Embracing SDGs’ complexity: National planning and institutional adaptation for implementation in Sri Lanka

SDG Lab: The “World’s Future” Game – A role-playing exercise organised jointly by IIASA and the OECD
15 June 2017, OECD Headquarters, Paris

Uchita de Zoysa
“During a short morning walk down Rue de Passy, I observed this old lady peeping into waste bins on the streets. She was carrying a pull-cart bag which she was loading some stuff she can use for her consumption. This was quite different to an immigrant under the influence of liquor or drugs that I noticed yesterday doing the same. Obviously in either context this shows that across the world "leaving no one behind" is another political slogan in the name of transformation; as for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Today and tomorrow I will be making two keynote addresses at the OECD headquarters in Paris to audiences on Policy Coherence for the SDGs and intend to draw attention to this fact. 30 years of campaigning for equality and social justice does not limit to people in my country or the southern hemisphere. People across the world are marginalized while the system governance managers are playing games of sustainability.”
Complexity, Comprehension, Coherence & Convergence

• Do we understand and/or believe that SDGs provide transformational pathways?
• Do we have the necessary legislative, policy and institutional set-up and capacity to implement the SDGs?
• Do we have the baseline information, data and statistics to conduct monitoring, evaluation and follow-up?
• Do we want to and/or have the financing for effective transformation?

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Countries are trying to fit the SDGs into their standard national programmes. Redefining SDGs for political, sectoral or silo administrative conveniences will confuse the monitoring and reporting process and compromise the transformation. New rationales for policy & institutional coherence must be devised.
The Embedding of SDGs will go through an incubation period.
- Agencies are competing for roles – fragmentation is obstructing the transition.
- Realignment of national institutional structures and policy frameworks is critical.
- Brave decisions for transformation are needed & Transformation must be inclusive.

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Planning an Inclusive Transformation in Sri Lanka

**2016-2020**
- Legislative, Institutional & Policy Framework established

**2021-2025**
- Investment for sustainable infrastructure and systems in place

**2026-2030**
- Coherent and convergent sustainable systems in motion

**Governance**
- Cabinet Ministry on SD
- Parliamentary Select Committee on SDGs
- Cabinet Sub-Committee for SDGs / Expert Working Group (presidents secretariat)
- SD Act & SD Council / National SD policy, strategy, standards & guidelines

**Engagement**
- National SD Engagement Platform
- Provincial SD Engagement Platform
- Provincial sustainability plans

**Roadmap**
- Systems linkage mapping for institutional architecture
- National visions, pathways, baselines & indicators
- Monitoring & reporting mechanism

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Complexity in Systems & Convergence Planning

Planning must be
- inclusive
- supported by data & statistics
- impacts measurable
- drawing visionary pathways

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Static & Dynamic Mapping of Institutional Architecture

The initial mapping was a static mapping between the 169 targets and the 425 institutions under the 51 ministries.

The second level of mapping was a dynamic mapping using a data and systems management software that enabled the discovery of the interlinkages between the targets and agencies at the same time.
Realizing the Institutional Fragmentation

- Fragmented institutional structure, duplication of roles and contradictory mandates leading to policy incoherence, incongruent investment and obstruction to the transformation

- A coherent and coordinated inter-agency institutional architecture for convergence planning and integrated implementation is necessary
Challenges of a Fragmented SDG Planning Process

- Cabinet Ministry on SD
- Parliamentary Select Committee on SDGs
- Cabinet Sub-Committee for SDGs / Expert Working Group (presidents secretariat
- SD Act & SD Council / National SD policy, strategy, standards & guidelines

... or take the easy way out & let just one politically powerful agency handle it as a “Project”.

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Proposed Integrated Institutional Mechanism for the SDGs

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Planning a Transformation Roadmap of Visions, Strategies & Actions

Uchita de Zoysa - Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka

• What type of governance systems & structures do we need for a true transformation? How can we ensure good governance?

• What is the economic model that can assist the transformation? How do we ensure means of implementation?

• What measures can we take to embed equality in planning the transformation? How do we ensure wellbeing of all?

• What are the ecological boundaries in our quest for prosperity? How can we plan to remain below our footprint?
Sustainable Development Advisor, Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Tel: +94 112879118 Fax: +94 112885492 Mobile:+94777372206 Email: uchita@sltnet.lk