Report on the **2021 Regional Forums on Sustainable Development**

A place in the world to build forward better

Cepei

Knowledge from the Global South

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Introduction

The report on the regional forums on sustainable development (RFSD) analyzes the work carried out in each of these five dialogue, exchange and joint learning scenarios between countries and non-state actors in each region, following the complex structure represented by the United Nations Regional Commissions.

The focus of this document is given by the role played by the RFSD in the implementation, monitoring and follow-up scheme of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes explicit references to the regional work in 14 of its 91 paragraphs (about 15%). Regions are also mentioned in five targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) —Goals 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)— although the entire set of SDGs cuts across the forums.

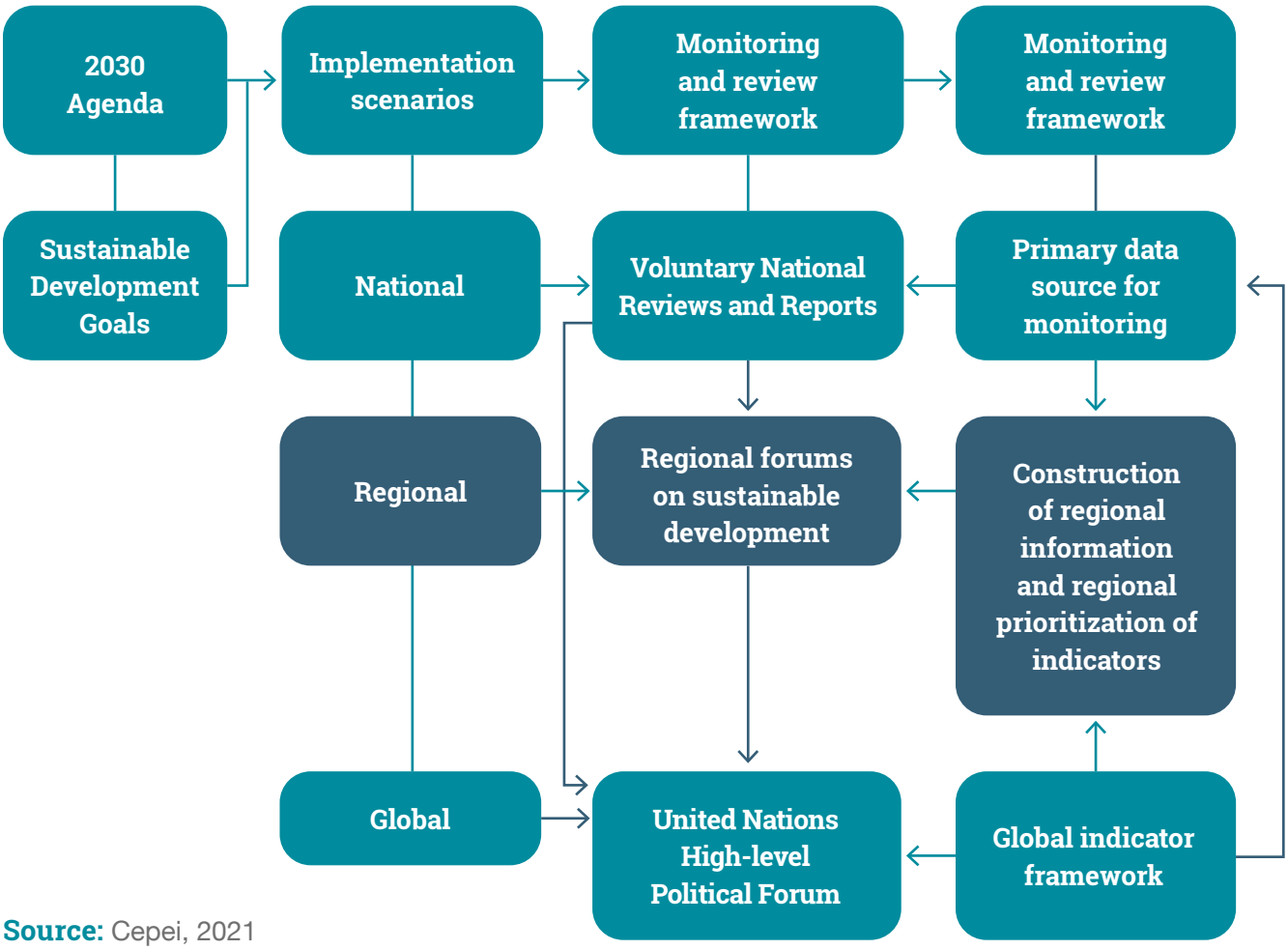
The origin of the regional forums responds to one of these regionally assigned tasks. Their working base is found in paragraph 21 of the 2030 Agenda, in which governments undertake to work for its implementation "within our own countries and at the regional and global levels," establishing a threefold working scenario. The final part of the paragraph further emphasizes the value given to regional work, recognizing "the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development. Regional and subregional frameworks can facilitate the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level".

The chapter on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda highlights the decision to create a solid, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated framework. This framework should be applied at the national, regional and global levels to promote accountability, support effective international cooperation, encourage the exchange of good practices and contribute to mutual learning. In addition, it should be a catalyst of support to overcome common challenges and detect new problems.

Paragraph 74 then sets out the principles that should guide the operation of the monitoring frameworks, stating that they will be country-led, but also that national-level processes will be the foundation for reviews at the regional level. This *bottom-up* dynamic is complemented by the *top-down* dynamic, insofar as it is established that the follow-up and monitoring of the SDGs will be carried out "using a set of global indicators to be complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels which will be developed by Member States" (2030 Agenda, paragraph 75).

Considering the intersection between data sources and indicators, the regions are intermediaries, as acknowledged in paragraph 80 of the same document when it states that "inclusive regional processes will draw on national-level reviews and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level, including at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development", leaving it to the States to decide on the most appropriate regional forum for their participation (paragraph 81).

Graphic 1. 2030 Agenda monitoring and follow-up system: Position of the regions



Source: Cepei, 2021

All regions now have their own established RFSD, hosted by the UN Regional Economic Commissions. The present report analyzes the main outcomes of the 2021 RFSD.

Methodology

The analysis is based on the authors' real-time monitoring of the forums, their participation in the meetings when possible, the preparatory and adopted documents for each of the regional meetings, along with interviews with key informants in each region and in the United Nations Development System conducted under the Chatham House Rules modality, which prevents their names from being cited here and the statements they may have made[1].

1. The modality establishes that participants are free to use the information received, including citations to the statements made, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the source may be revealed.

The documentary analysis includes both the documents produced by the States and the United Nations System and those prepared by other actors, published on the official websites of each of the forums.

As secondary sources, information taken from the press and from specialized institutions, such as the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) or PassBlue, is used.

The study is primarily qualitative, but includes quantitative data when relevant to understanding the dynamics of the RFSD functioning. The priority given in this case to the use of qualitative techniques responds to the search for well-founded interpretations over verifications. Additionally, we seek conclusions oriented to strengthen processes, using an integrated and holistic approach to our object of analysis.

Brief approach to regional forums on sustainable development

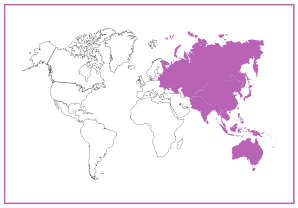
All RFSDs have similar work mandates. Common elements include:

- Responsibility for monitoring the status of the SDGs at the regional level.
- Promote knowledge exchange and best practices in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Facilitate dialogue among States and between States and other stakeholders. All forums are multi-stakeholder.
- Support for countries in the region that decide to voluntarily carry out their review processes for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and present their results to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).
- Create inputs to feed the debate at the HLPF.
- Work to identify common issues faced by countries in the region and promote common strategies to address them.

In addition, each forum has its own specificities[2].

2. Attached is the list of Member States of each region as of March 2021.

Graphic 2. United Nations Economic Commissions and regional forums

	Host Regional Commission	Number of Member States	Name of the RFSD
	ESCWA Arab Countries	**20/22 (*)**	Arab Forum for Sustainable Development
	ECE Europe	**56**	Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region
	ECA Africa	**54**	African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
	ECLAC Latin America and the Caribbean	**46**	Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development
	**ESCAP** Asia-Pacific	**53**	Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

(*) ESCWA comprises 20 Member States, but the regional Forum includes The Comoros and Djibouti, which do not participate in ESCWA but are members of the UN Arab countries

Source: Cepei, 2021

The African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

In March 2013, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was restructuring its work as a result of decisions taken by the African Union (AU) Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the UNECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. In this process, an African Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD), a subsidiary body of the ECA, was established, bringing together experts and policymakers in the economic, social and environmental areas.

The first UNECA Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (Af-RFSD) became part of the Ninth Session of the Committee on Sustainable Development held in Addis Ababa in June 2015. Resolution 930 (XLVIII) was adopted, calling for the establishment of the Forum as a biannual meeting. In 2016, resolution 939 (XLIX) established that its meetings would be annual.

The African forum's primary mission is to follow-up on the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

In 2021, the Af-RFSD held its seventh meeting between March 1–4, in a hybrid scheme with the preeminence of virtual presentations, under the theme "Building forward better: Towards a resilient and green Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063."

The strong ties between ECA and the African Union symbolizes development management at the regional level, with the latter being fully integrated into the work of the Af-RFSD.

The Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

The Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (LAC-RFSD) was established by Resolution 700 (XXXVI) of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in May 2016. It brings together all 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and aims to function as a regional framework for the follow-up and review of the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, targets and means of implementation, as well as to oversee the progress of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in the region.

