Summary of
VNR Lab 3 "Leaving no one behind: Inclusive implementation and reporting"

This lab took place on July 10 and was organized by DESA/DISD, DESA/EAPD and DESA/DPIDG, in collaboration with OHCHR, UNWomen and the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. Representative of Member States (2019 VNR countries: Ghana, Iceland and Turkey) and experts from academia, United Nations entities, and civil society shared their experience, including existing gaps, good practices and new initiatives to ensure that no one is left behind. The discussion reflected on: 1) what institutional mechanisms and processes exist to involve those who are left behind in the implementation and monitoring of SDGs, and/or VNR preparatory and reporting processes; and 2) the role of national governments, civil society and international organizations to ensure that no one is left behind.

In the absence of Prof. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Ms. Makiko Tagashira (DESA/DISD) moderated the Lab, and Mr. Matthias Bruckner presented key findings of the analysis of the 2018 VNR reports conducted by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP), outlining key findings on how countries addressed three key issues: leaving no one behind; pursuing global partnership as means of implementation (SDG17); and quality education (SDG4). While the VNRs contain many interesting examples for mutual learning and sharing of good practices, the need for more systematic attention to these issues and more explicit and frank discussions on strategies for their implementation, in particular on macroeconomic and other systemic issues, was highlighted.

Key messages centered around the following major issues:

Policies and strategies should not only ensure that no one is left behind, but also **not to push people further behind.** Those who are left behind varies from country to country, and include children, girls and women, older persons, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees, people living in rural and remote areas, people living in homelessness, those who are unemployed, with low levels of education, confined in prisons, and without access to justice. Three participating countries have established inclusive processes in the VNR process, while the inclusion of those left behind, in general, remain challenging and requires renewed commitment. **Rigorous investment in data, including disaggregated data,** is indispensable to capture the characteristics of those left behind.

The VNR process should be more effectively used as inclusive mechanisms at the national and local levels. Partnerships with disadvantaged groups need to be created based on rights and mutual respect. Without incorporating the specific culture and circumstances of indigenous peoples, targeted interventions can be counterproductive. Structural issues (e.g. inequalities, violation of human rights, land and resource grabbing) should be more explicitly addressed to enhance the engagement of disadvantaged group, as people, especially women, are often left behind intentionally/systematically. Enhancing physical accessibility and the availability of information is essential to enable older persons' participation in SDG monitoring and VNR preparation processes. **LNOB principles need to be**

mainstreamed into all policies and sectors, as policy targeting certain issue or group do not necessarily address other areas/groups.

Rights-based approach and access to justice are fundamental to reach those being left the furthest behind, including people without identity documents. Further efforts should be made to reduce violence; promote a people-centered justice system; strengthen capacity to create inclusive institutions; and reduce inequality. On example where all of this is crucial is when people fight over land rights and they are being pushed behind because of the interest in their resources.

Localizing the implementation of SDGs is key. While many SDG indicators have significant relevance at the local level, local governments are not necessarily fully aware of SDGs in many countries. **Translating SDGs in local languages** and **creating a multi-stakeholder partnership**, by mobilizing all stakeholders, in particular, parliamentary members, local governments, media, farmers, fishermen, the private sector, is critical to accelerate the implementation of SDGs.

The engagement of a wider segment of the population will **not only accelerate the implementation of SDGs**, but also help **ensure the accountability/transparency** and identify good policies and practices, existing gaps and innovative approaches at all levels across regions. **Civil society and international organizations** have an important role in **raising awareness of the SDGs and LNOB.** Further investment in SDG knowledge/information sharing is necessary, including through using and improving existing tools that are found effective. LNOB principles should also be mainstreamed into all policies and activities of the international organizations working/monitoring the SDGs.

Finally, there is a call to **register a voluntary SDG Acceleration Action for the SDG Summit**.