



Fostering Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific



Convergence of MDGs & SDGs and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Evolution of Sustainable Development

- **1992 Earth Summit** – Sustainable development concept based on Brundtland Commission's report: focus on inter- and intra-generational equity & planetary limits.
- **Commission for Sustainable Development** – Focused on the environmental dimension, but its results did not match challenges confronted, MDGs operate in isolation and on a separate track.
- **2012 Rio+20** – Defined a new and deeper perspective on sustainable development: the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Changing Dynamics: Convergence of MDGs and SDGs

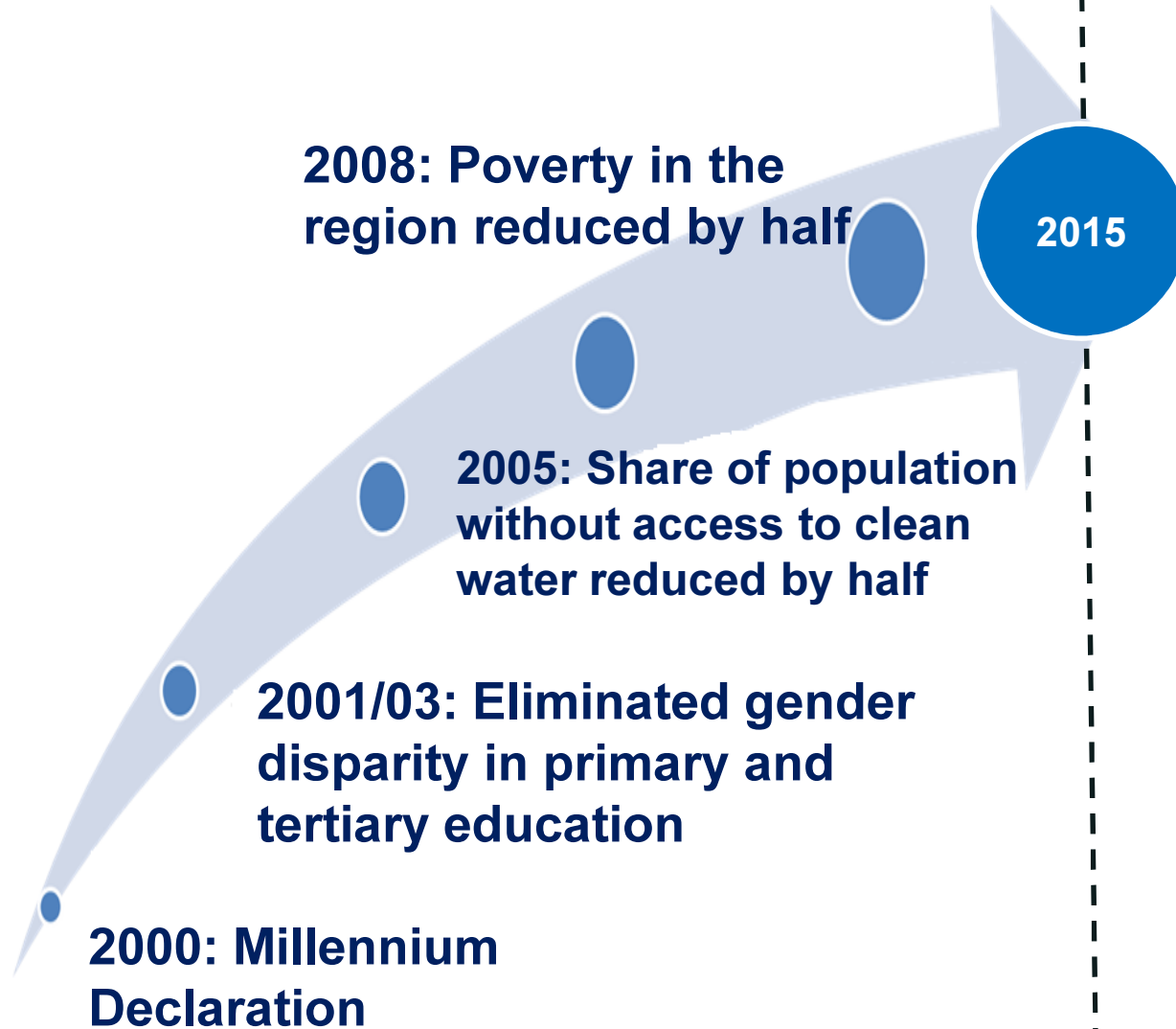
- **MDGs drove considerable social progress from 2000-2015:**
 - Targets fell short of expectations;
 - World pursued unsustainable consumption and production paths;
 - Consequently, MDGs and sustainable development were on different “tracks”.
- **Convergence, reinforcement and integration of tracks are key** to push for irreversible and parallel progress on MDGs and SDGs, with latter including elements of unfinished business.
- **Deep transformations in the development agenda has called for:**
 - Major rethink of the framework for sustainable development and its means of implementation;
 - Fundamental changes to deal with root causes and not just the symptoms,
 - Universality of SDGs; and
 - Mobilizing partnership and businesses to adopt and promote sustainable development.

