

Sustainable Development Goals Fund Steering Committee Informal Meeting Minutes

*New York, May 17, 2016, 10 a.m.
Location: DC-1 United Nations Plaza, New York*

Participants

1. H.E. Mr. Carlos Morales, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations
2. Ms. Marcela Ordoñez Fernández, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations
3. Ms. Huyen T. Ha, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations
4. Mr. Antonio Parenti, European Union Delegation to the United Nations, Minister Counsellor
5. Mr. Luis Francisco Martínez Montes, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations
6. Mr. Nick R. Hartmann, Director Partnerships Group, BERA, UNDP
7. Mr. Vinicius Carvalho Pinheiro, Special Representative to the UN and Director ILO Office for the United Nations
8. Mr. Puvan J. Selvanathan, Head, International Trade Center Office in New York
9. Mr. Tonye Cole, Sahara Group, Executive Director and Co-Founder
10. Mr. Jose Antonio Llorente, on representation of AD Group Worldwide
11. Ms. Jennifer Topping, Coordinator, Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
12. Ms. Paloma Duran, Director, SDG Fund

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Update on joint programme implementation
3. Update on communication and advocacy
4. Update on partnerships
5. Update on knowledge management
6. Update on governance and institutional arrangements
7. Financial update
8. AOB

The Steering Committee (SC) informal meeting started with a round of introductions. Paloma Duran, the Director of the SDG Fund thanked all members their participation in the meeting. She briefed the new members of the SC on the history, approach and activities of the Fund as well as the multi-stakeholder mandate of the Fund and the role of the SC. Following the items in

the agenda, SDGF Director gave information about every item with a brief update including in the presentation attach to the minutes and accepted by all members of the SC.

The SDG Fund announced that as is customary practice of the SDG Fund Secretariat, the SC report will be circulated one week ahead of next SC formal meeting in July 2016 (date to be confirmed). In addition, a draft of the ToRs of the SC will be circulated prior to the SC.

Jennifer Topping, Director of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) briefed the SC on the function of the MPTF and explained its role as administrative agent of multipartner UN funds such as the SDG Fund- providing financial reports that are available to the public through the MPTF gateway. Since its creation, the MPTF has managed 137 different funds with an overall portfolio of \$9.6 billion. MPTF was also the administrative agent for the MDG Fund. In the formal SC meeting in July MPTF will present the financial report of the SDG Fund for 2015.

Luis Francisco Martínez Montes, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations, explained that Spain requested the formal meeting of SC to take place during the HLPF in July 2016, instead of 17 May 2016, as initially scheduled, to ensure that Spain's Secretary of State for International Cooperation could attend. He reiterated the multi-donor and multi-agency nature of the SDG Fund and welcomed other donors and partners to contribute to the SDG Fund. He briefly explained the transitioning process from the MDG Fund to the SDG Fund and how it was decided to make of the SDG Fund a multi-donor mechanism. He recognized the SDG Fund as a model of transparency.

Ambassador Carlos Morales referred to the importance of SDGs for Colombia. In this regard he announced that Colombia has been one of the first countries to put forward a national SDG action plan. It was also one of the 18 countries included in the first round of SDG Fund joint programmes. He lauded the SDG Fund's efforts to bring together different stakeholders in achieving the SDGs – one of the key challenges for the success of the 2030 Agenda. He recommended opening the space to CARICOM countries. In terms of the SDG Fund Joint Programmes (JPs), he underlined the importance of working jointly with national governments to reinforce national ownership.

Huyen T. Ha, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations, acknowledged the invitation to participate in the expanded SC. She underlined the importance of the SDG Fund for Viet Nam and other participant countries in the transition process from the MDGs to the SDGs. She recognized the strategic importance of the current thematic areas of the SDG Fund and recommended expanding the work of the thematic window on Water and Sanitation. She also referred to the importance of engaging different UN Agencies to work together in the field and emphasized the interlinkages among the SDGs.

Nick Hartman, UNDP (BERA), said that the work of the SDG Fund and particularly its work with the private sector, is important in moving the 2030 Agenda forward. On the SDG Fund Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG), he asked if the SDG Fund had mapped a vision for the coming years to expand its role and plans to share their recommendations widely across the UN.

Paloma Duran, Director SDG Fund informed how the SDG Fund is engaging with the private sector using the SDG Fund JP approach to multi-stakeholder partnerships ensuring the participation of national governments, UN Agencies and civil society.

Vinicius Carvalho Pinheiro, Director of the ILO Office in New York, explained how the ILO is already working in 4 SDG-F joint programmes with other UN Agencies and highlighted the recently approved a UN inter-agency initiative on youth employment. In this regard, he asked if, due to the experience of the SDG Fund, it would be possible to operationalize projects under this initiative through the SDG Fund.

SDG Fund explained that the Fund has flexibility in considering new joint programmes proposed and submitted through the United Nations Resident Coordinator (RC) system. Jennifer Topping, drawing on her experience as former RC of Mozambique, explained how the RC proposes new JPs of the SDG Fund on behalf of the UN agencies active in the country. At the inception of a JP agencies jointly discuss and decide which thematic area it would be most beneficial to propose a programme in consultation with national government.

Tonye Cole of the Sahara Group, using its experience as member of the Private Sector Advisory Group, explained that the rationale for the private sector to partner with the SDG Fund was to bring private sector expertise on board. He highlighted that speed and common language are two important aspects in which the UN need to work on. The private sector can work across regions and is not constrained in the same ways as multilateral agencies. He recognized that businesses today are more social minded. He recommended that the SC should meet more than once a year, at least in these initial stages of implementing the SDGs. Jennifer Topping echoed this sentiment and suggested that some of the meetings could be virtual or decisions could be taken using electronic means.

Puvan J. Selvanathan, Head of the International Trade Center Office in New York said he saw the SDG Fund as an impact investor. He urged the Fund to articulate its value added and vision. He suggested the SDG Fund invest time in articulating the impact it expect to have in 5 years' time.

Antonio Parenti, European Union Delegation to the United Nations, suggested that informal meetings of the SC could be more frequent. He suggested looking beyond governments in bringing new representatives to the SC and in particular he recommended inviting more partners from the private sector.

Marcela Ordoñez Fernández, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations said it is important to see where the SDG Fund fits into the larger SDG architecture. She encouraged the SDG Fund to showcase good practices and challenges in system-wide strategic planning at the upcoming HLPF in July 2016. She also requested the SDG Fund to share its experience and solid examples of working with the private sector.

Huyen T. Ha, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations, suggested emphasizing the good practices on accountability that the SDG Fund has, including those with the private sector.

Paloma Duran closed the meeting by thanking the participants and said that the SDG Fund would share the minutes of the informal meeting along with the agenda for the upcoming SC meeting to take place in July.

With no more items on the agenda, the meeting is adjourned.