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TRANSMISSION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AS A GLOBAL AGENDA TO THE EU, NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL

Abstract: Sustainable development as a modern concept implies economic development harmonized with the social, economic and environmental component. The main focus of sustainable development strategies is finding a balance between economic and social growth with care for nature protection, and the encouragement of ecological production with the aim of preventing the degradation of natural resources and limiting climate change. The most prominent global endeavor dealing with this paradigm is the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development proclaimed by the UN in 2015 defined 17 sustainable development goals in order to enhance globalization, its positive effects and elimination or reduction of their harmful consequences. The objective of this paper is to elaborate and review this multilateral agenda, its strategic documents and analyze its transmission to various lower levels in terms of institutional, strategic planning and operational dimensions. The authors will present the main strategic documents and actions prepared and undertaken by the institutions of the European Union in order to follow this Agenda. We also aim to elaborate on national and local initiatives aimed at incorporating the sustainable development concept in their developmental strategies and action plans.

Keywords: Transmission of UN 2030 Agenda, EU, national and local sustainable development strategies

1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030) has been set by the United Nations in September 2015, and it is the international community's response to global challenges and trends in relation to sustainable development. This is the global agenda and the core essence of Agenda 2030 have been Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are follow up to UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that expired in 2015. The UN member states collectively pledged to eradicate poverty, find sustainable and inclusive development solutions, ensure everyone's human rights, and generally make sure that no one is left behind. The UN SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. There are 17 SDGs presented in the Picture 1 with 169 associated targets and accompanying indicators, to be reached by 2030, and these are built on the successes of the MDGs, while including new priority areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption and peace and justice. They take the quest for sustainability to the next level by making it tangible and measurable.

There are literature reviews that explain how the SDGs were developed, what happened in key meetings and how this transformational agenda, which took more than three years to negotiate, came together in September 2015. The authors (Dodds, Donoghue and Roesch, 2016) explain and analyse the meetings, organisations and individuals that played key roles in the development of SDGs. They provide insights into the challenges of high-level negotiation processes of governments and stakeholders, and into how the SDGs were debated, formulated and agreed. This book provides essential reading for all interested in the UN and the topic of sustainable development. The Millennium Development Goals have led to tangible progress in many developing countries. Once adopted, the United Nations' new global

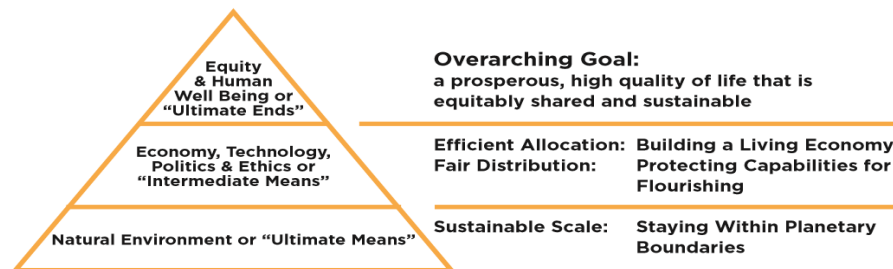
Sustainable Development Goals additionally require industrialized countries to implement such standards. But the world's first comprehensive stocktaking shows that most industrialized nations are a long way from serving as role models for sustainable development (Kroll, 2015).

When it comes to economic insight to SDGs, it is obvious that investors are taking a growing interest in investments that contribute to the realisation of these goals and at the same time offer attractive returns. However, assessing a company's contribution to the SDGs can present challenges. The global world, regions, countries and local communities have committed to adhering to a global agenda containing shared goals, processes to define implementation mechanisms and ways to track progress in achieving them. With the Sustainable Development Goals at its core, the 2030 Agenda is a transformative political framework to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development globally. It balances the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including the key issues of governance and peaceful and inclusive societies, recognizing the essential interlinkages between its goals and targets. It must be implemented as a whole and not selectively. The 2030 Agenda aims to leave no-one behind and seeks to reach the furthest behind first.



Picture 1: 17 Sustainable Development Goals
Source: United Nations

The general overarching goal is “a prosperous, high quality of life that is equitably shared and sustainable” (Constanca et al, 2014). There are three elements to this goal that cover the usual three components of sustainable development: economy (a high quality of life or well-being), society (equitably shared), and the environment (sustainable, staying within planetary boundaries).



