



## CONCEPT NOTE

### 2021-22 Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

11-14 April 2022

8:00pm (Republic of Korea), 1:00pm (Geneva), 7:00am (New York)

#### Background

The United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) was established in 2011 in Incheon City, Republic of Korea by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) with the support from the Government of Korea. The UNOSD, which is part of the UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), contributes to building, exchanging and facilitating the use of knowledge in support of sustainable development. The Office specialises in mapping, assessing and improving the exchange of knowledge resources, providing advice to Member States and the broader policy communities on applying such resources, and conducting research and capacity development in different areas related to sustainable development with the goal of accelerating progress towards Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

One of UNOSD's flagship activities is the annual *Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This training course is intended to provide policymakers in central and subnational governments with the knowledge, skills and tools for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at all levels of society.

Included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by UN Member States in September 2015, are the 17 SDGs and their 169 associated targets, conceived as "*integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities*". Four years later, the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report also warned that the biggest transformative potentials of the 2030 Agenda do not lie in pursuing single Goals or targets but rather in a systemic approach (GSDR, 2019).

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79). As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and shall provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. Given their central role in overseeing the follow-up and review of the SDGs at the global level, their overarching themes and in-depth reviews of selected Goals at national level through the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and, more recently, the progressive integration of review of SDG implementation at a local level through the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), the HLPF meetings generally serve as a useful backdrop to the organization of the one-week training course.

The Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development regularly takes place in Incheon City, where it gathers around 70 participants every year. For the second year in a row, however, this flagship activity of the UNOSD cannot take place in person due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Therefore, this edition of the Executive Training Course for Policymakers will take place in the form of a series of two-and-a-half-hour online sessions over four days between **11-14 April 2022 (8:00pm - 10:30pm, Korea Standard Time)**.

The international training course targeting senior government officials from developing countries to strengthen policy coherence for sustainable development integrating the social, economic, environmental and governance dimensions of policy making and implementation will be structured around the 2022 HLPF that will be held from 5 to 15 July 2022. Guided by the 2022 HLPF, which has for overarching theme, *Building back better from*

*the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the Training will also explore the five SDGs that will be the focus of attention during the 2022 HLPF, namely SDGs 4 on quality education, 5 on gender equality, 14 on life below water, 15 on life on land, and 17 on partnerships for the Goals. In addition, the course will also examine some of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15, 17 and, as far as possible, on the other SDGs in line with the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals.

## **Objectives**

The Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has the general objective of building the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and general capacities of Member States for implementing sustainable development planning, policy making and policy shaping through an integrated approach. This year, the training course aims to focus on SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals. The discussions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SDGs will serve as a means to identify challenges and potential solutions regarding the prompt recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## **Structure and Methodology**

The 2021-22 Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will consist of four online interrelated modules structured around concepts and issues of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the SDGs —of SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17, in particular, integrating in the discussions the challenges and potential solutions regarding the swift recovery from COVID-19 and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

It will consist of formal presentations by international experts, scholars, practitioners, and actors followed by Q&A and discussions. Recognizing the knowledge and experiences that already exist amongst the participating policymakers and policy shapers, the course adopts a methodology that aimed to promote peer-to-peer learning through country case examples presented by participants who will be invited by the organizers who will strive to ensure geographical and gender balance among the presenters.

The Forum will take place in an online format using the Cisco WebEx platform, with additional support of other compatible virtual event platforms, such as Slido, Padlet, Quizlet and Miro, etc. to enhance the interaction with the audience.

The training course this year is in continuity with its last year's edition, which was shaped by the forthcoming HLPF that was to take place in July 2021). It is also building upon the experience of the 2021-22 Sustainable Development Transformation Forum (SDTF) held a month earlier (28 February – 3 March 2022), which was also guided and inspired by the HLPF 2022 and from the scientific assessment in the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019 while developing its own methodological approach. Hence, the international training course will, as well, examine the abovementioned issues through the lenses of governance, capacity building & education, policy & institutional coherence, as well as individual and collective behaviour in an effort to enable a shift in participants' mindsets towards the necessary transformations and concrete actions to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

While this edition of the Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be informed by the experience and, at least partly, the knowledge generated or revealed by 2021-22 SDTF, it will also seek to complement, collaborate with, contribute to, inform and/or be informed by other initiatives in preparation of the 2022 HLPF —particularly the ones organized by the UN DESA and its Division for the Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), to which UNOSD belongs.

The structure of the modules aims to equip participants with practical yet transformative pathways, including planning, policy and public programme design for sustainable development. The modules will also emphasize the importance of equipping participants with skills to craft nationally and locally owned policies and strategies examining the interactions, co-benefits and trade-offs to create synergies in policymaking for the SDGs.

While each online module will be designed as a stand-alone training component, the first and last modules

will, respectively, make room for an introduction and conclusion of the whole training course. Following the opening ceremony, an introduction of the 4-day training course will be made with reference to the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the need to advance the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will then focus on of SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17. Having five SDGs to explore over only four sessions will make it impossible to dedicate a full session on each of the selected SDGs. To address this issue, and building upon the interlinked nature of the Goals, the international training course will, to the extent possible, seek to address two or more of the selected SDGs in each session in order to reflect these interconnections, where they exist. Given the transversal nature of SDG 17, a possible avenue will be to address major elements of the Partnership for the Goals, including, for instance, resource mobilization, technology, capacity-building and systemic issues (policy and institutional coherence; multi-stakeholder partnerships; and data, monitoring and accountability) during sessions of other selected SDGs. The organization of sessions will be further explored and developed later on, during the preparation phase of the Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Target Audience**

The international training course is targeting senior government officials and experts from developing countries who are responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national and subnational levels. Given the online format of the training course, it will enable the participation of academia, youth, and other stakeholders having a particular interest in the swift and sustainable recovery from COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or the selected SDGs.

International experts, scholars, practitioners, and actors, representatives of regional and international organizations, including the United Nations, and of civil society and private sector may be invited to act as resource persons, presenters, speakers and discussants.

## **Date, time and format**

As indicated above, the **2021-22 Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** will take place in the form of a series of two-and-a-half-hour online sessions over four days between **11-14 April 2022 (8:00pm - 10:30pm, Korea Standard Time)**

## **Language**

The Training Course will be conducted in English

## **Registration**

Registration is free of charge but is mandatory prior to all the four (4) sessions

### **Day 1**

Registration: <https://bit.ly/36UZ6RH>

### **Day 2**

Registration: <https://bit.ly/3tHpSWC>

### **Day 3**

Registration: <https://bit.ly/3DIdgbv>

### **Day 4**

Registration: <https://bit.ly/3qFteHH>