Sustainable Consumption and Production



- **Evolution of growing body of literature on SCP promotes:**
 - Decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation; and
 - Efficient and sustainable resource extraction and use, waste disposal, and consumption patterns etc.
- **Debates are being pursued at UNEP to discuss:**
 - Adoption of 10 year framework for SCP and its use to better understand sector linkages;
 - How this “cross cutting” theoretical framework should be applied and how SDGs can be shaped to reinforce the SCP context;
 - SDGs cannot address SCP holistically, but sector policy frameworks, technologies and production patterns can be modified and enhanced to achieve long-term sustainability of the way we grow, consume and produce.
- **In Asia and the Pacific green growth and inclusive policies have been adopted to work through the nexus between growth, poverty and environmental sustainability**
 - Development of green growth initiatives;
 - Development of sustainable infrastructure and climate resilient production;
 - Introduction of green growth tax reforms;
 - Ecological preservation, etc.

MDGs in Asia-Pacific



Unfinished Agenda

Hunger

Infant mortality

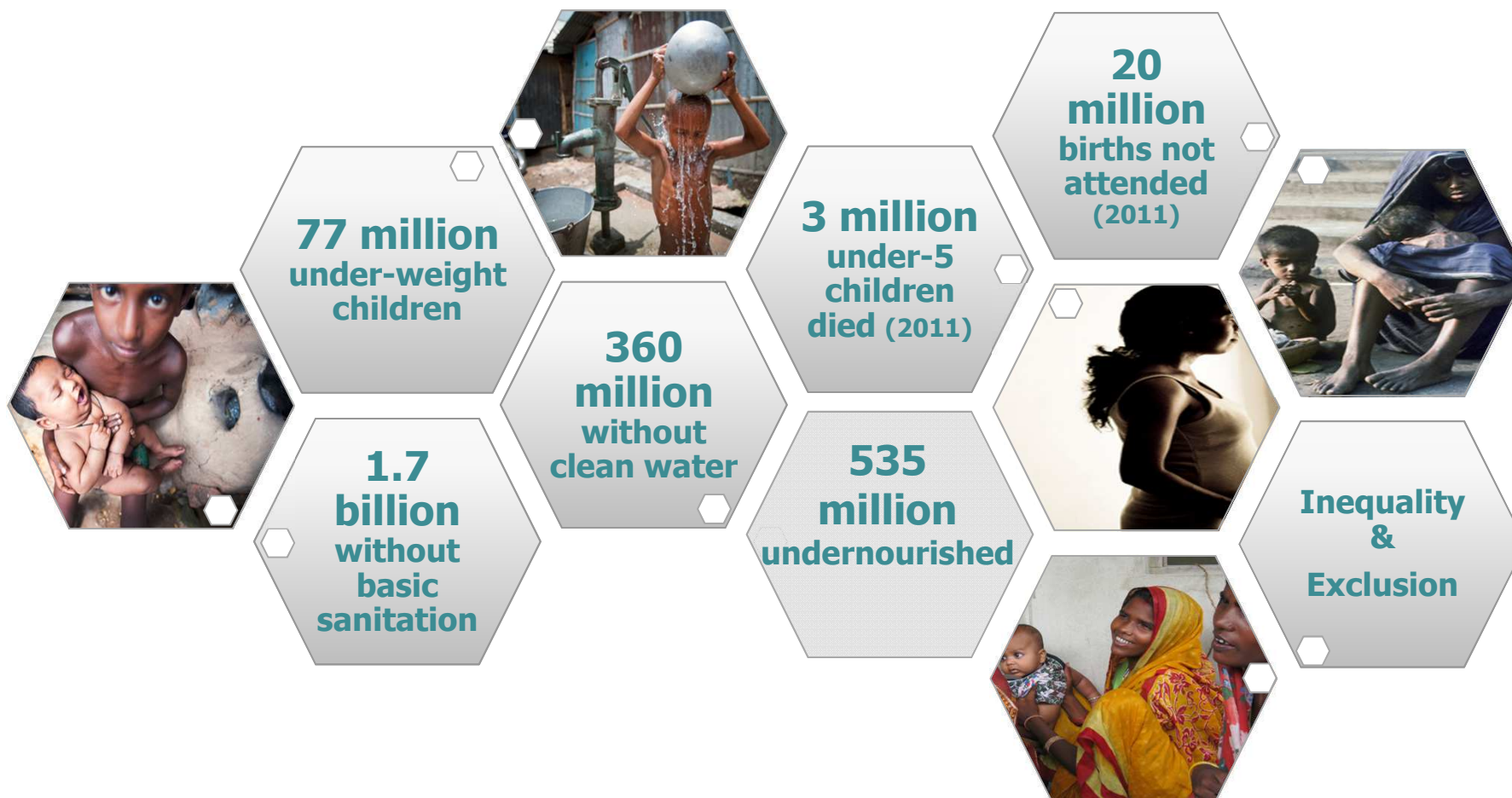
Under-5 mortality

Maternal mortality

**Reaching last
grade in primary
education and
improved quality**

Basic sanitation

Asia-Pacific region: High Level of Deprivation





Comparative Analysis: Asia-Pacific Region & Open Working Group

Aim: To lay out Asia-Pacific issues & juxtapose these with current proposals on the OWG. In some areas the proposals align closely with Asia-Pacific priorities, but in others there are still large gaps. E.g.:

- **Good alignment on issues such as: Pursuit of sustained & inclusive economic growth, gender equality and empowerment.**
- **But less alignment on key/hallmark Asia-Pacific issues such as:**
 - Critical importance of high and sustained economic growth;