In 2021, the LAC-RFSD held its fourth meeting after being forced to suspend its 2020 meeting as a result of restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 meeting took place virtually on March 15–17, without any specific theme.

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region

Given the membership specificities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the region has a dual membership: On a geographic basis and by income level, which act concurrently rather than exclude each other. Thus, 56 countries from different latitudes—from the United States and Canada to Israel, Russia and Turkey—are members of the ECE, making it the regional commission with the largest number of Member States.

It was established by Decision B (67) of the Economic Commission for Europe, approved in April 2017, as a regional mechanism for the follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to be held in 2018 and 2019. Its original mandate

was extended to 2020 and 2021 by Decision B (68) of the same institution, adopted in 2019. It is expected that a new decision will be taken in 2021 to extend their meetings. Consequently, unlike in other cases, the Eu-RFSD does not have the status of a permanent body/meeting.

The 2021 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development of the UNECE Region (Eu-RFSD) was carried out under a hybrid scheme with a prevalence of virtuality. Although their official meetings took place on March 17–18, a full week of work and discussions on the SDGs was also carried out. The theme of the meeting was "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and action and delivery on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region."

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Created in the framework of the High-Level Political Forum by the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (AP-RFSD) held its first meeting in May 2014, prior to the launch of the intergovernmental round of negotiations that would eventually adopt the 2030 Agenda. The theme that gathered that first meeting highlights its precocity: "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."

In May 2017, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted its resolution 73/1, aligning its structure to the 2030 Agenda's own demands, and making the AP-RFSD a subsidiary body of its own and establishing its terms of reference. The forum's mandate would focus on supporting countries in their efforts to implement and follow-up on the 2030 Agenda in UNESCAP Member Countries as well as preserving their regional perspective.

The eighth AP-RFSD meeting took place on March 23–26, 2021, under the theme "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific", following a hybrid format with a prevalence for virtuality.

The Arab Forum for Sustainable Development

It constitutes the main mechanism in the region of cultural bases integrated by the Arab countries for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda implementation. It includes the 22 countries of the United Nations Arab Group, which is why The Comoros and Djibouti participate in the Arab Countries Forum on Sustainable Development (Ar-RFSD) even though they are not members of the United Nations Commission for West Africa (ESCWA), which hosts their debates.

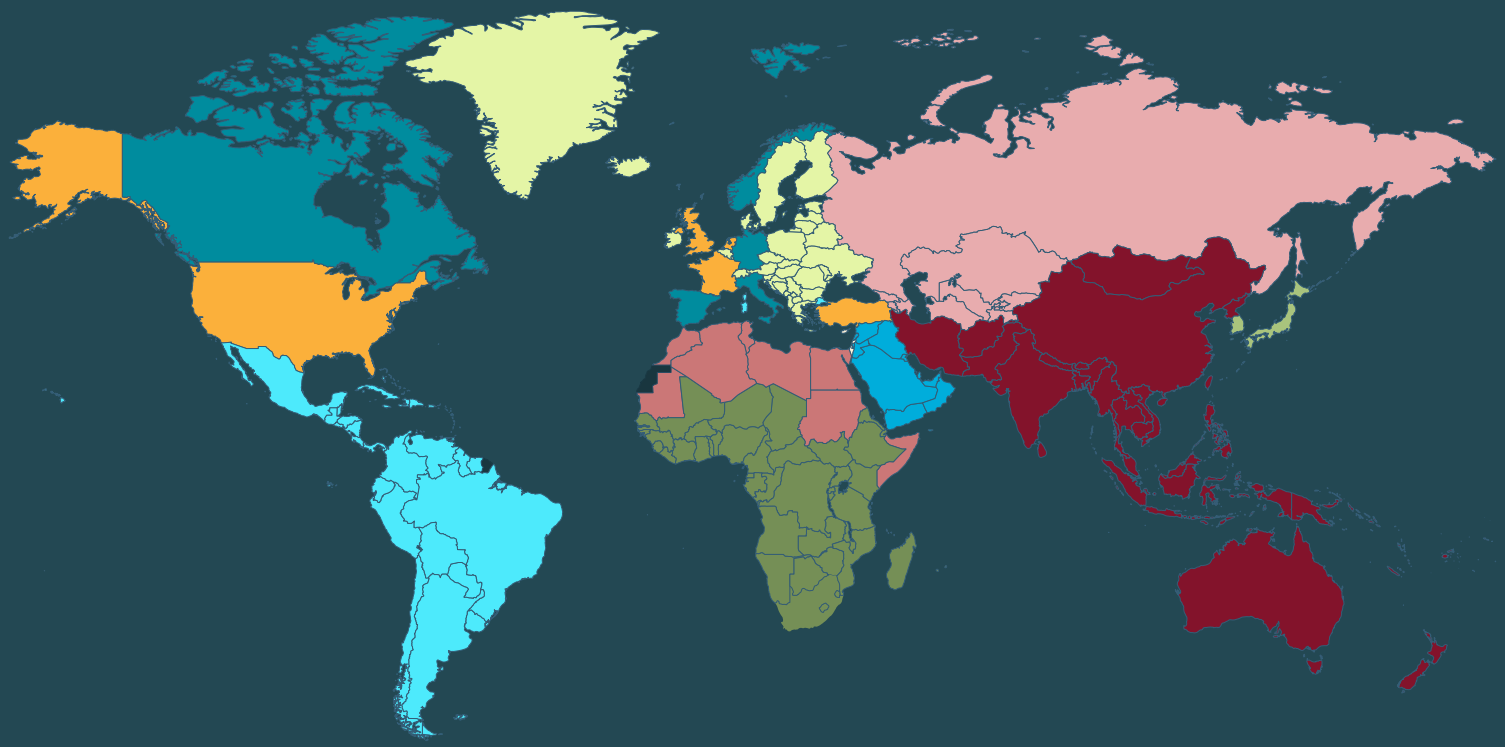
The Forum started its activities under the name "High-Level Arab Forum on Sustainable Development", following its establishment by ESCWA Resolution 314 (XXVIII) of 2014. In 2016, ESCWA Resolution 327 (XXIX), related to the working mechanisms of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development, and the "Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", adopted by ESCWA Member Countries in December, aligned their functions with the 2030 Agenda and gave it its current name.

The 2021 meeting of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development met on March 29–31, working under a hybrid (albeit largely virtual) scheme, under the theme "Accelerating progress on the 2030 Agenda post-COVID."

In this region, the strong link between ESCWA and the Arab League, who are working together in the preparation of the forum, stands out.

Box 1. Overlapping of regions

There are many cases of countries that are Members of more than one United Nations Regional Commission. This leads to overlaps between them, which, far from being a problem, can be a way of facilitating interregional work.



- Only ECE Member States
- Only ESCAP Member States
- Only ECLAC Member States
- Only ECA Member States
- Only ESCWA Member States
- ESCAP and ECE Member States
- ECLAC and ECE Member States
- ECLAC and ESCAP Member States
- ECA and ESCWA Member States
- ECLAC, ESCAP, and ECE Member States

Source: Cepei, updated in March 2021

Analysis of the 2021 regional forums on sustainable development

Core ideas

The main focus of discussions in the RFSD was COVID-19 and its effects on sustainable development. Four of the five forums had a meeting motto, and three expressly included a reference to COVID-19. Although the Arab Forum is the only one that refers to "post-COVID", both ECE and ESCAP use the expression "Sustainable and Resilient Recovery" to refer to the aftermath of the pandemic.

This seems to indicate that, at least in the regional layers, response and recovery are shifting towards a more focused discussion on the period following the pandemic. Under this approach, the *Decade of Action and Delivery* takes on an immense weight, since its own relevance becomes linked to the UN Secretary-General's vision: "*Build Back Better*", which Cepei prefers to call "*Build Forward Better*". Given the importance of these concepts as frameworks for the 2021 RFSDs, it is important to dwell on them for a moment.

The Decade of Action and Delivery

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, UN Member States realized that the progress made during the first five years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda was insufficient to be on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030. As a result, the first session of the summit-level High-Level Political Forum in 2019 included in its Political Declaration, entitled "Gearing up for a Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development", a global commitment to "accelerate our common efforts, now and in the coming decade." The Secretary-General immediately endorsed the demand and devoted the second half of the year to promoting it.

Build Back Better

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to the need to integrate the Decade of Action with responses to the pandemic. To address its short-term consequences, the UN presented a common strategy based on five pillars. At the same time, the Secretary-General launched a medium-term vision for post-pandemic recovery that he called *"Build Back Better"*, borrowing an expression already used by Bill Clinton in 2006[3] in his report on recovery in the Philippines after the December 2004 Tsunami—an expression included in the United Nations glossary since its introduction as one of the four priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015–2030.

