

2020 Regional Forum

Peer Learning Segment: Learning and Exchange on SDG Acceleration

The year 2020 marks the beginning of the [Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development](#), which was launched by world leaders at the UN Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2019. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has triggered progress in many areas. However, with only 10 years to go, the speed and scale of implementation is not sufficient yet to achieve the required sustainability transformation. Decisive action is needed to accelerate progress, including in the UNECE region with its mostly high- and middle-income countries.

The [2020 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region](#), in particular the peer learning segment, will therefore adopt an action-oriented and forward-looking approach. It will focus on ambitious and impactful actions, commitments and multi-partner initiatives that will help speed up SDG implementation and deliver the necessary transformations across different areas.

The identification of the themes for the round tables has drawn on the entry points presented in the [2019 Global Sustainable Development Report](#), which has also informed the possible range of issues that could be considered in each round table.

The description of the themes and some potential questions presented below aims to broadly characterize the potential space for discussion. In practice, the contribution of specific acceleration actions by governments and other actors will determine the actual content of each round table.

Round Table 3

Delivering sustainable food and nutrition for people and planet

Thursday, 19 March 2020, 15:00-18:00

Room 15, International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)

[Sustainable food and nutrition](#) is a critical area, in which progress is lagging behind globally as well as in the region. The current practices of food production are unsustainable. Many countries in Europe and Central Asia continue to face various forms of malnutrition, such as stunting and overweight among children and obesity among adolescents and adults. In transitioning towards sustainable food systems, a strong focus must therefore be on enabling more equitable access to nutritional foods. Moreover, reducing food loss and waste and maximizing the nutritional value of produce while, at the same time, minimizing the significant climate and environmental impacts of production and increasing the resilience of food systems remains a challenge.

Poor diets are a major contributory factor to the rising prevalence of malnutrition in all its forms. Moreover, unhealthy diets and malnutrition are among the top ten risk factors contributing to the global burden of disease. In addition, the way we produce and consume food is taking a toll on the environment and natural resource base. For example, food production accounts for the use of 48 percent and 70 percent of land and fresh water resources respectively at the global level. Social, demographic and economic factors are also contributing to changing lifestyles and eating patterns, and subsequently putting pressure on resources for food production.

Accelerating the [transition to sustainable food systems and agricultural practices](#) and the achievement of SDG 2 and other food- and nutrition-related SDG targets may involve, among others:

- The application of digital technology, science and innovation.
- Changes in governance (legislation, infrastructure, social protection, access to supply chains, gender parity).
- Adaptation of individual and collective behaviour (food waste, dietary habits).
- Strengthening economic incentives and financial mechanisms (market access, trade, insurance schemes).

Objectives and organization of the round table

Acceleration actions

The discussion of [acceleration actions](#) at the different round tables of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development would serve three purposes:

1. To identify and discuss specific acceleration actions in the area of sustainable food and nutrition;
2. Underscore potential policy actions, which could further support and accelerate actions /activities, related to sustainable food and nutrition;
3. Enhance and scale up further dialogue/cooperation among different actors with a focus on potential multistakeholder and cross-sectoral cooperation.

Acceleration actions discussed at the round tables can either be ongoing; they can scale up or complement existing actions; or they can be actions that are new or in the planning stage.

The actions, commitments and initiatives should contribute to SDG acceleration through their impact, scale or level of ambition. Acceleration actions should reflect interlinkages among SDGs and SDG targets. They can be presented for discussion at the round table primarily by governments, but also other stakeholders (international organizations, private sector, civil society, academia etc.). Actions can refer to national, local or international levels. Multi-partner initiatives are also

welcome as they are likely to generate additional momentum. The round table could also serve to identify potential or additional partners.

Reflecting the mandate of the Regional Forum to create a space for UNECE member States for peer-learning and the exchange of policy experiences, the main focus of the discussions would be on drawing actionable lessons for policy-makers concerning, for example:

- Why are the selected actions expected to work as accelerators of SDG implementation?
- How will these actions be implemented? Which concrete problems are anticipated and how will they be addressed? What input can other participants provide to address challenges?
- How are other partners being engaged in the implementation?

Structure of round table

Following an initial thematic input, the discussions will be spearheaded by the presentation of about 3-5 acceleration actions introduced by different countries and other relevant stakeholders.

Member States are encouraged to contact the secretariat and indicate their willingness to introduce such actions. The presented acceleration actions will then be discussed, supported by a moderator/facilitator. Government representatives and participants with an interest in a specific acceleration action could act as discussants. There will also be space for a free-floating interactive discussion. The round table will finish with take-aways and follow-up actions that may have been identified in the discussion as reflected in the tentative scenario below.

Organizers

This round table is organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in cooperation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