Picture 2: A hierarchy of goals along the Ends-Means spectrum
Source: Daly & Farley, 2004.

It is also important to recognize that the economy is embedded in society, which is embedded in the rest of nature. These three elements are nested in a way that means that they are extremely interdependent. We can no longer treat the economy separately, without considering its strong interdependence with society and the rest of the nature. This goal as stated above can be seen as the ‘ultimate end’ in the spectrum of means and ends shown in Picture 2. (Daly and Farley, 2004). The SDGs are ‘intermediate means’ or ‘ultimate means’ on the diagram that contribute to achieving the ultimate end or overarching goal. The SDGs can therefore best be considered as sub-goals contributing in different ways, in different times and places to be overarching goal or ultimate end. Constanca et al (2014) refer to this overarching goal as ‘sustainable well-being’, recognizing that this well-being or quality of life must be equitably shared, both within and among nations, and that it is interdependent with the well-being of the rest of nature. Another way of describing the three elements of sustainable well-being is as the integrated provision of: 1. Efficient Allocation: Building a Living Economy, 2. Fair Distribution: Ensuring Capabilities for Flourishing, 3. Sustainable Scale: Staying Within Planetary Boundaries.

In the literature there is on-going debate especially on how to balance meeting the SDGs with fulfilling equity, and the effectiveness and importance of collaboration versus coordination among the countries and within the international organisations. For example, Browne (2017) elaborates the logic of global governance through international organizations, UN contributions to development thinking, reforming the UN development system and the future of the UN and multilateralism. Paradigm of sustainable development is not a stationary state but a global resolution of problem in a peacefully manner across the planetary boundaries. It is a normative (ethical) concept, an analytical concept, the science about complex systems, and at the same time a saving formula of the global survival of the world

and the most complex human challenge in the 21st century. As an ideal this is a utopian concept, there are no reliable scientific arguments in support of its realisation and predictable time proximity (Mirović, 2019). Therefore, it is obvious that sustainability and sustainable development require certain changes in all segments of life, from the consciousness of individuals and changes in lifestyles to changes and corrections of all policies that should include the achievement of sustainable development in their goals (Bilas, Franc and Ostojic, 2017).

2. THE EU AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The EU made a positive and constructive contribution to the development of the 2030 Agenda. The EU institutions have committed to implement the SDGs in policies and encourage EU countries in doing the same. 17 SDGs have been defined, with 169 associated targets, to be reached by 2030. They address the global challenges the world faces and tackle all dimensions of sustainable development, in a balanced and integrated manner. European development policy fosters sustainable development and stability in developing countries, with the ultimate goal of eradicating extreme poverty. Development assistance is one of the pillars of the EU's external action, alongside foreign, security, and trade policies. The EU and its member countries provide over half of all global development aid. That makes EU the world's leading donor, investing in peace and security around the world.

European development policy is based on the fundamental principles laid out in European treaties, agreements, and strategies. It implements international objectives which the EU helped develop and committed to achieve, such as the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, defining 17 concrete Sustainable Development Goals which have been reflected in the European Consensus on Development. EU member states strive to make European development policy more coherent and effective, in the face of the increasing challenges caused by conflicts and climate change. Policy coherence for development allows us to minimise contradictions and build synergies between different EU policies that are likely to affect our partner countries. And by focusing on effectiveness, EU intends to reach better development results with smarter and more targeted investments. Together with its member countries, the EU adopted the European Consensus on Development in 2017, as part of its response to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. The consensus defines the shared vision and action framework for development cooperation. The Picture 3 represents the main factors that have influenced the EU and its member states to reconsider its development policies and define a new European development policy in line with the Agenda 2030.



Picture 3: EU &SDGs

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/european-consensus-development_en

Therefore, the EU has prepared a strategic document in 2017 called New European consensus on development 'OUR WORLD, OUR DIGNITY, OUR FUTURE', which was presented as a joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the member states, the European Parliament and the European Commission. The purpose of this Consensus is to provide the framework for a common approach to development policy that will be applied by the EU institutions and the Member States, while fully respecting each other's distinct roles and competences. It will guide the action of EU institutions and Member States in their cooperation with all developing countries. Actions by the EU and its Member States will be mutually reinforcing and coordinated to ensure complementarity and impact.