 - Development risks of multiple shocks – especially external economic shocks, in addition to the shocks such as natural disasters;
 - Demographic dividends and challenges (e.g. impacts of youth bulge/aging on both social fabric & financial sectors); and
 - The need to decouple economic growth from resource- and carbon-intensive production and consumption patterns.

Moving from the MDGs to the SDGs

MDGs

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality rates
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development



Asia-Pacific SD priorities

- Eradicating poverty and narrowing inequality
- Pursuing sustained and inclusive economic growth
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Building resilience to natural disasters and economic shocks
- Responding to population dynamics and urbanization
- Enhancing resource efficiency and natural resource management
- Deepening regional integration and connectivity

Sustainable Development Priorities for Asia and the Pacific



A. Eradicating Poverty and Narrowing Inequality

Issues

The incidence of extreme poverty declined, but large numbers of people still live just above the poverty line and this is concentrated in middle-income countries.

The population-weighted average Gini coefficient of the region rose from 33.5 to 37.5 since the early 1990s.

In half of the countries where data are available, public social protection expenditure is less than 2% of GDP.

Deprivation in access to basic services is high.

Inequalities of income, opportunity and power are linked with disparities in access to productive assets and basic services, as well as discriminatory policies.

Proposed OWG Goals

Eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 (1a). Reduce the proportion of people living below national poverty lines by 2030 (1b).

Sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the income distribution (8a).

By 2030 implement nationally appropriate social protection measures including floors (1c).