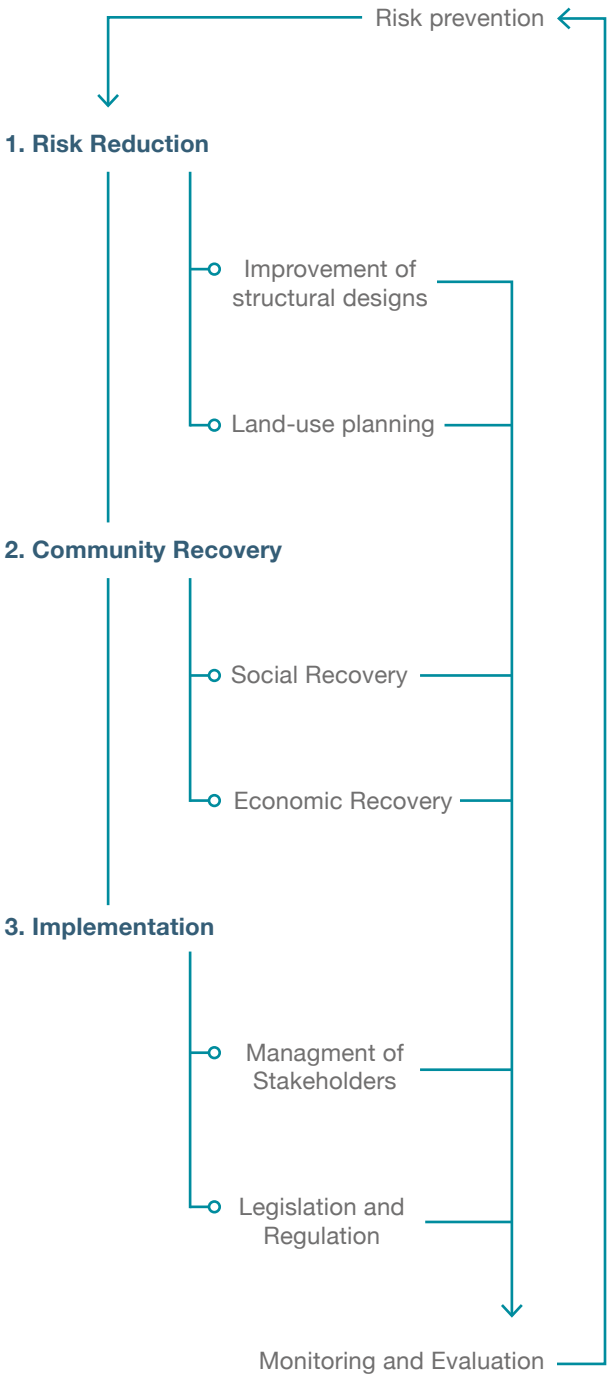
3. The former U.S. president had been appointed a year earlier as Special Envoy of the Secretary General, Kofi Annan, for the post-Tsunami recovery.

Graphic 3. "Building Back Better" in the Clinton Report and the Sendai Framework

The 10 Principles to Build Back Better in the 2006 "Climate Report"

1. Governments, donors, and aid agencies must recognize that families and communities drive their own recovery
2. Recovery must promote fairness an equity
3. Governments must enhance preparedness for future disasters
4. Local governments must be empowered to manage recovery efforts, and donors must devote greater resources to strengthening government recovery institutions, especially at the local level
5. Good recovery planning and effective coordination depend on good information
6. The UN, the World Bank, and other multilateral agencies must clarify their roles and relationships, specially in addresing the early stage of a recovery process
7. The expanding role of NGOs and Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement carries greater responsabilities in recovery efforts
8. From the start of recovery operations, governments and aid agencies must create the conditions for entrepreneurs to flourish
9. Beneficiaries deserve the kind of agency partnerships that move beyond rivalry and unhealthy competition
10. Good recovery must leave communiities safer by reducing risks and building resilience

Build Back Better according to the Sendai Framework for Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030



Source: Cepei, 2021

The Secretary-General's Building Back Better approach seeks to align post-COVID-19 recovery processes with the achievement of the SDGs, in order to avoid repeating unsustainable practices and promote changes towards new social, economic and environmental ways of life, in line with the future of the world depicted in the 2030 Agenda and taking advantage of the opportunities and lessons learned from the crisis.

Building Forward Better

The Build Back Better proposal was adopted, appropriated and adapted by different actors, even within the United Nations system itself, which began to speak of the need to *Build Forward Better*.

This rewording seeks to highlight the fact that we must not rebuild something that was an unsustainable practice. Building forward shifts the focus from the past (build back what was there: rebuilding) looking to the future, thereby also promoting the commitment to intergenerational solidarity inherent to sustainable development within a response to COVID-19, driven by an integrated and holistic approach. Thus, while rebuilding does not necessarily imply an exercise of creating sustainability, **building forward means a creative exercise of economic, social and environmental sustainability**.

The side events

A series of side events prior to the official RFSD meetings initiated regional discussions on sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda and COVID-19.

Only the activities that have been included in the official sites of each of the forums were taken as references. Given that the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development does not include any such activities, we are only working with the remaining four forums. A total of 126 events have been recorded, of which more than 40% correspond to the Asia-Pacific forum alone:

- **LAC-RFSD:** 28 events
- **Af-RFSD:** 24 events
- **Eu-RFSD:** 22 events
- **AP-RFSD:** 52 events
- **Ar-RFSD:** No data

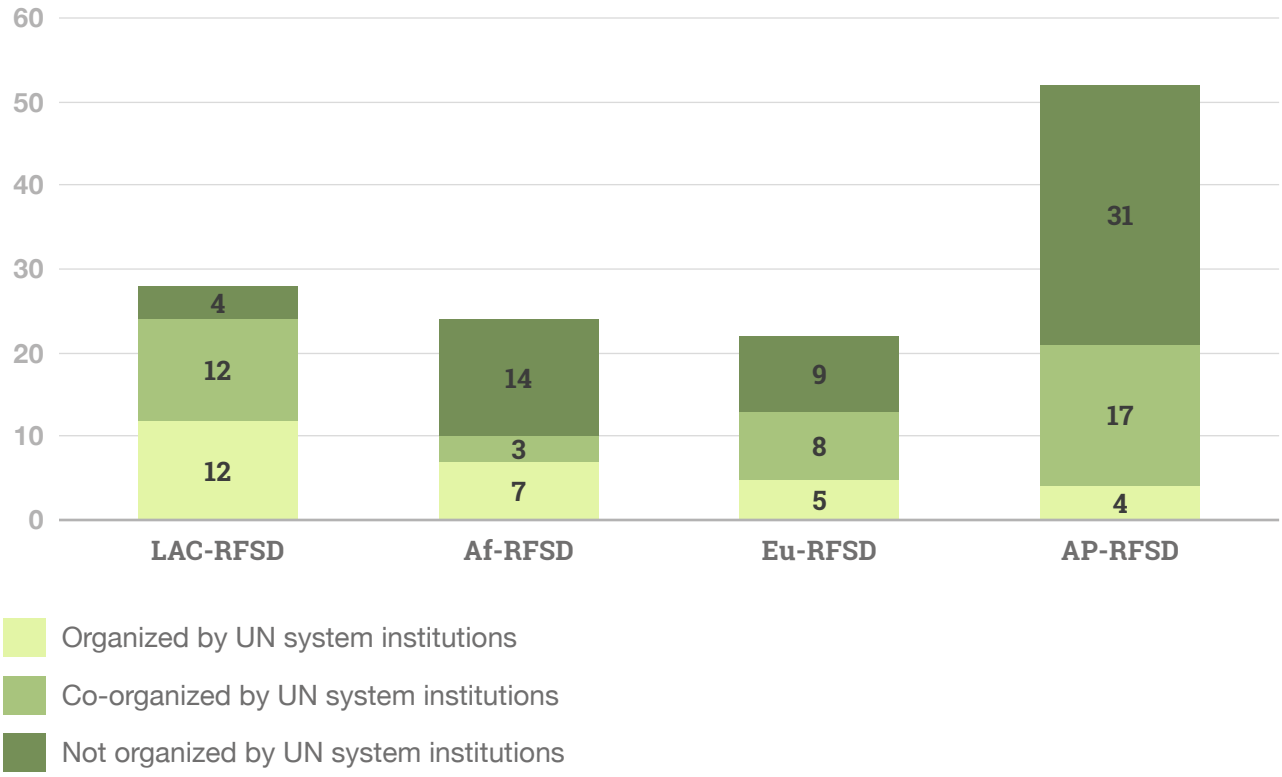
To explore these events and collect information, we propose the following questions:

How many of these events were organized or co-organized by the UN system?

This question is relevant as it allows us to see to what extent the system is taking over the forums. Given that the space for side events is necessarily limited, a high percentage of those organized by the UN system institutions may indicate a sign of setting aside the interests and actions of other actors[4].

4. The AP-FRDS did not carry out a selection exercise for side events, but rather all those proposed were accepted on the sole condition that they met the established presentation requirements.

Graphic 4. Side events included in the official sites of the 2021 RFSD, according to the participation of the UN system institutions in their organization



