb): discussed the role of private sector and academia in reducing inequality within and between countries; Group active since 2016
- Republic of Korea has taken serious strides to reduce inequalities with increased social spending, taxation and minimum wage increases, resulting in progressively moving up from being second last in Oxfam Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRIE); aspiration to be success story.
- False separation between poverty and inequality, now merging (e.g. Oxfam); SDG10 crucial to achieving SDG1. SDG10 treats the disease of which poverty is a symptom – opportunity to examine root causes, trends
- Difficulties in measuring inequalities according to SDG10 indicators, e.g. World Bank's shared prosperity measure (growth rate of bottom 40% of population should be faster than the rest)
- Measurement problem when many indicators for SDG10 are Tier III
- Of 91 countries for which we have data, only 50 saw the poorest 40% grow greater than the average and most of these gains are marginal; data available only for 12 LDCs.
- Metric of 'shared prosperity' ignores top of distribution, so we don't know about polarization; recent research on top performers according to shared prosperity metric; for many countries, poorest 40% did better than average, but top 10% beat everybody. Hard to say inequality is reducing in those cases.
- Issues with the data and with the metric, so we don't have a good understanding of how the world's poor are faring as inequality changes. Data from people on their lived experiences of inequality is very important to capture.
- Mathematical relationship between the speed at which poverty declines and measures of inequality. According to the World Bank, if global growth stays same but we do nothing about inequality, we won't eradicate extreme poverty. Even if growth doubles we can't do it.
- Inequalities are also evident at high end of wealth spectrum – one solution is a target for women to capture 30% of wealth, investment in women-owned enterprises which would be an advance

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<sup>1</sup>**Member States:** Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, EU Delegation to the United Nations. **United Nations Entities:** International Labour Organization, UN Conference on Trade and Development, UN Division for Economic and Social Affairs, UN Research Institute on Social Development, UN Women. **Civil Society:** ACT Alliance, Bahá'í International Community, Center for Economic and Social Rights, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, NGO CSW, Daughters of Charity, Dianova International, Global Policy Forum, Gray Panthers, INPEA, International Disability Alliance, International Federation on Ageing, Loretto Community, New Humanism Project, Oxfam International, Religions of Sacred Heart Mary, UNANIMA International, VALLI, WaterAid, Women's Environment and Development Organization.

- Reducing inequality doesn't hurt growth. Inequality is a macro-critical economic issue, not "fringe" or leftist. Tackling inequality is essential to sustainable development and the inclusion of SDG 10 was a major milestone for the SDGs.
- Inequalities are not just about income or wealth – need to address the systemic and structural issues of policy that are antithetical to goal 10 that keep us from realizing the full spectrum of the 2030 Agenda. Open and frank conversation about why inequalities exist is necessary if the SDGs are to be achieved; without addressing structural issues we are making only marginal changes at best.
- Same power asymmetries driving inequalities also prevent policies to address it; need to build coalitions that include civil society and policy makers to address power structures, institutions through which inequalities are enacted
- Universal social protection floors are a concrete policy option that contributes to reducing inequalities
- Examples of inequality even when there is growth e.g. there is still poverty, corruption; need for social security, progressive taxation; acknowledgement of colonial histories and effects of imperialism augment inequalities both within and among countries
- Need to look at environmental inequalities, inequalities between regions, specific situations of small island nations
- Gap in discussion: environmental dimension of SDGs and its link to inequalities. Useful to look at Oxfam's carbon inequality impact of climate change, and how most unequal societies have the most environmental degradation (pollution deaths, etc)
- Inequalities are not just an economic issue, but political. Addressing them requires changing the balances and imbalances among societies, through cultural consensus and political will
- Achieving SDGs in line with African Union Agenda 2063, collaborating with UN at country level; civil society has a huge role to play to improve understanding of how inequalities are experienced, in implementation and also policy-making and building consensus for change
- Reducing inequalities require life course investment in women and girls; example of national-level poverty reduction strategy involving consultation at all levels, multi-stakeholder approach, inputs from rural and indigenous peoples
- Civil society struggle key in making political change happen, e.g. electing political party with inclusive social welfare focus. Have to lead from people's experiences, e.g. GCAP's Faces of Inequality project
- SDG10 was hard won but has had the least progress – many VNRs list efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda, but mostly skip over inequalities while policies at home push austerity and deregulation. The policies required to systematically reduce inequalities are often not politically palatable or easy - require taking on elite and corporate power. Need an honest and frank conversation in country and at the HLPF
- What do we want to see from HLPF in July and SDGs Summit in September, around inequalities - regarding multi-stakeholder discussion that impact policy, and potential civil society campaign? 2019 provides an opportunity for progress around SDG10, debate on new economic justice model, new forms of corporate governance; and to avoid continued de-prioritization of SDG10
- Interlinkages approach required across 2030 Agenda, to capture civil society experience and look at gaps in access to services and opportunity. DESA is hosting an EGM to assess these issues.
- Need political will and civil society advocacy, including around the IMF, to address political capture and economic inequality
- We don't have shortage of policies to address inequalities - what's lacking is political will to implement these policies. We know enough strategies, the challenge is political commitment.