Provide universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (6a).

Ensure universal access to sustainable modern energy services (7a).

Ensure equality of economic opportunity for all women and men, including secure rights to own land, property and other productive assets and access to financial services for all women and men (1f).

B. Pursuing Sustained and Inclusive Economic Growth



Issues

Economic growth should be inclusive and equitable. Insufficient decent and productive employment is being generated.

The region faces three important challenges: informal employment, youth unemployment and inequalities in the nature and extent of women's and men's engagement in economic activity.

Economic growth should respect planetary boundaries.

OWG Proposed Goals

Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all who seek employment including for marginalized groups (8b).

Encourage formalization of informal sector activities and employment (8j). Halve the number of youth not in employment, education or training by 2020 (8c).

By 2030 improve by x% the energy and resource productivity of economic activities and reduce by y% their waste and emissions per unit of output (8d).

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)

C. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Issues

Gender equality and women's empowerment are recognized prerequisites for the realization of all development goals.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are issues of human rights – of all persons fully and freely exercising their fundamental rights and freedoms.

The gender gap in labour force participation rate is still very high - in South Asia (49.5%), but declining in Southeast Asia.

Women's limited access to productive assets underpins violence and impairs the development of individuals and communities.

Multi-faceted actions are needed to answer to the multi-dimensional nature of gender inequality.

Proposed OWG Goal

By 2030, end violence against women and girls in all its forms (5b).

Equal participation and leadership in decision-making in public and private institutions (5f) .

Equal employment opportunities and equal pay for equal work (5d) .

Equal access to, and control of, assets and resources, including natural resources management (5e) .

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)

D. Building Resilience to Natural Disasters and Economic Shocks

Issues

Asia-Pacific is the world's most disaster-prone region, with disasters rolling back development gains made.

Climate change is predicted to affect the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, cause sea-level rise, and impact ecosystem health, with cities being often on the frontline.

Risk management should be regarded as an investment in SD rather than an added cost.

The region's economic outlook is subject to downside risks posed by pressures on food and energy prices, exchange rates and asset prices—and exacerbated by disasters.

OWG Proposed Goals

Build resilience and adaptive capacity to climate induced hazards in all vulnerable countries (12e) .

Increase the number of cities adopting and implementing policies and plans towards resilience and adaptation to climate change and natural disasters (10e) .

Build resilience of the poor and reduce deaths and economic losses related to disasters (1d) .

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)

E. Responding to Population Dynamics and Urbanization



Issues

Population dynamics, including urbanization/ migration, demographic dividend, ageing, present both challenges and opportunities for the region.

Migrants, totaling 53 million in the region, contribute to national economies in countries of origin and destination - there is a need to ensure decent work and social protection for them.

The region is registering an increase in its proportion of older persons (25% by 2050) as well as in its urban population (1.3 billion new urban dwellers by 2050). Many people live in slums.

About 60% of the world's youth population, or 750 million young persons aged 15-24, live in Asia-Pacific. Countries, particularly in South Asia, which are experiencing the youth bulge are in a prime position to reap the youth dividend.

Proposed OWG Goals

Implement planned and managed migration policies

Access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport for all, improving road safety and urban quality (10b).

**Capacity building for integrated planning and management (10c).
Elimination of slum like conditions (10a)**

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)

F. Enhancing Resource Efficiency and Natural Resource Management



Issues

Unsustainable rates of resource use threaten to reverse development gains and entrench poverty and inequality.

The region cannot sustain its resource intensive growth pattern which currently uses three times more resources than world average per unit of GDP. It needs to improve its energy efficiency and natural resource management.

Decoupling economic growth from resource consumption.

Promotion of environmentally sustainable economic growth.

Proposed OWG Goals

Achieve sustainable management and use of natural resources (11a).

Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, including in buildings, industry, agriculture and transport (7c) .

Improve the energy and resource productivity of economic activities and reduce their waste and emissions per unit of output (8d). Improve the resource productivity of economic activities (11c). Reduce waste through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse (11b).