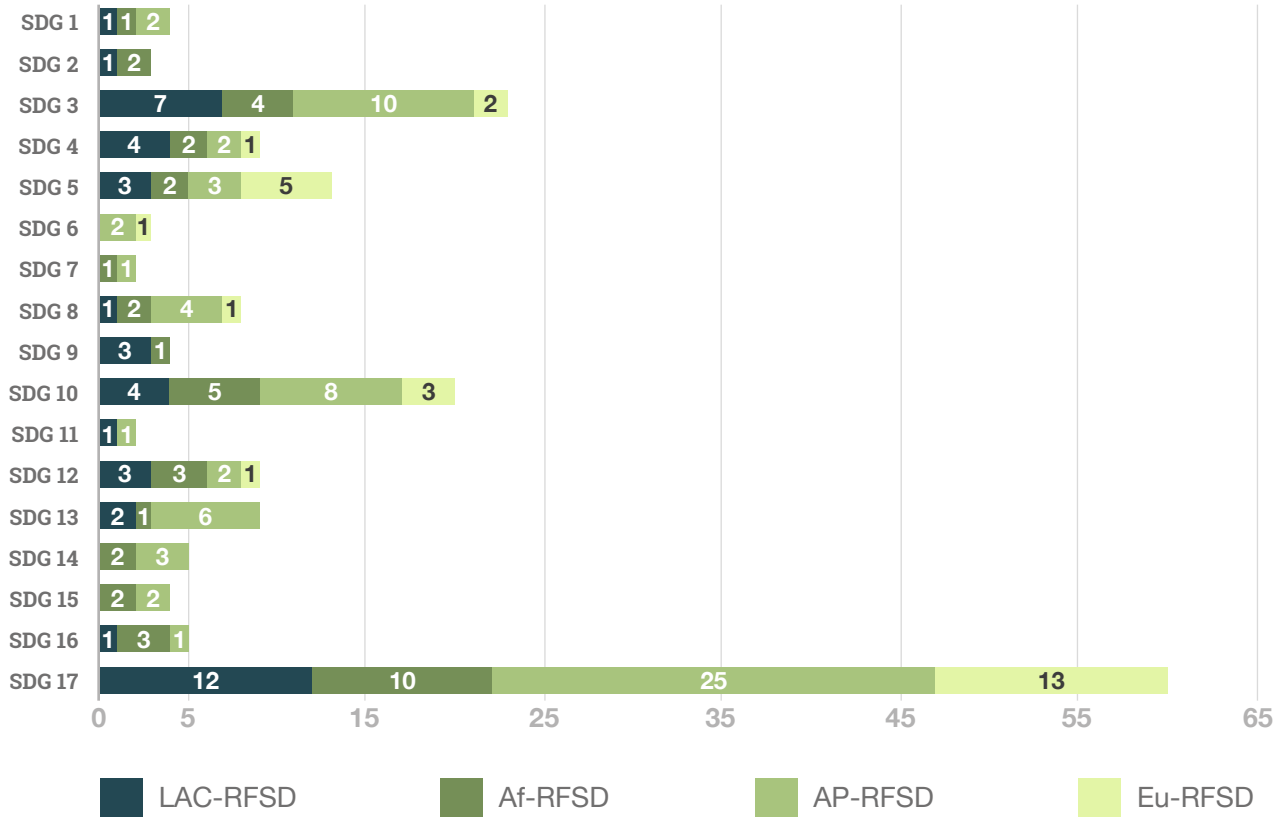
Source: Cepei, 2021

Within the framework of the LAC-RFSD, the over-representation of the system, either as the sole organizer or co-organizer of events, is evident. Considering both categories, we can see that the UN system made part of the organization of 86% of the parallel events in the region. In this regard, one of our interviewees pointed out that in order to increase the chances for a civil society event to be accepted, a counterpart should be sought in the organization within the system. This topic did not appear as relevant in any of the interviews conducted with respect to other forums.

As for the actors involved in the preparation of these events, civil society, together with the private sector, has been present at all four meetings. Following behind, without any general presence, are academia, local governments, parliaments and development banks. It is clear that there are major actors missing, such as unions, whose presence should be encouraged, as well as those who still show little presence in the preparation of side events in each of the regional forums on sustainable development.

Taking into account all the events in the four forums, 183 were associated with SDGs and their targets (a single event can be linked to multiple SDGs). The most referenced Goals were SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Graphic 5. Relationship between side events in the RFSD (except Arab countries) and SDGs



Source: Cepei, 2021

The gap between the goals under consideration is obvious. The wide difference between SDG 17 and the others can be explained by the characteristics of the forums, designed as multi-stakeholder scenarios oriented to the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. The large number of references to SDG 3 can be understood from the context in which the forums were held. SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and 10 show a globally widespread concern about inequality, which has been starkly heightened by the pandemic.

Why did the Eu-RFSD did not have a single side event directly linked to SDG 1 when the 2030 Agenda "acknowledges that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development" (paragraph 2)? How can we interpret this, taking into account that the Eu-RFSD brings together most of the world's richest countries whose international policy decisions have a global impact? Are regions "leaving behind" Goals 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)? The lack of balance in regards to the consideration of the environmental dimension is evident for Latin America and the Caribbean, whose economic commission argues the need for a great environmental leap to overcome underdevelopment, and for the UNECE region.

As a result of the analysis, we found that there is no balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development, and this raises a significant concern.

How was COVID-19 present in the side events?

To answer this question is important to think about how regional debates are taking into account what will be the greatest challenge of sustainable development in the immediate future.

Among the 126 events surveyed, 41 (almost 33%) referred explicitly to COVID in their calls. This may be good news as it shows the relevance and concerns surrounding the issue, but it also shows that other issues linked to sustainable development at the regional level have not been put aside, which would be a great risk.

Among the activities referring directly to COVID-19, there is a balanced distribution between those organized by UN system institutions, those co-organized between the UN and external partners, and those directly convened by actors outside the system.

Among the most repeated themes within the subgroup of activities under analysis, the following stand out:

- **General approaches to the challenge of recovery:** 8 activities
- **Activities linking recovery to technical and scientific issues, those relating to data, and those linking recovery to the promotion of human rights:** 3 activities each
- **Local management:** 2 activities

Regarding groups that are particularly vulnerable to the pandemic and need to be considered in recovery policies, we found activities about:

- **Women:** 6 activities
- **Young children and adolescents:** 3 activities
- **Native people:** 3 activities
- **Youth:** 2 activities
- **People with disabilities:** 2 activities
- **Migrants and refugees:** 1 activity

The SDGs with which these events had the most links were SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

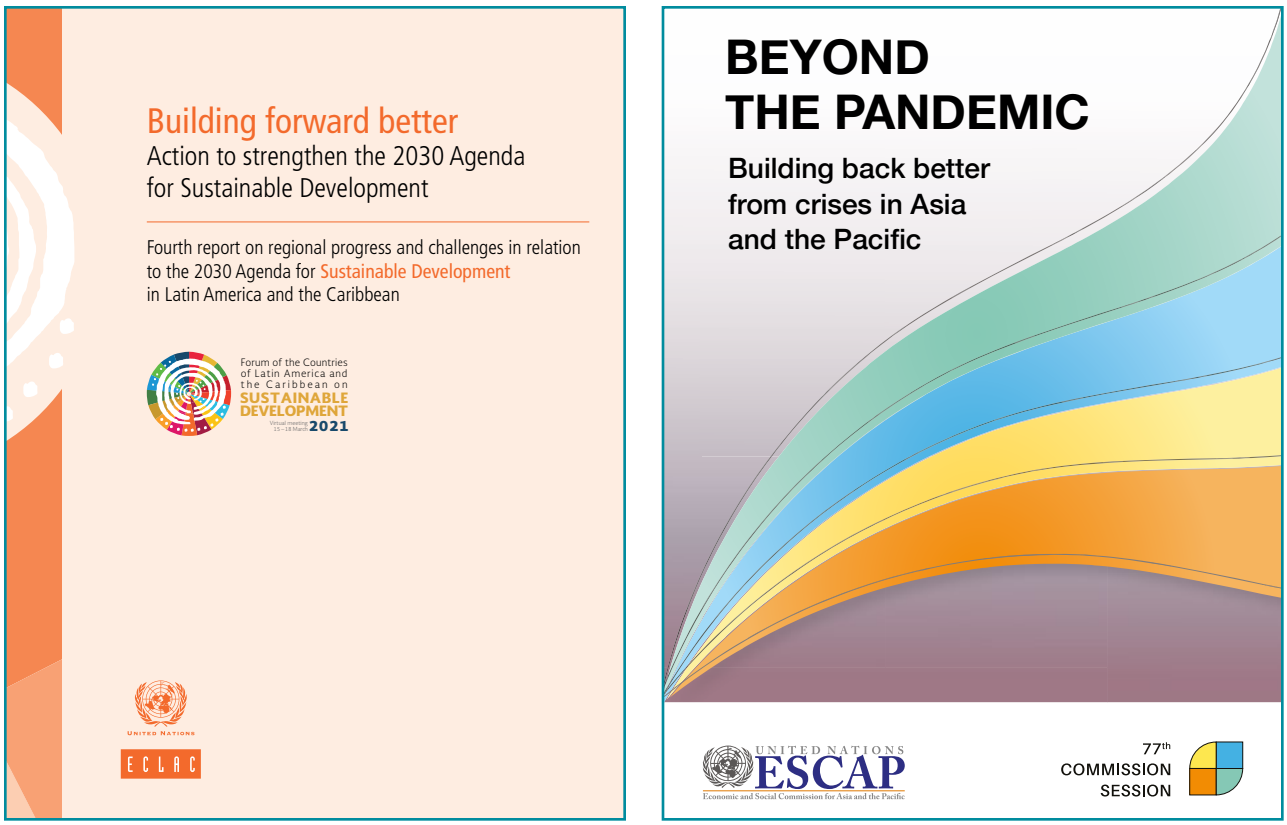
The complete absence of side events where the central topic of discussion was access to vaccines and treatments against COVID-19, as well as the non-participation of the COVAX initiative therein, is striking.

How active were the discussions around The Decade of Action to Deliver the SDGs, "Build Back Better" and "Build Forward Better"?

The answer to this question allows us to understand the regional relevance that each of these initiatives have and the degree of appropriation by regional actors.

The first thing to point out is that the Decade of Action was given very little consideration. It was the key focus of only three of the 126 side events: One in the Af-RFSD, one in the AP-RFSD and another one in the Eu-RFSD.

Illustration 1. Building back, building forward



Left: ECLAC's 2021 report on sustainable development progress in the region uses the *Build Forward Better* expression. Right: ESCAP's report for the 77th session of the Commission refers to *Build Back Better*. Both reports were published in March 2021.

On the other hand, there were considerable references to ***build back/build forward better***, and there were even mentions other than post-COVID-19 reconstruction/building forward:

The ***"Build Back Better"*** slogan was used in the call themes of 10 side events, while 5 opted for ***"Build Forward Better"***. Four other activities chose to mention *"Building Better Together"*, *"Build Back Greener"*, *"Building Back More Equal"*, and *"Building Back Fairer"* in their titles.

