

Evaluation Report: Meeting of LDC National Focal Points

Background and objective

The meeting of LDC National Focal Points (NFPs) was held from 11 to 12 July 2023 in New York, United States. It was organized by UN-OHRLLS with participation of the UN Development Coordination Office, the Committee for Development Policy of UNDESA, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP, and the UN Technology Bank for LDCs. National Focal Points from 22 LDCs attended the meeting. Türkiye attended the meeting as the donor country. This is the first in-person meeting of LDC NFPs in the UN headquarters since the Covid-19 pandemic.

The agenda of the meeting covered two days. Day 1 focused on updates on the status of implementation and mainstreaming of the DPoA into national development policies. During these sessions, NFPs shared national experiences in mainstreaming provisions of the DPoA into national development policies and identified challenges. The OHRLLS briefed participants on the envisaged Monitoring Framework. NFPs deliberated on national arrangements for monitoring and shortfalls through sharing best practices and policy options, and mapped out capacity building support. Day 2 highlighted the support by the UN system for the implementation, follow-up, and monitoring of the DPoA. NFPs were briefed on support for graduation, particularly Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (iGRAD). More details on the agenda can be found in Annex I.

The results of this report are based on an online evaluation questionnaire¹ which was available from 13 to 28 July 2022 on Microsoft Forms and sent to the 22 LDC participants and the representative of Türkiye. To facilitate a higher number of responses, the questionnaire was available in English and French. The next section provides a descriptive analysis of the data yielded. The report concludes with reflections and recommendations for future meetings and the work of the NFPs network.

Results from the evaluation questionnaire

The meeting counted the participation of 22 LDC delegations (Nepal as Chair of the LDC group) and a total of 36 people including: the participants from Türkiye (1) - as the donor country that financed the meeting; the Economic Commission for Africa (1); DCO (1); ESCAP (1); DESA (1); UNDP (1); DESA/CDP (1); UN Technology Bank for LDCs (1); and OHRLLS staff (6). Regarding the geographic distribution of the participating LDCs, there were 4 delegations from Asia, 17 from Africa, and 1 from the Caribbean. The response rate was 100%. A total of 17 participants responded in English and 5 in French.

Section 1 (Question 1 - 5) asked participants about their perception of the meeting's venue and organization using a 5-point rating scale, with 5 indicating "Excellent," 4 indicating "Good," 3 indicating

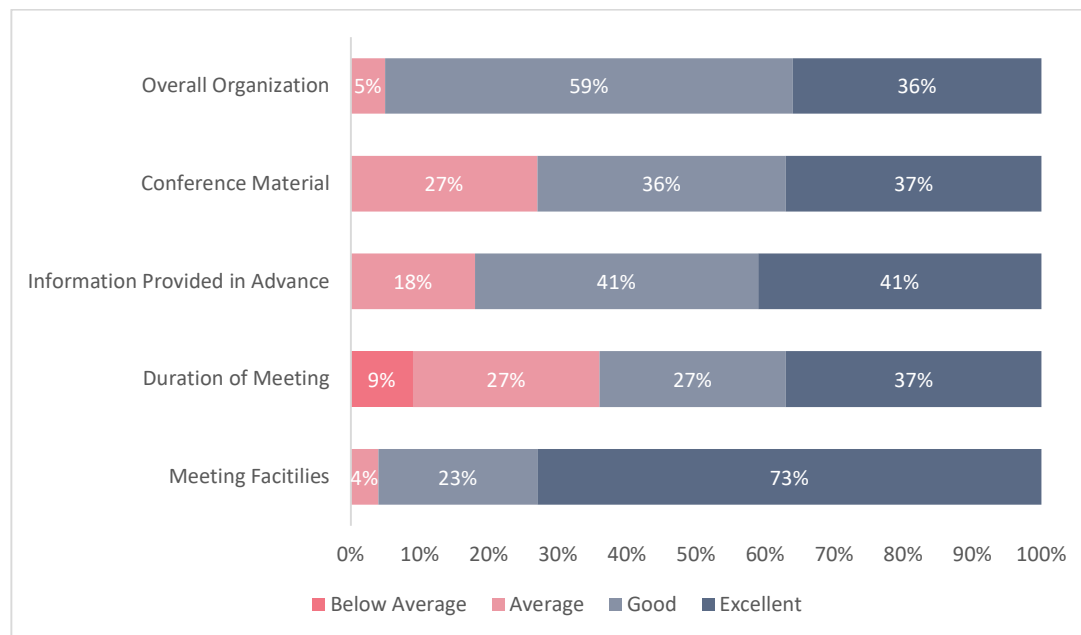
¹ The questionnaire is attached as a PDF in the email transmitting this report.

