REGIONAL ROAD MAP FOR IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA-PACIFIC: LEVERAGE POINTS FOR SOUTH ASIA
A Regional Road Map for Asia and the Pacific

BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

- Based on extensive dialogue between member states and inputs from civil society organizations and the broader UN community, countries in Asia-Pacific developed a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda.

- The road map stemmed from decisions mandated at the Second and Third Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2015 and 2016.

- The road map was adopted in March 2017 - in the Fourth session of the APFSD.

- It is the only inter-governmentally agreed, member-state driven, regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia-Pacific.
It will support LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, countries in conflict situations and post-conflict countries and other countries with special needs.

It aims to place gender equality and women’s empowerment as a central issue of the regional policy agenda.

It recognizes that sustainable development is underpinned by peaceful and inclusive societies, addressing inequality, and by good governance.

In line with the 2030 Agenda, the objective of the road map is to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development through regional cooperation.
Priorities and thematic focus

**EXPECTATION**
- Strengthen regional cooperation on priority issues
- Enable continued and more efficient and coordinated support
- Facilitate more effective knowledge sharing

**PRIORITIZED AREAS**
- Data and statistics
- Technology
- Finance
- Policy coherence

**FOCUS ON PRACTICAL MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION**
- North-South, South-South, international & regional partnerships

**THEMATIC AREAS OF COOPERATION**
- Leave no one behind
- DRR & resilience
- Climate change

**WITH MULTISECTORAL IMPACTS**
- Natural resource management
- Connectivity
- Energy
Thematic areas of cooperation

**LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

- Promotes advocacy to address inequalities, reduce poverty and enhance social protection;
- Advances gender equality and women’s empowerment;
- Addresses unemployment and underemployment among youth;
- Facilitates regional and subregional dialogue on policies to address population ageing;
- Strengthens linkages between international migration and development

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND RESILIENCE**

- Promotes efforts to strengthen DRR monitoring, maximize existing cooperation mechanisms and promote a “Build Back Better” approach.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Will shape ESCAP’s response to climate change and efforts to strengthen region’s DRR and resilience capacity.
Thematic areas of cooperation

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

- Promotes the management of natural resources to increase food security while reducing negative environmental impacts.

**CONNECTIVITY**

- Encourages seamless connectivity in the fields of transport, energy and ICT.

**ENERGY**

- Promotes policy dialogues and networking among member States to develop a regional cooperation framework to enhance energy security and sustainable energy resources.
Highlight of subregional activities in support of the Road Map

ESCAP SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST ASIA OFFICE

- Strategic direction of SSWA office programme of work is derived from the 2030 Agenda (and relevant global and regional mandates);

- Strengthen policy environment in South Asia (and South-West Asia) to support the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, including gender perspectives;

- Enhance effectiveness of subregional initiatives and coordination processes to address regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development.
Towards a policy agenda for achieving the SDGs in South Asia

- Interrelationships between many goals and targets
- Positive spillovers of integrating economic, social and environmental pillars
- Identify key policy priorities for South Asia that will help maximize those interrelationships and spillovers
MDGs still an unfinished agenda for South Asia

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- Early achiever
- On track
- Slow
- Regressing/No progress
a. Create jobs through balanced economic transformation and sustainable industrialization

• Fast growing subregion
• Yet growth not creating adequate jobs
• And has contributed to high unemployment, especially among youth
• 80% of the workforce remains trapped in informal jobs without social protection
b. Close gaps in infrastructure by providing essential basic services to all

- Wide infrastructure gaps in South Asia
- Infrastructure availability affects achievement of other SDGs
- Access to infrastructure also source of inequality (between rural-urban)
- Important multiplier effects of infrastructure investment
- Accelerating access to sustainable infrastructure and basic services: a policy imperative for South Asia

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<th>Access to telecommunications, 2014 (per 100 people)</th>
<th>Access to electricity, 2012 (% of population)</th>
<th>Access to improved water, 2015 (% of population)</th>
<th>Access to improved sanitation, 2015 (% of population)</th>
<th>Internet users, 2014 (per 100 people)</th>
<th>Rail density, 2012 (km of railway per 1000 km²)</th>
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c. Harness the demographic dividend through universal access to education and health

- South Asia must prioritize closing remaining gaps in universal access to health and education, crucial to harness dividend from its youth bulge
- Although MDG targets for primary enrolment and completion met, quality remains an issue
- SDGs provide last window as dependency ratio in South Asia will begin to increase between 2030 and 2050.
- With human resource development and productive jobs, South Asia could be home to largest middle class in the world and engine of global growth
- South Asia needs to move towards universal health coverage
d. Provide universal social protection and financial inclusion to reduce inequalities and dire deprivations

- Extending financial inclusion and social protection as critical for SDG achievement, low coverage related to prevalence of poverty in South Asia
- Across South Asia, fewer than 10.6% of workers have social security (except Sri Lanka). Global average of over 40%
- Bank account ownership in South Asia only reached about 46% of adult population in 2014 (highest gender gaps in financial inclusion)
e. Address food security and hunger with sustainable agricultural productivity improvements

- South Asia remains one of the largest hunger hotspots in the world
- In 2014-2016, about 281 million people were undernourished in South Asia
- Food security and eradication of hunger requires policy action in four priority areas:
  - Eradicate extreme poverty to ensure better access to food and reduce inequality
  - Provide more nutritious food (to reduce anemia and vitamin A deficiency)
  - Extend social protection programmes to improve household incomes and consumption
  - Increase smallholder agricultural productivity through sustainable agricultural practices
f. Promote gender equality and women’s empowerment through entrepreneurship

- Although MDG goal on gender equality in primary and secondary education achieved, South Asia lags behind in economic and political empowerment of women
- South Asia also has highest level of female child mortality and violence against women and girls remains prevalent
- Low female workforce participation rate
- Opportunity cost gender inequality very high ranging between $800 billion to $3.5 trillion additional GDP by 2025 in South Asia
- Promoting women’s entrepreneurship through gender-friendly ecosystem and credit facilities for women entrepreneurs as potent catalyst for achieving inclusive and sustainable development.
- Only about 8-9% of formal SMEs owned by women in the subregion
g. Enhance environmental sustainability through low-carbon climate-resilient pathways

- Growing vulnerability to climate change and disasters
- Addressing the challenges through enhancing energy efficiency and mix
- Sustainable urbanization
- Sustainable production, consumption and waste recycling
Concluding remarks

- The 2030 Agenda is a unique opportunity to provide a life of dignity to all in South Asia within a generation
- Accelerate achievements through exploitation of synergy and interlinkages
- Seven key policy priorities may help accelerate progress including industry-oriented job creating economic growth, closing gaps in basic infrastructure, providing universal education and health, social protection, women entrepreneurship, sustainable agriculture and low-carbon growth paths
- Exploit the potential of domestic resource mobilization
- Stronger global partnership for finance, technology and market access
- Critical role of regional cooperation and integration
- South Asia’s turn to lead the global achievements?
Thank you