Neither of these references was used in the LAC-RFSD—the closest mentions were about "sustainable and resilient recovery" and "transformative recovery".

Judging from the combination of mentions of recovery/building forward in any of its forms and those of the Decade of Action and Delivery, it is clear that the former have surpassed the scope of the latter. In other words, the idea of ***building back/building forward better*** appears as a concept closer to the current needs and realities of the regions and their actors.

Official activities

Below, we will limit ourselves to the activities that have been officially incorporated as part of the forums, either as preparatory activities or as part of their work[5]. This analysis is complemented by the above, in order to provide an overall view, and avoiding to consider official activities and side events as a single group (even though we have only taken into account those officially recognized by the organization of each regional forum).

Official preparatory activities

The official programs of the forums include a total of 119 activities divided into official, preparatory plenary and official restricted participation activities. In the case of the Af-RFSD, a post-Forum activity was included: an "Online Creative Writing Workshop for young writers participating in Championing the Decade of Action Initiative."

The designation of activities as "preparatory" varied considerably from one meeting to another, even when the topics covered in the forums were similar or even identical.

The LAC-RFSD considered that preparatory activities were meetings that took place the day before the start of the official activities. Meanwhile, the Ar-RFSD has been holding meetings since November 2020. In regards to the Eu-RFSD, preparatory meetings began about two weeks before the opening of the forum.

Preparatory activities include the aforementioned activities aimed at supporting countries submitting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), as well as civil society meetings in all regions. In Africa, the civil society meeting was a training workshop to strengthen knowledge on Af-RFSD's work. In Europe, the youth held their own sectoral meeting.

Only the regions represented by ECLAC and ECE included private sector forums as preparatory activities.

The ECE, ESCWA and ESCAP regions also held specific meetings of parliamentarians to discuss their role in promoting sustainable development.

The following should be taken into account as particularities of each region:

- ECLAC convened a preparatory meeting to discuss with its (non-full) associate members and the online presence of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina J. Mohammed. The dialogue was held between her and the resident coordinators of UN teams in the countries of the region. In LAC, the meeting of the Regional Collaboration Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Mohammed, was also considered as preparatory.

- Among the meetings held prior to the Af-RFSD, there was one focusing on science, technology and innovation.

- The Arab countries discussed the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda within the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the possibilities of boosting sustainable production and consumption.

- In the Asia-Pacific region, the youth organized their regional forum as a meeting prior to the AP-FRDS with the intention of generating inputs for the debate and strengthening their position as actors in the promotion of sustainable development in the post-COVID-19 period. ESCAP and DESA jointly organized an activity prior to the regional forum on Voluntary Local Reports.

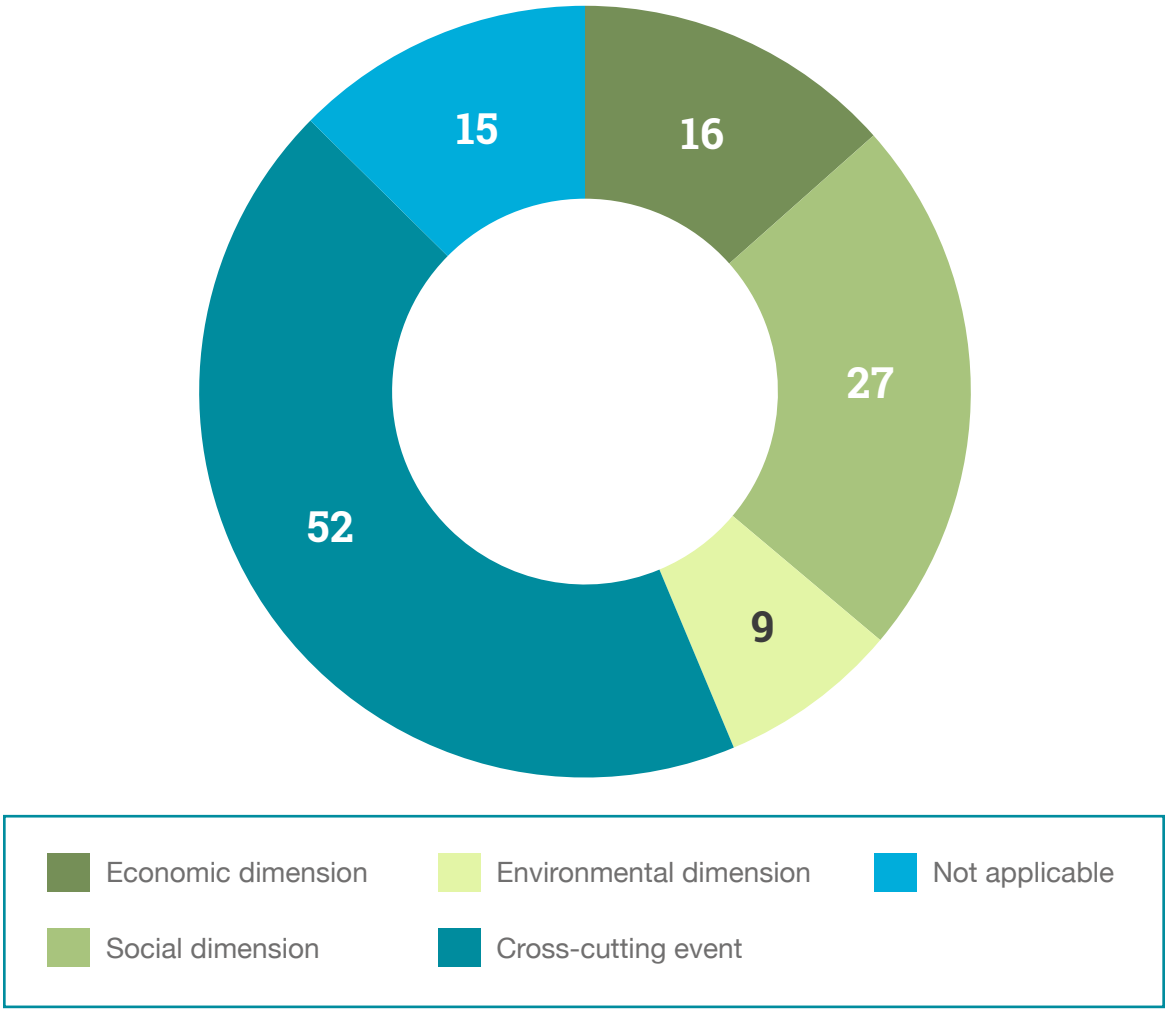
5. Only one activity carried out after the end of the Af-RFSD was considered; However, it was part of the forum's program.

- In Europe, the week prior to the official opening of the Eu-RFSD was marked by roundtable discussions organized around four themes (people, planet, prosperity and cross-cutting debates). The outcomes of these discussions fed into the debates of the regional forum.

Balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development

Based on both preparatory activities and forum sessions, we can note a disparity on the consideration of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and a strong predominance of the social dimension over the economic (as occurred with the side events). Although most of the events had an integrating aspect of the three dimensions, we noted that the officials who spoke at these events were rarely responsible for managing environmental areas and, therefore, had little representation in relation to their peers from the social and economic areas.

Graphic 6. Official events (preparatory and during the forums) by sustainable development dimension



Source: Cepei, 2021

Activities of the forums, COVID-19, building back/building forward better, and the Decade of Action and Delivery

A total of 39 of the 119 official activities carried out (27%) expressly called for debates around COVID-19, which reflects what was said when analyzing the side events, where this proportion was slightly higher (33%).

These activities were mainly related to post-pandemic recovery processes, rather than urgent containment measures. Linking recovery to increased resilience is almost a constant.

Considering the conceptualization framework of this reconstruction, the references to ***Build Back Better*** are reiterated for 6 events: Three in Europe, one in LAC, one in Africa and the last one in Asia-Pacific.

The expression *"Build Forward Better"*, which ECLAC translates into Spanish as *construir un futuro mejor* (build a better future), is used in four calls: two in the Af-RFSD and two in LAC-RFSD.

As a result, the Ar-RFSD does not use any of these expressions, and only comes close to their meaning on one occasion when referring to the need for a *green recovery.*

The Decade of Action and Delivery is expressly mentioned in only six of the calls for events surveyed—five of them in the Af-RFSD and the remaining one in the LAC-RFSD. There is no mention in the calls of the other three regional forums.

Level of engagement

In every forum, the ministerial level played a leading role. However, the presence of officials below the rank of minister is common, while only two presidents participated in the forums, both as leaders of the countries chairing their regional economic commissions. Such are the cases of Carlos Alvarado Quesada (Costa Rica) and Denis Sassou Nguesso (Congo). The only vice-president who participated in the Af-RFSD is a unique case: In addition to serving as vice-president of Malawi, Saulos Klaus Chilima is the Minister responsible for Economic Planning, Development and Public Sector Reform in his country.

With a few exceptions, the participation of representatives of the different States, regardless of their level, showed that the formal prevailed over the substantive. During the debates, there were no questions from State representatives, who seemed satisfied with giving three to five-minute speeches, highlighting some element of their countries' path towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda or in their struggle to fight the effects of COVID-19.

The UN system showed a different reality: Its commitment was demonstrated by the participation of the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, who participated in events at all five forums, and the President of the ECOSOC, Mr. Munir Akram, who was absent only at the Arab forum. Each of the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions and officials of the UN agencies, funds and programs also participated, although the latter were not necessarily of the highest rank.