“Average,” 2 indicating “Below Average,” and 1 indicating “Poor.” The participants were asked about the “Meeting facilities,” “Duration of meeting,” “Information provided in advance,” “Conference material,” and “Overall organization.”

On average, 45% of the participants rated the overall venue and organization as “Excellent,” and the rating of “Good” and “Average” were given by 37% and 16% of participants respectively. No responses were recorded for the option “Poor.”

The responses indicated that the participants were most satisfied with the “Meeting facilities” and the “Overall organization.” Both were rated as “Excellent” or “Good” by about 95% of the respondents. The “Information provided in advance” and “Conference Material” were rated as “Excellent” or “Good” by about 82% and 73% of the respondents respectively. The question “Duration of meeting” was the only one recorded rating “Below average,” with 36% of participants giving the rating “Average” (27%) or “Below average” (9%), being the element rated the lowest by the participants. For details, see Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Responses to Section 1
Please rate the venue & organization of the National Focal Points (NFPs) meeting.



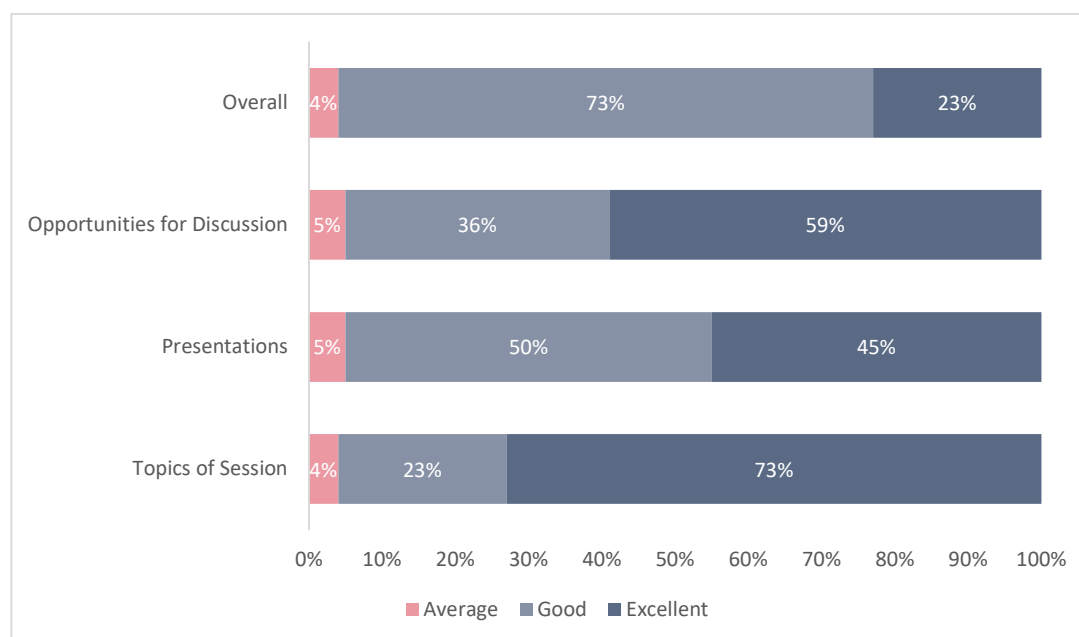
Source: NFP 2023 Online Evaluation Questionnaire

Section 2 (Question 6 - 9) asked participants about thematic sessions using the same 5-point rating scale as in Section 1. The participants were asked about the “Topics of sessions,” “Presentations,” “Opportunities for discussion,” and “Overall” rating for the sessions.

On average, half of the participants rated the thematic sessions as “Excellent,” and the rating of “Good” and “Average” were given by 46% and 4% of participants respectively. No responses were recorded for the option “Below Average” or “Poor.”

The responses indicated that the thematic sessions were very successful since about 95% of participants rated the topics, presentations, opportunities for discussions, and the overall sessions as “Excellent” or “Good.” For details, see Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Responses to Section 2
Please rate the thematic sessions of the National Focal Points (NFPs) meeting.



Source: NFP 2023 Online Evaluation Questionnaire

Section 3 (Question 10 – 18) further evaluated the potential impact of the information shared during the sessions and invited participants to provide open-ended comments to improve future NFPs meeting.