Redouble efforts to raise awareness for creating a culture of sufficiency and sustainable lifestyles (11d).

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)

G. Deepening Regional Integration and Connectivity

Issues

Regional economic integration is critical for accelerating economic growth and reducing poverty and economic disparities.

The benefits of integration have still to be spread more widely across the Asia-Pacific region.

At the moment, economic integration is restricted by the following limitations:

- small domestic markets,
- limited natural resources,
- low level or unskilled labour force,
- little indigenous technology and poor infrastructure.

Hard and soft connectivity needs to be strengthened - e.g. railway networks and ICT connectivity.

Affordable access to broadband Internet is crucial

Proposed OWG Goals

Enhance regional and international cooperation for science, technology, and innovation and solutions-oriented research, and enhance knowledge sharing, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation (15d).

Promote open, rules-based, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading and financial systems, including complying with the agricultural mandate of the WTO Doha Round (15a) .

* Referring to OWG working document for OWG 11 (dd. 17 April)



Subregional Perspectives

THE PACIFIC

- **Sustaining growth in the context of low economic dynamism and increased vulnerability including to climate change.**
- **Environmental and resources sustainability, with a particular focus on ocean biodiversity.**
- **Social inclusion: addressing income and gender inequalities.**

SOUTH and SOUTH-WEST ASIA

- **Eradicating poverty and hunger.**
- **Pursuing higher, inclusive and sustained economic growth for productive job creation.**
- **Women's empowerment and gender equality, in the context of violence and inadequate access to health care.**
- **Building resilience to disasters.**
- **Developing surface transport networks and virtual ICT networks to facilitate subregional transit and trade.**

EAST and NORTH-EAST ASIA

- **Addressing inequalities, especially with regards to:**
 - The urban-rural divide;
 - Informal employment;
 - Population ageing; and
 - Gender inequality.
- **Resource efficiency: decoupling growth from resource use and pollution.**
- **Responding to population dynamics.**
- **Deepening regional integration and connectivity.**

NORTH and CENTRAL ASIA

- **Economic diversification, given the high and increasing dependence on commodities.**
- **Food security, energy security and water management.**
- **Environment and resilience to climate change.**
- **Investment in human capacities and people-oriented domestic policies.**
- **Connectivity, in relation to trade, transport and ICT infrastructure, as well as further integration into the world economy.**

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

- **Sustainable infrastructure development, with slow progress on meeting basic sanitation needs, and almost 30 per cent of urban populations living in slums.**
- **Expanding access to health care: health expenditures as a percentage of GDP have lagged behind other subregions.**
- **Disaster risk mitigation and climate adaptation.**
- **Managing transboundary ecosystems and transboundary environmental impacts, such as land degradation and biodiversity loss.**
- **Managing extractive industries, sustainable consumption and production.**
- **Managing transitions to good governance.**
- **Closing the digital divide through ICT infrastructure investment that brings affordable broadband to all.**

Means of Implementation



A. Financing

Options for raising required, new and additional resources include:

- **Domestic resource mobilization, which will be critical:**
 - Most developing countries have low tax/GDP ratios as base is narrow. A combination of progressive taxation policies could be coupled with state level efforts to ensure proper collection from property taxes;
 - At all levels strengthening tax administration will be important;
 - Removal of fuel subsidies;
 - Expansion of financial inclusion services and its use for sustainable development;
 - Financial sector deepening through developing capital market; and
 - Encouraging institutional investors through credit enhancement.
- **Utilizing ODA, institutional investment and MDBs resources, which are now being augmented through innovative approaches need to be deployed for development of sustainable through public-private partnership.**
- **Diversification and deepening of capital markets, through better governance and product innovation.**
- **Strengthening regional development cooperation through South-South Cooperation and Triangular cooperation and effective use of regional savings and foreign exchange reserves.**
- **Refocus on the use of ODA for SDGs.**

B. Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)