In the same way that the structure and working methods of the United Nations High-Level Political Forum are currently being debated to increase its efficiency, it could be useful to replicate this at the regional level.

Support in the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews: When regional regionalism blocks the possibility of being enriched by other visions

The regional sustainable development forums are a space to support those countries that are in the process of building their VNRs for submission within the same year to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum. The strategies followed by each region to this end have changed:

- In Latin America and the Caribbean, a workshop with a preparatory status is organized for reporting States only.
- In Africa and Europe, preparatory workshops are held as a restricted-entry pre-activity, with open plenary discussions as part of the official activities of the Af-RFSD and Eu-RFSD forums.
- In Asia-Pacific, the exchange of experiences on report preparation is promoted as a main and plenary activity within the work of the forum.
- In the case of the Arab region, the forum was preceded by a two-day workshop on Voluntary National Reports. It should be noted that each year ESCWA holds two workshops to work on this topic between meetings of its regional forums.

Although each region uses the mechanism that best suits its possibilities and needs, the regional economic commissions hold monthly meetings throughout the year. The interviews conducted indicate that in this space there have been exchanges on how to improve their support to the countries reporting to the High-Level Political Forum.

It is important to note that the knowledge gained by countries in conducting their Voluntary National Reviews and reporting on their results can be used by countries in other regions if properly articulated. Inviting countries from other regions to share their own experiences in the regional forum could be a practice that enriches the views on the process of each separate region.

The Af-RFSD has already taken a step in this direction by inviting Mariana Cammisa (SDG Officer of the Secretariat of International Affairs of the government of the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina) to participate in its workshop on national and local voluntary reporting.

Knowledge gained in a region, should not mean losing the opportunity to benefit from those that exist in other regions. The knowledge generated in the construction of Voluntary National Reviews and their use has nothing to do with regional boundaries.

Something similar occurs with respect to data-related activities in each of the regions. Although it is understandable that each of them faces its own particularities, relying on this to confine the debates within the region, instead of enriching them with experiences from other regions, results in a loss. There is an opportunity for cross-regional cooperation that can be exploited—at little or no financial cost—and with the potential to improve the results of the support processes for reporting countries.

Non-state actors engagement

Having mentioned the elements that we consider essential to the participation of the States and the United Nations system itself in the forums, we should now ask ourselves about the place of other actors in the debates. It is worth remembering that openness, inclusiveness, participation and transparency of the follow-up and review schemes of the 2030 Agenda, as well as support for reporting by all stakeholders, is a basic principle of the process (2030 Agenda, paragraph 74.d).

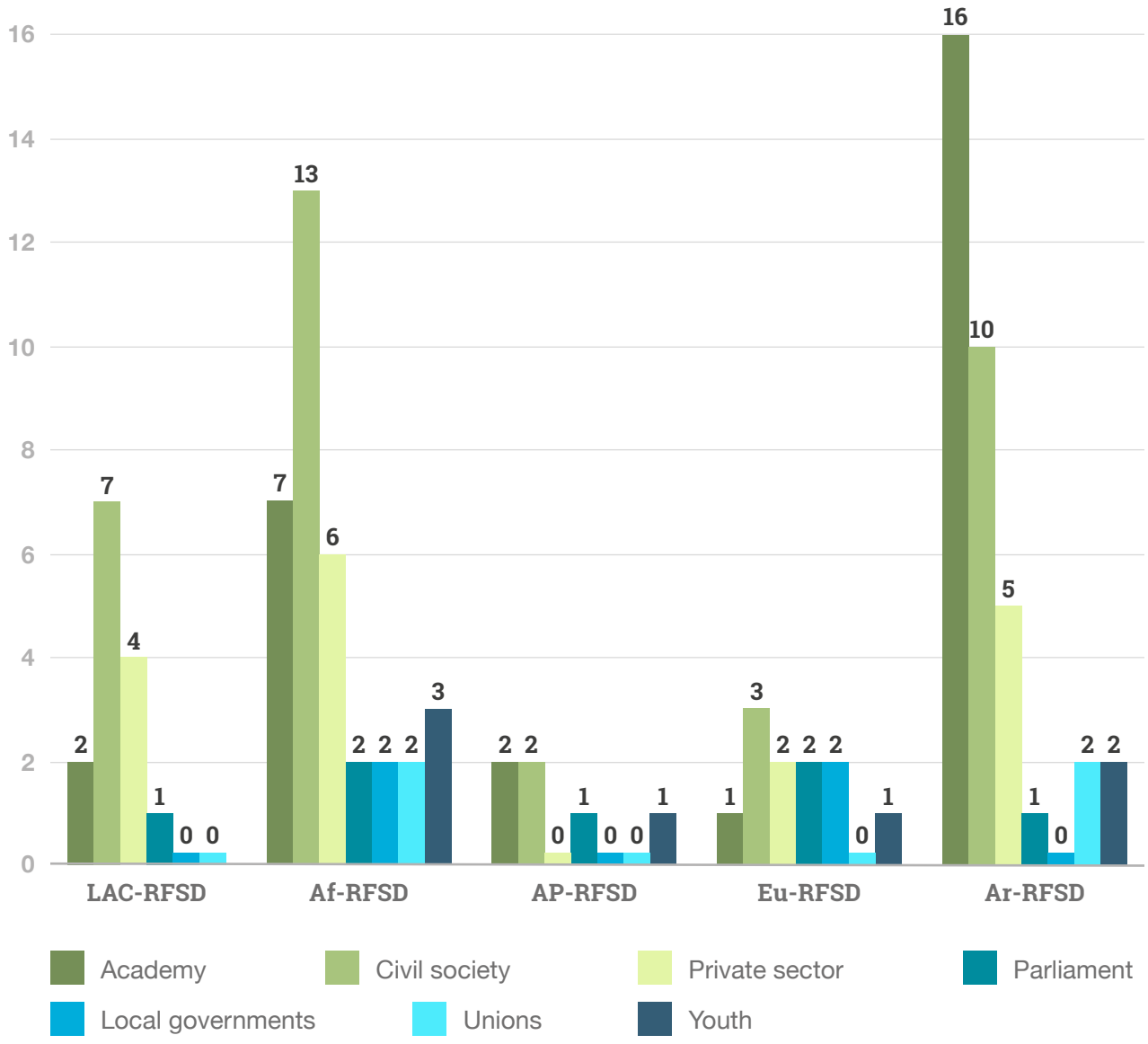
In addition to the possibility of speaking in plenary debates, some actors have played prominent roles in the activities, working as informants,

expert speakers and panel commentators. This report excludes from the analysis situations where the floor was requested in plenary events.

The intensity and type of actors involved in the forums of each region has been different, but with few exceptions, it has been verified that each sector acts as a sealed compartment when organizing its activities in the forums, hardly inviting other non-state actors.

In a vision that integrates the previous official activities and those carried out as part of the forums, we have the following result:

Graphic 7. Non-governmental actors engagement in the different regional forums on sustainable development: participation activities



Source: Cepei, 2021

The above graph reveals that civil society and academia are the most called in players among non-governmental actors, with a certain preeminence of the former: Academia has only been called in more than civil society in the Arab countries forum. The Latin American and Asia-Pacific forums had the least diversity of non-governmental actors among their speakers.

Parliaments and local governments are lagging behind, and the youth is far from being involved to match the discourse on their importance. Other relevant actors to strengthen the sustainability of development are completely absent, such as political parties and the media, both traditional and digital.

Furthermore, none of the forums has explained how the decision as to who would represent the different actors in the activities was taken. This may not be problematic in the case of academia, where the calls are made according to the expertise of individuals, but it can be problematic when inviting representatives of civil society or young people.

The forums play a special role in opening spaces for non-governmental actors, especially at a time of increasing restrictions for them at the national level, including the assassination of leaders. Taking this forward can increase the relevance of the forums and open up the range of voices that have something to say in sustainable development debates.

Greater participation also means a deeper appropriation of the meaning of the regional forums, and is an opportunity to generate knowledge and awareness of the 2030 Agenda in societies.

Box 2. The value of inclusion in the regional forums: An experience at the African 2021 forum

At the closing session of the Af-RFSD, Allara Le Todjida, a deaf member of civil society, made his presentation in sign language, with simultaneous translation into English by an interpreter who, as per United Nations regulations applicable to these meetings, participated in every official session. Le Todjida said it was the first time he had the opportunity to participate in such a forum and asked for more support for his community, which in Africa has so much to express. At the end of his participation, he wiped away the tears shed by the opportunity to be part of the debate.

Allara Le Todjida, President of Strategies to Advance and Network Deaf Africans for Ubuntu, at the closing session of the Af-RFSD. On screen, Congo's Minister of Tourism & Environment, Arlette Soudan-Nonault, representing the country chairing the sessions, and Zimbabwe's Minister of Public Service, Labor & Social Welfare, Paul V. Mavima, listen to the translation of the sign language interpreter.

The United Nations development system reform in regional forums

The UN Sustainable Development Promotion System is currently undergoing a process of necessary reforms to adapt to the commitments and windows of opportunity resulting from the 2030 Agenda, and provide greater effectiveness, efficiency and a stronger orientation towards results.

This process began at the national level. Its clearest expression was the introduction of the figure of national coordinators to replace the former resident coordinators. However, this involved multiple factors ranging from changes in country support plans to internal UN office management schemes.

The next step was taken at the regional/global level, with the creation of a new institution to ensure the coherence of the system: The Development Coordination Office (DCO).

Within each region, progress was made in establishing guidelines for action and governance aimed at optimizing resources, promoting dialogue within the system and among its members, governments and non-governmental partners, while at the same time increasing the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of management and results.

