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CONCEPT NOTE

Workshop to Accelerate SDG Implementation in the Caribbean

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
18 May 2017

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into effect on 1 January 2016 subsequent to the adoption of Resolution A/RES/70/1¹ on 25 September 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly. The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity and has at its cornerstone the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are posed to shape global sustainable development efforts till the year 2030. In this respect, many global and regional initiatives, mechanisms and frameworks have been established to guide the implementation, follow-up and review of the SDGs. These include the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HPLF), the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG), the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB), and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. Activities at the subregional level have also been directed at galvanizing Caribbean countries to position themselves to successfully implement the SDGs.

However, one year into the 2030 Agenda, the pace of implementation in the Caribbean has remained slow. At the recently held Caribbean Symposium on Mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in National Development Planning organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Kingston, Jamaica, during 14-16 February 2017, it was identified that the Caribbean has largely not institutionalise the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, creating a vacuum in the process of national ownership of the SDGs. Specifically, the lack of a national institutional framework for SDG implementation in most countries constitutes a major factor in the slow pace of implementation in the Caribbean. Therefore, it is essential that a clear institutional arrangement for SDG implementation be defined at the national level to ensure national ownership of the 2030 Agenda and to promote a coordinated approach to the implementation of the SDGs.

Against the background, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is organizing a one-day **Workshop to Accelerate SDG Implementation in the Caribbean** as an avenue to discuss practical steps towards establishing national institutional frameworks for SDG implementation in the Caribbean. The workshop will provide an opportunity for Member States

¹ A/RES/70/1-Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

to consider models of institutional arrangement for SDG implementation that would be most appropriate for adoption considering national circumstances. The workshop will also provide a space for peer-learning on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the HLPF, thereby positioning more Caribbean countries to conduct VNR in the coming years.

Rationale

National ownership is central to the 2030 Agenda and a dedicated mechanism for mainstreaming and implementing the SDGs in every country is a crucial success factor. With one year already gone in the 15-year period for implementing the 2030 Agenda, a large number of Caribbean countries are yet to begin the implementation of the SDGs in any substantive manner. With few exceptions, in countries where SDG initiatives have already started, they remain largely fragmented without a central coordinating body, institution, or office charged with the primary responsibility to coordinate the implementation of and report on the progress in attaining the SDGs. To this end, it is important to sensitize Member States to the importance of having a national institutional framework for SDG implementation and to provide policy makers with recommendations on alternative models of institutional arrangements that could be considered.

Objectives

The main objective of this workshop is to provide policy makers with practical options for establishing or enhancing their national institutional framework for SDG implementation in order to ensure that the pace of implementation of the SDGs in the Caribbean is accelerated.

Format

The workshop will be participatory in nature. Workshop materials will be distributed to participants ahead of time and Member States are encouraged to provide practical examples of their national arrangements to stimulate peer-learning and to facilitate arriving at workshop outcomes that are practical and which can be adopted by Member States.

Expected outputs

The main outcomes of this workshop include:

- Guidelines for establishing a national institutional framework for SDG implementation
- Model institutional framework of SDG implementation for consideration by Member States

Venue and date

The workshop will be held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago on 18 May 2017.

Participation

The meeting will bring together senior government officials from the Caribbean in the areas of foreign affairs, sustainable development, and planning, including the national statistical system. Officials of the United Nations system will also participate.

Geographic coverage

All CDCC Member and Associate Member Countries.

Language

The working language of the meeting will be English.