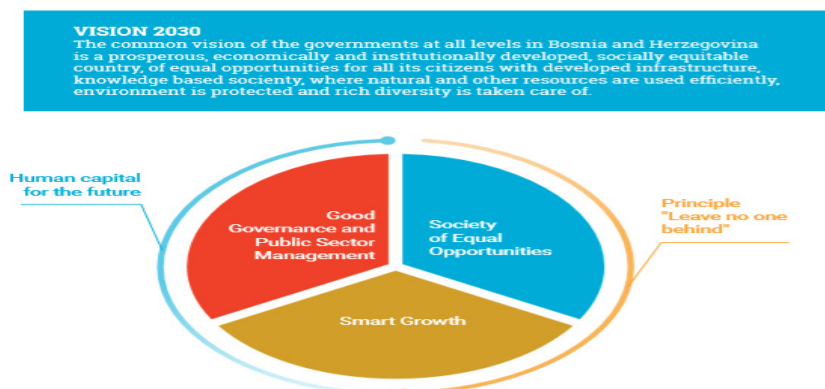
During 2019 and in line with the European Consensus for Development, the EU continued to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change globally, in direct cooperation with partner countries. Rising inequalities, growing hunger, global warming, biodiversity loss, social unrest, conflicts and migration are worsening trends and reflect across the entire 2030 Agenda. The 2019 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Summit reviewed progress and underlined the need for a shift in development pathways and speed to meet the 2030 deadline. An EU-ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) Joint Declaration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs was adopted on the margins of the Summit reaffirming commitment to the 2030 Agenda and looking to strengthen cooperation to accelerate SDG implementation to leave no one behind (EU, 2020).

3. AGENDA 2030 IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In September 2015 Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with 192 United Nations Member States, committed to implement Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Bosnia and Herzegovina has recognized the importance and potential for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 as an opportunity to significantly improve social, economic and environmental aspects of life within the country and to enhance the regional cooperation. As we have elaborated in the previous chapter, sustainable development is in the core of the policies of the European Union and its member states, and accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union is an overarching priority for BiH. The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), which came into force in 2015, defines Bosnia and Herzegovina as a “potential candidate” for accession to the EU. Bosnia and Herzegovina formally submitted its application for membership of the European Union in February 2016. The European Commission’s opinion as of May 2019 on BiH’s candidate status says: the negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the country has achieved the necessary degree of compliance of the membership criteria and in particular the Copenhagen political criteria requiring the stability of institutions guaranteeing the notable democracy and the rule of law (EU, 2020). The emphasis of the European Union on ensuring the European perspective for BiH is additionally demonstrated with liberalization of the visa regime for BiH in 2014.

The first step for implementation of Agenda 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been to develop the SDGs Framework in BiH, as a joint document of governments at all levels, which defines broader development directions, through which the governments at all levels and the society in Bosnia and Herzegovina strive to contribute to accomplishment of the SDGs. Therefore, this document is a broader framework to achieve Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and as such it will serve for steering the current and upcoming processes of strategic planning in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The governments at all levels in BiH have defined their priorities, measures and activities in compliance with the constitutional competencies and will provide their contribution for achieving Agenda 2030. The mentioned development pathways have to contribute to creating of a better society and future, where no one will be left behind, where people, prosperity, peace, partnership and care for the Planet Earth are at the core of a better and common future (UNDP, 2020:7).