Among the elements highlighted in this second moment of the reforms, are the creation of regionally unified information access portals, the establishment of *Issue-based* Coalitions for the work of different agencies on issues of regional interest, and *Regional Collaborative Platforms*[6].

The 2021 regional forums on sustainable development were the space chosen to make visible, and in some cases introduce for the first time, the new RCPs and their IBCs. The relevance of this issue to the UN as a whole was demonstrated by the fact that the Deputy Secretary General, who chairs the RCPs, participated in the 2021 meetings of the five regional forums, and personally led the meetings of each of the RCPs that were held in parallel to the forums.

Regional Collaboration Platforms

The UN Secretary-General stated the following in his report on the "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (2019)" (A/74/73, April 2019):

I intend to create a unified mechanism for coordination in each region –a United Nations regional collaborative platform –to foster collaboration on sustainable development across entities of the United Nations development system operating at the regional level (paragraph 110).

This decision was embodied in the establishment of the Regional Collaboration Platform, which in the 2021 regional forums on sustainable development held closed meetings with the UN Deputy Secretary-General (who leads them and to whom they are accountable).

- "Today marks the start of the next-generation collaboration approach for the regional UN entities to support African countries to respond and recover better from the COVID-19 pandemic and reignite the Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is aligned with the Africa Union Agenda 2063".

6. For further information on this process, please visit the CEPEI website on the United Nations Development System Reform.

- In Latin America and the Caribbean, it took place on March 15, as a preparatory activity for the LAC-RFSD.

- In Asia-Pacific, it was held on March 23, in parallel to the work of the AP-RFSD. Amina J. Mohammed stated that "The United Nations continues to make progress on its sweeping reforms to strengthen our work on all fronts – country, regional and global (…) This platform sets the foundations for a much stronger contribution by regional UN entities to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific".

- In Europe, the meeting originally scheduled for March 19 was rescheduled to the week prior to the AR-RFSD, allowing the Deputy Secretary-General to make a direct reference to the topic in her inaugural speech, stating that "The UN development system in your region is stepping-up to support your efforts. After the reform, it is now better positioned to provide joined-up policy and operational support to a sustainable recovery and acceleration of SDG progress. The inaugural meeting of the new Regional Collaborative Platform last week concluded with clear priorities for action in 2021."

- In the Arab countries, the RCP meeting was also moved a few days ahead of the start of the Ar-RFSD. Following its session on March 26, the results of the meeting were presented by Mounir Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA, in an official activity of the Sustainable Development Forum of this region.

The commitment to strengthen and give visibility to this new working mechanism is one of the most concrete aspects of the 2021 round of regional forums on sustainable development. The message was "there is no going back on the reform at the regional level, nor is there any time to lose in its implementation". According to an interviewed source, the RCPs could be one of the strongest "bets" of the General Secretariat to give relevance and effectiveness to the work of the regions in the post-COVID-19 reconstruction processes.

Box 3. Issue-based Coalitions

UN Development System actors in each region have defined issues of importance and have established coalitions for joint UN work at the regional level. Thus, a double result is achieved: Joint definition of regional priority areas and promotion of synergies for regional action. The current thematic coalitions are:

Africa[7]

1. Strengthened integrated data & statistical systems for sustainable development.
2. Ensuring effective and efficient macroeconomic management and accelerated inclusive, economic transformation and diversification.
3. Harnessing Demographic Dividends through investments in Youth and Women's Empowerment for Sustainable Development.
4. Leveraging new technologies and enabling digital transitions for inclusive growth & development.
5. Fostering Climate Action and Resilience.
6. Towards Peace, Security, and the Respect of Human Rights.
7. Forced displacement and migration.

Latin America and the Caribbean[8]

1. Climate change and resilience
2. Equitable growth
3. Governance and institutions
4. Human mobility
5. Crime and violence
6. Development Finance

Asia-Pacific

1. Climate Change Mitigation and Air Pollution.
2. Building Resilience.
3. Inclusion and Empowerment.
4. People, Mobility and Urbanization.
5. Human Rights and Gender Equality.

Europe and Central Asia

1. Health.
2. Gender Equality.
3. Youth and Adolescents.
4. Social Protection.
5. Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience.
6. Environment and Climate Change.
7. Sustainable Food Systems.

Arab Countries

1. Adolescents and youth.
2. Humanitarian development peace nexus.
3. Migration.
4. Economic management and social protection.
5. Gender justice and equality.
6. Food security, climate action and environment.
7. Quality social services.
8. Urbanization.

7. This region uses the expression "Opportunity/Initiative-based Coalitions (OIBCs)" instead of "Thematic Coalitions."
8. It considers gender and youth as cross-cutting themes in the six coalitions.

Regional information gateways

In his aforementioned report on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/74/73), the UN Secretary-General announced his decision to create "strong knowledge management hubs in each region, by pooling the policy expertise, by or across sectors, available through our almost 8,000 human assets today" (paragraph 113).

The realization of this proposal was reflected in the presentations of regional information portals as a major activity in three of the five regional forums.

- **LAC-RFSD:** on March 18, Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and Luis Felipe López Calva, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Program, presented the Regional Knowledge Platform on the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (SDG Gateway).

- **At the AP-FRDS,** the presentation of the Asia-Pacific Knowledge Management Hub was held on March 25 as one of the official events of the meeting, with the presence of Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Secretary-General of ESCAP, and Kanni Wignaraja, Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. This platform is part of a larger information portal, the SDG Help Desk, which integrates a Knowledge Hub, data portals, SDG-oriented web-based planning tools, and information from technical assistance activities and the work of a community of practice.

- **The Eu-RFSD** was the setting for the presentation of a new segment of its Knowledge Hub on SDGs, online since 2020, a dashboard to provide unified follow-up on the progress of the 56 UNECE Member States. It was presented the week before the start of the regional forum.

Besides those three cases, ECA has a knowledge platform, while ESCWA uses its Arab SDGs Gateway. However, its process of building a single base by unifying access to all its resources continues under the name "Manara" (meaning "lighthouse" in Arabic). The project is currently in its final stage and is expected to be online before the end of 2021.

These portals open up new ways of accessing information produced by the UN system at the regional level as a whole. In addition to the implementation of the RCPs, this strongly promotes the repositioning of the regions, increasing their visibility and working tools for the promotion of sustainable development and post-COVID-19 building forward.

Conclusions

There are two main variants that have given the regional forums on sustainable development in the year 2021 their particularity:

1. The COVID-19 context. While the forums that were actually held in 2020 operated in this context, this year's forums are the first to be planned within the framework of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, impacting the operational aspects of their development. Their themes were influenced by the effects of the pandemic and the anxiety to initiate the building forward processes that will occur in the post-COVID-19 period.

2. The moment and the strong commitment made by the General Secretariat to accelerate and consolidate the reform of the United Nations system at the regional layer.

As we pointed out, both themes may have more connections than what emerges at first sight. Indeed, for the UN it will be necessary to work at all levels with an articulated, efficient and results-oriented system to play a relevant role in the building forward process. Otherwise, if the organization proves incapable of playing such a role, it is likely to result in further structural weakness of the underpinning multilateralism that was already under stress before the pandemic arrived.

The role played by the regional economic commissions as the hosts of the regional forums thus gains a new dimension, as they can now be seen as an indispensable building block in the construction of a relevant UN for the post-COVID-19 period.

This role/responsibility of the commissions is far from excluding other entities that give the UN a real presence in the regions. The United Nations agencies, funds and programs will also have to say and do their part to achieve a regional work up to the challenges.

This integrated response uses as its main tool the thematic collaborative platforms. The capacity for action in the post-COVID-19 period is once again being crossed with the progress and consolidation of this new structure resulting from an incomplete reform.

It is under this approach that the first "pending" of the regional forums appears: To work with the particularities of each region, without excluding the elements that the other regions can provide. The linkage between the forums and extra-regional partners that can enrich their debates remains almost nonexistent; A linkage that only requires political will and imagination, given that there is no economic cost to move forward this proposition.

Once again, the forums can strengthen one of the scenarios historically neglected by the UN: The interregional arena. Both the presence of institutions of the system working in different regions and the existence of "cross-memberships" (double and even triple) among the Member States of the economic commissions open up channels for bringing regions closer together. This becomes even more important in times of facing a great common challenge: Building forward.

However, one element to emphasize from the 2021 forums is that the pandemic did not take over all the debates, which was an understandable risk. The forums have clearly demonstrated that sustainable development far outweighs the call for building forward better. In doing so, they have made it clear that the 2030 Agenda is one of the

plans that remain relevant (and may even have been strengthened) as it was conceived, before the pandemic. The forums have stated that in order to overcome the effects of COVID-19, we do not need to modify the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda, but rather fulfill them even more intensely than before.

The Decade of Action and Delivery, the Secretary General's call to "*Build Back Better*", which we refer to as "*Build Forward Better*", has proven to be relevant in the post-COVID-19 dialogue, and has been integrated into the visions of all the actors involved at the regional level. "*Building Back*" or "*Building Forward*" have settled as the basis for a common multi-stakeholder narrative. The challenge is to understand that by using these terms we are actually pointing to the same thing.

In order to consolidate a common narrative, it is important to increase the participation and diversity of non-state actors in the forums. Although each forum has its own particularities, there are sectors that are not participating in the regional forums, whose contribution would be relevant for sustainable development. While civil society and academia participate significantly in official and parallel events, other actors do so sparingly; To the point of zero participation from parliamentarians, local governments or young people in some forums. Other actors such as political parties and the media are completely out of consideration.