Question 10 and Question 11 asked the participants that, whether the topics and presentations were useful for their work, and whether the meeting contributed to their work by expanding their knowledge and learning from the exchange of experiences. The responses from each NFP suggested that, overall, the meetings were considered very insightful and valuable to the work of LDCs. The following topics are especially seen as being relevant:

- 1. The exchange of experience across NFPs was seen as the most important event throughout the meetings.** The successful stories of LDCs in the Asia & Pacific region, especially Bangladesh, really inspired the NFPs in implementing DPoA in their own countries. The other countries mentioned in the comments include Lesotho, Madagascar, and Haiti. One respondent stated that this experience

sharing gave a wake-up call for those lagging, especially in terms of mainstreaming the DPoA into their national development plans.

2. **The information provided by the UN agencies, especially tools and support by regional agencies to LDCs, was appreciated by the participants.** The UN Technology Bank for LDCs and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit (IPRT) by ECA received special attention from many LDCs, and they hoped to utilize more of these resources in their future development plans. The iGRAD was also seen as useful in supporting sustainable graduation.
3. Other points mentioned in the responses include that **the topics in the meeting addressed real issues of LDCs, and the meeting showed a way for better coordination of the national team.**

Question 12 asked participants to specify sessions that they found particularly informative to their countries. Overall, (i) The **presentations related to the support by the UN agencies** received the most appreciation. Among them, information session by the UN Technology Bank for LDCs of Session 5 and iGRAD of Session 4 were mentioned the most; (ii) **Tools** developed to support LDCs was another topic favored by the respondents, especially the Integrated National Financing Frameworks of Session 3 and IPRT of Session 2; and (iii) Many participants valued the **presentations by NFPs** from Session 1 and 2 since they showed how other LDCs addressed the mainstreaming and integration of DPoA.

Question 13 surveyed the participants whether the meeting contributed to their knowledge of how to mainstream the DPoA into their national development policies and monitor the DPoA at the national level. Most responses indicated that the meeting was inspiring and informative, especially on the follow-up and monitoring, the IPRT tool, and the lessons learned from Asia. One respondent commended that this year's meeting was clearer than the previous one. However, one respondent stated that the meeting did not give concrete leads on how to integrate the DPoA into national development policies, especially for countries whose National Development Plans were drawn up before the DPoA.

Question 14 asked participants whether the presentation on support by the UN system on implementation, follow-up, and monitoring of the DPoA was useful for their national context, and what kind of support is most needed. The responses can be grouped into 6 themes:

1. **Monitoring & Evaluation** : The respondents wanted a more effective tracking system for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of DPoA. One respondent mentioned that a general template could be created for a monitoring mechanism for the NFPs. Support for M&E was mentioned too. One respondent highlighted that it was important to have the same team to work on SDGs, Agenda 2063, and UNDAF.
2. **Technical support especially on tools** : Some NFPs wanted more support on using tools such as the INFFs and IPRT. The IPRT was especially popular among the respondents, and they wished to

have more support in using this type of tool and help their countries to develop clearer indicators and targets.

3. **Capacity building** : The NFPs also have a strong desire to get more support on capacity building. For example, they wanted support in developing measurable indicators.
4. **Data** : Lack of data support is another highly raised issue. Many NFPs mentioned that they wanted support on data collection, data generation, statistical systems, and the use of available data.
5. **Exchange of experience** : Many NFPs found this meeting valuable because they could learn great experiences from other LDCs. There was a call for regional meetings among LDCs, and maybe separate meetings among those who are graduating, so that they could learn more from their peers.
6. **Financial support** : Two respondents also mentioned financial-related support.

Question 15 wanted to know whether the updates on major UN processes and events and the work of OHRLLS were helpful. Overall, the participants agreed that the information provided was important. One respondent mentioned that the meeting quality was improved compared to the previous one, and the presentations on the second day were particularly useful. However, one respondent stated that the meeting still needed some improvements.

Question 16 asked participants whether interventions from any particular country were useful. In general, the respondents found the sharing of experiences very helpful. The experience in Bangladesh and Lao PDR received special attention from many NFPs. The other countries mentioned include Bhutan in Asia, Solomon Islands, Uganda, Togo, and Lesotho in Africa.

Question 17 and 18 wanted participants to provide additional suggestions to improve future meetings. The comments can be grouped into the following broader categories (ranked from the most to the least mentioned):

1. **Peer exchange** : Many NFPs voiced the need for more exchange of experience. (i) Some respondents encouraged more meetings among LDCs that are close to graduation, and those who are graduating could even collaborate with other countries regionally to implement the programme together ; (ii) There could be more regional meetings among NFPs ; (iii) Since many countries are interested in the work of the UN Technology Bank for LDCs, it could also be interesting to organize some sessions in a country that has joined the DPoA and is working with the Technology Bank on concrete projects. Training sessions could also be provided on those subjects; (iv) Some members have called for longer discussions during the peer exchange session or more frequent NFPs meeting. That way, the presenters could get more feedback to improve the

implementation of their national plans; and (v) One respondent suggested creating an LDCs WhatsApp group to facilitate more communications among the LDCs.