The extensive consultations on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, focused on citizens, were launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016 under the umbrella initiative “Imagine 2030”, which was conceptualized by the UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which more than 5,000 people have participated up to now and which remains to be the main tool of advocacy and raising awareness on the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Agenda 2030 and the SDGs were officially presented in April 2017, when a high level conference was held on Agenda 2030 under the auspices of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and subsequently the institutions were appointed to lead the coordination process for implementing Agenda 2030 at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the situation analysis with regard to sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, the key development trends, opportunities and obstacles, particularly within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s accession to the European Union and extensive consultations held with representatives from institutions at all levels of government and socio-economic stakeholders from 2018-2019, three pathways of sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina were determined: 1) Good Governance and Public Sector Management; 2) Smart Growth; 3) Society of Equal Opportunities, and two horizontal themes 1) Human Capital for the Future and 2) the “Leave no one behind” Principle. Within each of the mentioned development pathways the accelerators and drivers are defined which have to lead to the desired changes by 2030. In addition, in compliance with Agenda 2030 and commitments taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina also determines the concrete targets and indicators to measure the progress (UNDP, 2020:9).



Picture 4: BiH SDG Pathways Capture
Source: UNDP, 2020

These development pathways determine the key accelerators – development policies or broader interventions, which have to contribute to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and within each accelerator the individual

drivers are defined, which resolve challenges and contribute to achieving desired changes by 2030. Good governance and public sector management, in order to create an accountable, transparent, efficient and effective public sector, which can ensure rule of law. The specific priorities include enhancing the process of policy design and coordination, delivering better services for citizens and business community, enhancing financial resource management, public enterprise reforms, reducing corruption, and ensuring a more functional judiciary system. Smart growth which aims to ensure transformation of innovative and productive ideas in products and services which may lead to creating highly qualified and highly paid jobs, leading toward larger productivity, accelerated growth while preserving natural capital and reducing inequality in the society. This pathway (Picture 4) implies entrepreneurship development, industrial policies and transformations in key sectors, proactive promotion of innovative capacities and productivity by incentivizing companies which achieve rapid growth, as well as creating an innovative sector, as an essential condition for ensuring prosperity resulting primarily from creating highly-paid jobs. In addition to the administration reform as well as rapid income growth and employment, it implies enhancing the social protection system at all levels in BiH, as well as enhancing access to education, training and labor market, in order to better protect those who are facing the highest risk of poverty and social needs (UNDP, 2020:12).

The Sustainable Development Goals Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a generally accepted and joint platform for action at all levels of government, and its operationalization is done through strategic documents of each level. In this regard, each individual level of government will develop its development strategies within its development planning and management systems, through which it will plan measures and policies for accomplishing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and will ensure funds for their implementation. Having in mind the complexity of the administrative organization in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the overall socio-economic condition in the country, each level of government will make additional efforts towards mobilizing (domestic and external) financial sources. According to the IMF data, approximately 40% (or slightly more) of GDP is distributed through the public budgets. Therefor the public budgets, together with external remittances with total of approximately 78% represent dominant potential sources of funding the SDGs (according to the data for 2008-2017). The afore-mentioned is supported by the fact that, in addition the significant presence of international donor communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the official development aid (ODA) amounts only approximately 6% of potential sources of funding the SDGs, while less than 9% relates to foreign credit sources (UNDP, 2020:65). Picture 5 presents indicators of SDG 1 in BiH.

SDG 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Target 1.1: By 2030 eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere

Alternative SDG indicator 1.1.1: Poverty rate, the international poverty line

| Year | Baseline (2015) | Mid-term (2023) | Target (2030) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Indicator value | 3.9 | 3.0 | 0.0 |

Alternative SDG indicator 1.2.1: Poverty rate at the state/entity level

| Year | Baseline (2015) | Mid-term (2023) | Target (2030) |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Indicator value BiH | 16.9 | 15.0 | 8.5 |
| Indicator value SD BiH | 17.6 | 13.2 | 8.8 |
| Indicator value FBiH | 17.1 | 12.9 | 8.6 |
| Indicator value RS | 16.4 | 12.3 | 8.2 |

Target 1.4: By 2030 ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technologies and financial services, including microfinance

SDG indicator 1.4.1: Access to basic services, in %

| Year | Baseline (2015) | Mid-term (2023) | Target (2030) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Water supply (1.4.1.a) | 88.6 | 93.0 | 96.0* |
| Sanitary services (1.4.1.b) | 23.1 | 75.0 | 89.0* |