The lack of connection between actors is not limited to events organized by the States, as interactions between actors are also limited when one of them is the organizer or convener.

With respect to the States, the particularities arising from virtuality can be used to justify the almost total lack of participation of high level leaders, particularly when the expectation is that at least those from the chairing countries will be present. However, justifying their absence may be a mistake: Their presence reasserts the political commitment of governments with the UN's regional work on sustainable development.

On the other hand, there does not seem to be a proper balance between representation from the United Nations and governments. It was usual to see the Deputy Secretary-General and the President of ECOSOC participating in events where their counterparts were third-line national officials. It is necessary to work with the States prior to the forums so that they can correctly assess their importance.

However, that importance must first be given by the UN. The forums were conceived as an integrated space in the process of reviewing and monitoring progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) has not given the expected relevance to their main outcomes and conclusions. Rather, it has relegated them to a brief activity (like all HLPF activities), of little substance, and whose contributions are not reflected in the documents resulting from the global meeting. Today, under the process of reforming the HLPF, this issue must be taken into account. It may also be necessary to reconsider the dynamics, priorities and products of the regional forums. The RCPs can be a space to initiate this debate. Their definition should be given by the States, potentially within the framework of their meetings at the conferences of each of the Regional Commissions.

Finally, the lack of balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development has yet to be resolved. There is a clear gap regarding the environmental dimension. For example, greater participacion of environment ministers in the regional forums, is an effective way of rapidly raising discussions related to the environmental dimension. It could also result in greater awareness among the environment ministers regarding the *trade-offs* in sustainable development promotion strategies with environmental implications.

Suggested actions

Based on the progress made and the conclusions obtained, the following suggested actions can be carried out to strengthen the regional forums:

1. Work proactively with the presidents of the countries leading the regional commissions, in order to increase their commitment and turn them into allies to achieve higher level government representation. One measure that could be encouraged is for the presidents themselves to call in their peers to meet at events within the forum.

2. Identify relevant sustainable development actors that are underrepresented in the forums and prioritize their participation in panels and events as speakers or commentators.

3. Set up agendas for the regional forums that guarantee the balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development. During the planning phase of the forums, the inclusion of governmental and non-governmental actors working in areas not greatly discussed in the debates, should be taken into consideration.

4. Make the regional forums a space for RCPs to be accountable to society for their actions at the regional level. A specific event could be created for this purpose within the official program of each forum.

5. Supporting the States that present their Voluntary National Reviews each year remains a fundamental task of the forums, and should be maintained and increased as much as possible. The exchange between the economic commissions on what has been useful in providing such support, disseminating the results of these dialogues in search of best practices, can be immensely useful.

6. Strengthen interregional work. Promote exchanges between members of different regions. This may be an essential role for the economic commissions, but equally important for agencies, funds and programs with a presence over multiple regions, and for countries with memberships in several regional commissions.

7. Keep up the participation of the highest level of representatives, in order to convey a clear message of support and recognition of the forums and their outcomes at the global level.

Annex

UN Regional Economic Commision Member States (only full memberships, by alphabetical order)

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Afghanistan			ESCAP				
Albania				UNECE			
Germany	ECLAC			UNECE		**Yes**	
Andorra				UNECE			
Angola		UNECA					
Antigua and Barbuda	ECLAC						
Saudi Arabia					ESCWA		
Argelia		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
Argentina	ECLAC						
Armenia			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Australia			ESCAP				
Austria				UNECE			
Azerbaijan			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Bahamas	ECLAC						
Bahrain					ESCWA		
Bangladesh			ESCAP				
Barbados	ECLAC						
Belarus				UNECE			
Belgium				UNECE			
Belize	ECLAC						
Benin		UNECA					
Bolivia (Plurinational S. of)	ECLAC						
Bosnia and Herzegovina				UNECE			
Botswana		UNECA					
Brazil	ECLAC						

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Brunei Darussalam			ESCAP				
Bulgaria				UNECE			
Burkina Faso		UNECA					
Burundi		UNECA					
Butan			ESCAP				
Cape Verde		UNECA					
Cambodia			ESCAP				
Cameroon		UNECA					
Canada	ECLAC			UNECE		**Yes**	
Chad		UNECA					
Chile	ECLAC						
China			ESCAP				
Chipre				UNECE			
Colombia	ECLAC						
Comoros		UNECA					
Congo		UNECA					
Korea (Republic of)	ECLAC		ESCAP			**Yes**	
Costa Rica	ECLAC						
Côte D'Ivoire		UNECA					
Croatia				UNECE			
Cuba	ECLAC						
Denmark				UNECE			
Djibouti		UNECA					
Dominica	ECLAC						
Ecuador	ECLAC						
Egypt		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
El Salvador	ECLAC						
United Arab Emirates					ESCWA		
Eritrea		UNECA					
Slovakia				UNECE			
Slovenia				UNECE			

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Spain	ECLAC			UNECE		**Yes**	
State of Palestine					ESCWA		
United States	ECLAC		ESCAP	UNECE			**Yes**
Estonia				UNECE			
Eswatini		UNECA					
Ethiopia		UNECA					
Russian Federation			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Fiji			ESCAP				
Philippines			ESCAP				
Finland				UNECE			
France	ECLAC		ESCAP	UNECE			**Yes**
Gabon		UNECA					
Gambia (Rep. of)		UNECA					
Georgia			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Ghana		UNECA					
Granada	ECLAC						
Greece				UNECE			
Guatemala	ECLAC						
Guinea		UNECA					
Guinea Bissau		UNECA					
Equatorial Guinea		UNECA					
Guyana	ECLAC						
Haiti	ECLAC						
Honduras	ECLAC						
Hungary				UNECE			
India			ESCAP				
Indonesia			ESCAP				
Iran (Islamic Rep. Of)			ESCAP				
Irak					ESCWA		
Irish				UNECE			
Iceland				UNECE			

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Marshall Islands			ESCAP				
Solomon Islands			ESCAP				
Israel				UNECE			
Italy	ECLAC			UNECE		**Yes**	
Jamaica	ECLAC						
Japan	ECLAC		ESCAP			**Yes**	
Jordan					ESCWA		
Kazakhstan			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Kenya		UNECA					
Kiribati			ESCAP				
Kuwait					ESCWA		
Laos DPR			ESCAP				
Lesoto		UNECA					
Latvia				UNECE			
Lebanon					ESCWA		
Liberia		UNECA					
Libya		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
Liechtenstein				UNECE			
Lithuania				UNECE			
Luxembourg				UNECE			
North Macedonia				UNECE			
Madagascar		UNECA					
Malawi		UNECA					
Malaysia			ESCAP				
Maldives			ESCAP				
Mali		UNECA					
Malta				UNECE			
Morocco		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
Maurice		UNECA					
Mauritania		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
Mexico	ECLAC						

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Micronesia (Fed. S. os)			ESCAP				
Moldova (Republic of)				UNECE			
Monaco				UNECE			
Mongolia			ESCAP				
Montenegro				UNECE			
Mozambique		UNECA					
Myanmar			ESCAP				
Namibia		UNECA					
Nauru			ESCAP				
Nepal			ESCAP				
Nicaragua	ECLAC						
Niger		UNECA					
Nigeria		UNECA					
Norway	ECLAC			UNECE		Yes	
New Zealand			ESCAP				
Oman					ESCWA		
Netherlands	ECLAC		ESCAP	UNECE			Yes
Pakistan			ESCAP				
Palau			ESCAP				
Panama	ECLAC						
Papua New Guinea			ESCAP				
Paraguay	ECLAC						
Peru	ECLAC						
Poland				UNECE			
Portugal	ECLAC			UNECE		Yes	
Qatar					ESCWA		
Democratic Republic of Congo		UNECA					
Korea DPR country			ESCAP				
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	ECLAC		ESCAP	UNECE			Yes
Central African Republic		UNECA					

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Syrian Arab Republic					ESCWA		
Czech Republic				UNECE			
Kyrgyz Republic			ESCAP	UNECE		Yes	
Dominican Republic	ECLAC						
Rwanda		UNECA					
Romania				UNECE			
Saint Kitts and Nevis	ECLAC						
Samoa			ESCAP				
San Marino				UNECE			
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	ECLAC						
St. Lucia	ECLAC						
Sao Tome and Principe		UNECA					
Senegal		UNECA					
Serbia				UNECE			
Seychelles		UNECA					
Sierra Leone		UNECA					
Singapore			ESCAP				
Somalia		UNECA			ESCWA	Yes	
Sri Lanka			ESCAP				
South Africa		UNECA					
Sudan		UNECA			ESCWA	Yes	
South Sudan		UNECA					
Sweden				UNECE			
Swiss				UNECE			
Surinam	ECLAC						
Thailand			ESCAP				
United Republic of Tanzania		UNECA					
Tajikistan			ESCAP	UNECE		Yes	
Timor-Leste			ESCAP				
Togo		UNECA					
Tonga			ESCAP				

Member State	UN Regional Economic Commision					Multiple membership	
						Double	Triple
Trinidad and Tobago	ECLAC						
Tunisia		UNECA			ESCWA	**Yes**	
Turkmenistan			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Turkey	ECLAC		ESCAP	UNECE			**Yes**
Tuvalu			ESCAP				
Ukraine				UNECE			
Uganda		UNECA					
Uruguay	ECLAC						
Uzbekistan			ESCAP	UNECE		**Yes**	
Vanuatu			ESCAP				
Venezuela	ECLAC						
Vietnam			ESCAP				
Yemen					ESCWA		
Zambia		UNECA					
Zimbabwe		UNECA					
Total	**46**	**54**	**53**	**56**	**20**	**25**	**5**

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