2. **Meeting materials** : It is frequently suggested that meeting presentations should be shared with NFPs before the meeting, or at least shared at the end of each presentation. One comment recommended summarizing good practice based on the presentations for a country's integration and monitoring practice, and sharing that information with the NFPs.
3. **Meeting contents & organization** : In terms of meeting contents, some participants wanted more discussions on support of the UN system, and some wanted more focus on measures to help especially African LDCs to speed up their graduation. One comment suggested choosing only two to three countries to present so that they could adopt those examples as good practices to follow.
4. **Technical support** : Many NFPs wanted support on capacity building, such as access to funding, integration of DPoA into their national policies, an M&E framework/guideline, and support on indicators and targets for implementing DPoA. One respondent also asked for support on technology transfer.
5. **National Focal Points' participation in the meeting agenda** : It is recommended that NFPs should also contribute to the meeting agenda, for example, a small survey prior to the meeting on topics that can be discussed.
6. **Other suggestions** : (i) Two participants wanted more discussions of monitoring and implementation of VPoA and help create measurable targets for VPoA; (ii) All NFPs should be encouraged to join the meeting; (iii) All NFPs should be in close coordination with their respective authorities (i.e. Permanent Missions or national institutions); and (iv) The delegates should be given travel flexibility and meeting breaks.

Annex I: Agenda of the NFP Meeting



Tuesday, 11 July 2023, Conference Room 12

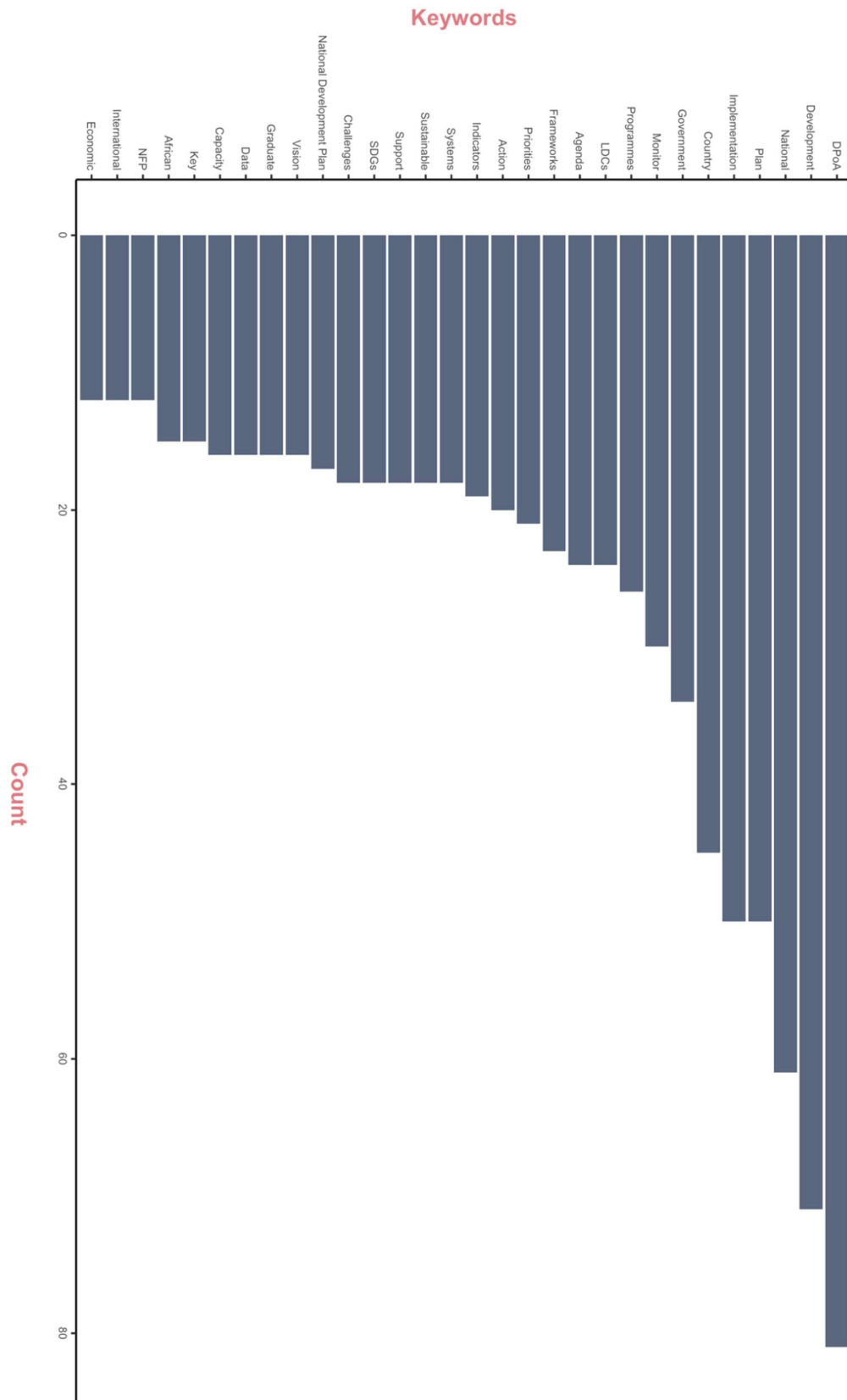
09:00-09:30	Registration
09:30-09:45	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS • H.E. Mr. Sedat Önal, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Türkiye to the UN • Ms. Prathma Uprety, Charge d Affaires, a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nepal, Chair of the LDC Group
10:00-12:30	<p>Session 1: Updates on the status of implementation and mainstreaming of the DPoA into national development policies</p> <p><i>(In this section, NFPs will share national experiences in mainstreaming the provisions of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031 (DPoA) into national development policies and identify challenges.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by Mr. Md. Abdul Alim, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, OHRLLS • Presentation by LDCs (All participating NFPs will present. 7 Mins each.)

