Policy Oriented Round Table on the Need for Better Policy Coherence and Policy Coordination for SDG Implementation amongst International Organisations (Round Table)

The overall theme of 2017 EADI relates to the urgent need to successfully implement the 2030 global policy agenda on sustainable development.   To implement the SDGs will require boundary spanning for the International Organisations but many of the IOs are used to operate autonomously with limited coordination with other IOs, even when operating in the same policy space. This proposed policy panel aims to examine the system polarity of IOs in regard to policy isolationism versus policy collaboration in managing the boundaries within their institutions and across their institutions.
The concept of boundary elasticity describes a state in between permeable and non-permeable boundary conditions of a system. Such elasticity is considered as the basic characteristics of system resilience when dealing with uncertainty and multifaceted disruptions. This panel will explore the enabling policies and mechanisms that different IOs deployed in order to maintain a balance between the two boundary conditions for instance during the implementation of the PRSPs.

It is argued that the intensity of globalisation spurred forth by ideology, necessity and technology has "washed away" in many instances the organisational boundaries that existed between IOs. For instance, voices of disenfranchised people or stakeholders are catered to when they are the loudest and receive high popular support, via social media or other crowd rousing tools even if it is not a IOs core mandate. Other voices, equally authentic, but not crowd pleasing are often drawn out and have little influence on the policy direction of the IOs.

It is the intent of this panel to use a few cases to illustrate the need to purposely ensure organisational boundary elasticity in order to maintain a constructive form of inter-agency coordination system. The panellist will aim to generate insights as to how to make the IOs become more cooperative thus more able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the SDG agenda.

To be sustainable, an IO needs to manage this inherent system polarity of stability/predictability versus responsiveness/change of its organisational

functioning. One of the modality is to create alternative policy spaces to allow for a multitude of voices to be presented in the debate so that the policy making process could be enriched, rather than hijacked by minority interests. Another modality could be to create formal policy coordination mechanisms with incentives and disincentives to guide the IOs towards more policy coherence and policy coordination.

One of the cases that will be presented will focus on the OECD Development Centre's experience in creating inclusive networks around major themes of international development. These nonconventional networks bridged the donor countries and partner countries. By bringing together various think tanks from the Global North and Global South, perspectives were exchanged, needs aired and innovative ideas emerged.

Other examples of such boundary spanning initiatives will be presented by the participants who have many years of experience in the field relating to the workshop topic.

The relevance and importance of this topic lie in the ambitious 2030 Development Agenda, which require all actors to move out of their respective policy and operational silos in order to ensure successful implementation of the SDGs by 2030. Organisational boundary spanning and crossing will become the new norm for SDG implementation and will require new institutional learning and re-imagination of inter-agency coordination and consultation.

Participants:

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2. Prof Raymond Saner, Diplomacy Dialogue, CSEND, Geneva (Organiser)
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   Programmes, UNCTAD, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
4. Rashid Kaukab, Director, CUTS international, Geneva
6. Dr Roland Bardy, University of Florida, USA
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