- **STI has not been well-integrated in development agendas.** Region has to its credit strong STI centers and countries with good potential of knowledge and technology, however these need fuller exploitation to adopt and adapt technology and more effective mechanisms for transfer of technology
- **Expand R&D for scientific advancements** to better understand the key global challenges, draw solutions and apply a more forward-looking analysis, particularly to deploy technologies to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency and to encouraging climate change resilience
- **Fully deploy ICT with dynamic approaches** to the adaptation and diffusion of innovation. From the power of big data, to the latest mobile applications which simplify everyday tasks, cutting-edge technology offers opportunities to accelerate economic growth, boost productivity, increase social inclusion, and provide new tools in the fight against poverty, inequality, and cross-border challenges. Promoting Asia's ICT super highway will allow use of ICT for sustainable development.
- **Enhance national policy frameworks to develop a culture of working on STI** in a more integrated manner, as together they can be 'game changers' – facilitating shifts in the development landscape.
- **Technology transfer key for Asia's two-thirds of the world's poor to "catch up" with technology**, both through adaptation and adoption. East Asia, for instance, has the potential to become a major innovator in its own right and can serve as a new hub through the promotion of South-South collaboration.
- **Promote quality of education and research** to encourage creativity, better learning, and more effective knowledge generation to ensure our next generation can take our STI achievements to new heights.
- **Improve technology access to SMEs**

C. Trade

- **Establish a multilateral trading regime that is fair, just and open.**
- **Lower trade costs, especially with regards to non-tariff costs.**
- **Promote “Aid for Trade”, through green trade, foreign direct investment, technology transfers and trade finance funding.**
- **When implementing trade reforms, promote the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.**

D. Capacity Building

- **Support evidence-based, multi-dimensional, long-term and participatory decision making at all levels.**
- **Enhance the statistical capacity of the region and support monitoring.**
- **Reform the region's vision on education and learning, as well as job qualifications, curriculum development and programmes.**
- **Rely on cultural heritage and education as drivers of community development.**

E. Partnerships

- **Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue in August 2013 agreed that partnerships should:**
 - Be built among all stakeholders; and
 - Support internationally-agreed development targets to form the centerpiece of Asia Pacific cooperation in the years ahead
- **Strengthen regional partnerships, giving special consideration to the support for participation of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.**

F. Governance for Transformation towards Sustainable Development

- **Call for more accountable, transparent and effective institutions.**
- **Emphasize the importance of effective policy coordination mechanisms to synergize objectives, for example with respect to trade and social inclusiveness.**
- **Support institutional reforms to create an enabling environment for civil society and peoples' participation such as civil registration**

The Regional Political Process for Sustainable Development



The Way Forward

Shaping a long-term regional HLPF process for Asia and the Pacific:

- Recommendations on the functions, timing, frequency, participation, outcome, themes and procedural aspects.
- **Possible functions of a regional HLPF:**
 - Sharing information on best practices and lessons learned;
 - Enhanced reporting and accountability;
 - Strengthened science-technology-innovation institutions and policy interface; and
 - Stakeholder engagement.
- **A regional roadmap for implementation** of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs may be developed through a participatory process.
- **Developing a suitable financing strategy** for regional public goods as well as regional safety-net and other regional financial arrangements.
 - Enhancing capabilities for tax administration, domestic capital market development through regular annual consultations on financing for sustainable development

The Way Forward

Regional sustainable development forum and regular ESCAP Commission (RC) sessions?

- **4 options explored by RCs during the 2014-2015 transitional period for the HLPF:**
 1. Integrating the regional forums for sustainable development into Commission sessions;
 2. Holding the regional forums back to back with the Commission sessions;
 3. Using the regional forums for sustainable development and meetings for the Commission session or some aspects of it; and
 4. Standalone events.
- **Integrate into the ESCAP regional economic cooperation and integration (RECI) agenda, especially in the activities of four working groups.**

The Way Forward

Points for discussion:

- **Regional sustainable development priorities – especially those that need greater emphasis at the global level.**
- **The most effective organizational modalities of APFSD in the future.**
- **The feasibility of, and process for developing a regional road map for implementing the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015.**
- **The key substantive functions of the APFSD to best promote the integration of the three dimensions and the means of assessing progress at the regional level**



Thank you.