

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ASIA PACIFIC: A ROLE FOR THE EU?

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# A New Agenda for Global Development

- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an expanded global agenda endorsed by the UN following the experience of the Millenium Development Goals
- An Open Working Group, post-2012, with widespread consultation including civil society
- 17 Goals, 169 targets
- Indicators to measure
- Significant engagement from UN agencies
- High Level Political Forum
- The Paris Agreement on Climate, November 2015



# The SDGs

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

# The SDGs (cont)

- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

# Bringing Some Focus to Bear...

Jeffrey Sachs, Global Director of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) identifies 5 categories of Goals:

1. the provision of **essentially public services**: health, education, utilities and infrastructure;
2. complex 'intermediate' goals such as 'decent work' that involve close **collaboration between public and private sectors, and civil society**;
3. **complex high-level goals** such as eliminating poverty and hunger by 2030;
4. **transformational goals** for environmental sustainability, addressing specific topics such as climate-related change, carbon, urbanisation, food, energy and ecosystems; and
5. **high level social objectives**, related to gender equality, reducing violence and increasing inclusion, and promoting global citizenship. (See Sachs 2015, 274-75)

# The EU: A Global Development Leader...

- The global leader in public overseas aid, active in many parts of the world, not least Asia
- June 2016: the EU's High Representative released *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*, the EU's Global Strategy for its Foreign and Security Policy
- 1 June: European Parliament adopted a revised Consensus on Development – *Our World, our Dignity, our Future*, priorities of People, Planet, Prosperity and Peace
- 22 June: European Parliament, ENVI Committee: future roadmap on the future of the EU and to ensure that adherence to the SDGs becomes a key feature of proposed initiatives across all areas of the Union's work programmes
- Brexit: loss of energy, or a new partner?

# A Global Development Leader...??

- Gap between commitments and piecemeal implementation
  - no strategy for implementation
  - primary focus on the Juncker priorities
  - preoccupation with security issues, especially post-Trump
- New Multi-annual Financial Framework
  - reflection paper expected in second quarter 2018
- But, Council has determined that all its deliberations should include reference to economic, social and environmental implications – a technical solution...
- *Investing in Sustainable Development* (April, Addis Ababa)
- Can the SDGs become a framework for the MFF, for all government decision-making?

# Contexts for EU Action on SDG Implementation with Asian Partners

- UN Forums (eg High Level Political Forum, UNESCO), World Bank, ILO, WHO, IMF
- The Asia Europe Meeting, ASEM:
  - On the agenda of the Ministers' meetings (eg 16<sup>th</sup> Foreign Ministers, November 2015), and the 11<sup>th</sup> Leaders' Summit (July 2016)
  - Track 1.5 Ministerial meetings, thematic meetings
- But also: ASEM Lifelong Learning Hub: 5 research networks, meetings in Bali, Melbourne, Glasgow, & Copenhagen
- Bilateral relations with nations



# ASEM Forums

- The **Asia Europe People's Forum**
- The **Asia Europe Business Forum** (15
- **Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP)**
- **The Asia Europe Foundation**
- ASEF Rectors' Forum and Students' F
- ASEM Infoboard
- ASEF Creative Networks
- ASEF Journalists' Colloquium
- ASEF Summer University
- ASEF Young Leaders Programme



# Specific Opportunities for Collaboration

## 1. 'Thematic' campaigns:

- Climate diplomacy
- Research and innovation actions
- Education programs

## 2. Country-specific action

- Development dialogues re collaboration
- Eg. Bangladesh, Myanmar
- Eg. Laos, BEQUAL: delegated management of aid, complementary projects; collaboration between civil society and government actions

# Specific Opportunities for Collaboration (cont)

## **3. Collaboration with Non Government Organisations in Asia Pacific**

- Structures and ownership
- Different modes of operation
- Different relationships with host governments, civil society
- Multiple sites, partners

## **4, Regional organisations**

- ASEAN
- East Asia Forum
- Pacific Islands Forum

# LAOS, AS AN EXAMPLE

- BEQUAL (Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR) is a 10-year program led by the Governments of Lao PDR and Australia, with support from the European Union.
- Improve access to, and quality of, primary education for Laos' most disadvantaged population (across 66 districts)
- In February 2017, Laos, Australia and European Union agreed on annual work plan to improve basic education in Lao PDR: primary education curriculum, infrastructure, teacher training, innovation
- Phase I (2015-2019) budget amounts to AUD 82 million. BEQUAL will help an estimated 450,000 children



# Challenges in Implementation

- Complexity and scale, how to develop an integrated framework for cross-sectoral coherence and focus
- A preoccupation with indicators and measurement
- Financing
- Engagement in higher income countries
- A place-based (nation or region) focus??
- Sustaining EU leadership – and necessarily with new partners??