

Concept Note

Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

20-24 May 2019, Incheon, Republic of Korea

Background

The *Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs* is intended to provide policymakers in central and local government and policy shapers in the private sector and civil society with the concepts and tools for mainstreaming and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through their work.

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.”

Considering their integrated and indivisible nature, the Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs the *Executive Training Course for Policymakers* is striving to examine the Agenda as a whole and the 17 SDGs in relation to one another as well as cross-cutting issues within the time and resources available.

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). These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the HLPF. As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the 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 the central role of the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in overseeing the follow-up and review of the SDGs at the global level, HLPF meetings, their overarching themes and SDGs under in-depth review generally form part of the topics discussed during the one-week training course.

During the 2018 HLPF, which was under the overarching theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" the following SDGs were under in-depth review: Goals 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 15 Life on Land) in addition to Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), which undergoes in-depth review every year.

This year, the Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs takes place while the 2030 Agenda is in its fourth year of implementation, and when the HLPF—scheduled a few weeks later, will complete a full cycle of thematic reviews of the 17 goals.

The 2019 HLPF (to be held on 9-18 July 2019) will review progress towards the 2030 agenda under the overarching theme “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” with the following set of goals to be reviewed in depth: Goals 4 (Quality Education), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The 2019 HLPF, its overarching theme and the SDGs under in-depth review will serve as a backdrop to the course, while keeping its focus on implementing the Agenda through the daily work of the participating policymakers and policy shapers. Through presentations made by various experts and participants on selected topics and the discussions held in group work and plenary seminar sessions, participants will increase their knowledge of good practices, strategies and tools that can help them implement the Agenda 2030 and SDGs in their own (national and local) contexts.

Objectives:

- Knowledge and skills acquisition regarding the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and their integration into policy and practice at national and local levels
- Networking among public policymakers and non-state policy shapers
- Sharing experiences and peer-to-peer collaboration, across sectors and countries
- Learning from best practices and pitfalls in implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs
- Capacity building for sustainable development policymaking and policy-shaping

Structure

The course is structured around the five pillars of Agenda 2030 – people, prosperity, planet, peace and justice and partnership, while looking particularly at the goals that will be reviewed in depth during the 2019 HLPF from the perspective of practical policymaking and operational activities for development.

Following an introductory module on the main concepts of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and progress so far, subsequent modules will cover the appropriate SDGs that fall under the people (SDG 4), prosperity (SDGs 8 and 10), planet (SDG 13), and peace & justice (SDG 16) modules. Additional modules will be devoted to the means of implementation, the global partnership and multistakeholder partnerships for sustainable development (SDG 17). A final module will explore the way forward and provide insights to enable participating policymakers and policy shapers to return to the job with individual action plans.

Methodology

The course will consist of several interrelated modules, each covering concepts and issues of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, complemented by concrete policy practices and options. It will consist of formal presentations, group work and plenary seminar sessions. Preparatory reading and assignments will be requested of participants, with a chance to share views on line prior to the course. Group work will involve concrete policy exercises to apply the issues reviewed and assignments undertaken. The group work would also involve some role-playing simulation as well as structured debates. A half-day field trip to a project to illustrate the Korean experience in implementing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs is foreseen.