12:30-15:00	Lunch break
15:00-18:00	<p>Session 2: Follow-up and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the DPoA at all levels</p> <p><i>(The DPoA states that efficient follow-up and monitoring mechanisms adapted at the national, subregional, regional and global levels are crucial for the successful implementation of the DPoA and are fully aligned with existing frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals. In this section, NFPs will be briefed on the envisaged Monitoring Framework, and deliberate on national arrangements for monitoring and shortfalls through sharing best practices and policy options and map out capacity building support.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by LDCs (continued) (All participating NFPs will present. 7 Mins each.) • Moderated by Mr. Aniket Ghai, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, OHRLLS • Presentation by Mr. Bartholomew Armah, Chief, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on the Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit (IPRT) (15 Mins) • Q&A • Presentations by NFPs (All participating NFPs will present. 6 Mins each) • Interactive discussion

Wednesday, 12 July 2023, Conference Room 12

10:00-13:00	<p>Session 3: Support by the UN system for the implementation, follow-up, and monitoring of the DPoA</p> <p><i>(In this section, UN regional commissions and other UN agencies will present concrete tools for monitoring and mainstreaming. NFPs will discuss how these can be improved, and linkages between different monitoring mechanisms and tools for implementation of international agendas, and look into synergies in the reporting on the SDGs and the DPoA.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderated by Ms. Susanna Wolf, Deputy Chief & Senior Programme Management Officer, OHRLLS• Presentation by Ms. Rosemary Kalapurakal, Director, DCO (10 mins)• Presentation by Mr. Oliver Paddison, Chief, ESCAP (10 mins)• Presentation by Ms. Natalia Aristizabal Mora, Inter-Regional Advisor on Financing for Sustainable Development, DESA, and Mr. Tim Strawson, SDG Finance Advisor, UNDP on Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF) (10 mins)• Interactive discussion
13:00-15:00	<p>Lunch break</p>
15:00-16:00	<p>Session 4: Support for graduation--Sustainable Graduation Support Facility - iGRAD</p> <p><i>(The Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (iGRAD) is a facility set up by OHRLLS and DESA/CDP Secretariat that aims to assist graduating LDCs in various stages through tailored capacity building support and policy advisory services to ensure sustainable and irreversible graduation. The CDP Secretariat and OHRLLS will provide updates on the graduation process and the operationalization of iGRAD. NFPs will engage in interactive discussion on how iGRAD can strengthen LDCs capacity to prepare for graduation and to develop and implement their Smooth Transition Strategies.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderated by Ms. Margherita Musollino-Berg, Senior Programme Management Officer, OHRLLS• Presentation by Ms. Mereseini Bower, Inter-Regional Advisor, DESA/CDP Secretariat on iGRAD and its service lines (10 Mins)• Interactive discussion

Annex II: Text Analysis - Top 30 Mentioned Words by NFPs



Source: NFP 2023 – Presentations by LDCs from Session 1 & Session 2

Annex III: Word Cloud – What Did the NFPs Mostly Talk About?



Source: NFP 2023 – Presentations by LDCs from Session 1 & Session 2