Picture 5: BiH SDG 1 Indicators
Source: UNDP, 2020

4. MUNICIPAL LEVEL AGENDA 2030 - BIJELJINA CASE STUDY

The City of Bijeljina decided to go for the “bottom -up” approach and started raising awareness about Agenda 2030 among local stakeholders in the city at the beginning of 2017. The main activities included: a survey on knowledge about SDGs with representatives of the public, private and civil sector; consultations conducted with relevant international organizations, including UN in BiH, on the approach of promotion and localization of SDGs; training of municipal staff members on UN BiH methodology/interactive tool; start of awareness raising training sessions with partner groups on Bijeljina city level (composed of private, public, civil sector and academia) and other stakeholders. Localization of SDGs started in Bijeljina through implementation of concrete projects in partnership with private, public and civic sector and academia - e.g. enhancement of unemployed people skills in accordance with the need of private sector; establishment of inclusive playground for children with and without disabilities; enhancement of practical classes for 7 deficient occupations needed at the labor market. There are several project implemented in the city that closely adhere to Agenda 2030 goals.

The main aim of initiatives has been to include SDGs into the revised Development Strategy of the City of Bijeljina for the period 2019 - 2023. Raising awareness target groups have been established including public sector, private companies, NGO sector, academia, media representatives - as multipliers of the gained knowledge. Various methods and tools have been used: power point presentation on the establishment of Agenda 2030/SDGs, their importance and concrete examples of how all targeted stakeholders can start getting involved, as citizens, as well as representatives of

institutions and organizations they represent. Awareness raising activities on the importance of Agenda 2030/SDGs during 2017 in the City of Bijeljina have led to consolidation of partners in achieving a concrete action which would promote the main pillars of Agenda 2030 (GIZ, 2019).

5. CONCLUSION

The SDGs place greater demands on the scientific community than did the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which they replaced, because they are addressing climate change, renewable energy, food, health and water provision. These are the goals which require coordinated global monitoring and modeling of many factors - social, economic and environmental. The 17 goals and 169 targets in order to be achieved require much more to be done on all levels - global, regional, national and local. More detailed metrics need to be developed to measure progress towards the targets, as well as, more concrete monitoring and evaluation procedures and standards need to be set up. It is also obvious that there are connections between targets that need to be better understood, and synergies and trade-offs. There are five priorities for how the scientific community should participate in this process in order to enhance progress in following: devise more specific metrics, establish clear monitoring mechanisms, constantly evaluate progress, develop infrastructure and standardize and verify data (Yonglong et al, 2016).

This paper focuses on the UN Agenda 2030 and sustainable development strategies which followed on EU-regional, country and local level in order to adhere to this global agenda. Firstly, the authors presented the background behind this multilateral intention to create a completely new approach to global development challenges. Introductory part of this paper is followed by analysis on how the European Union addressed transmission of this global agenda to its regional level. The analysis presents Agenda's transmission to various lower levels in terms of institutional, strategic planning and operational dimensions. The main strategic documents and actions prepared and undertaken by the institutions of the European Union in order to follow this Agenda have been presented. In addition to that, the paper elaborates on national and local initiatives aimed at incorporating the sustainable development concept in their developmental strategies and action plans. In order to elaborate on country level Agenda 2030 transmission, the authors presented background on Bosnia and Herzegovina's response to Agenda 2030 on procedural, institutional and operational policy level. We have found out that a serious approach to addressing and transmitting sustainable development agenda has been undertaken in BiH to date, but much remains to be done. When it comes to local, municipal level, the case study of Bijeljina city has been presented, as well as, the concrete actions in this regard, as one of the pilot municipalities, meaning that also these experiences need to be replicated, as much as possible, in other local communities in BiH.

Therefore, the purpose of the 17 SDGs is to have a globally agreed holistic approach to the three major pillars of sustainable development: economic development, including ending extreme poverty; social inclusion, meaning gender equality, human rights, and the reduction of inequalities; and environment sustainability, including combatting human-induced climate change. These are not poverty goals, as with the MDGs. Ending poverty is certainly a key part of the SDGs; indeed, ending extreme poverty is SDG 1. However, the SDGs are not only about ending poverty. They are about the holistic challenge of sustainable development. The goals are universal, indivisible, and interlinked, which means they are for all of us Sachs (2015). All of this applies to the research done in this paper; it shows and confirms that SDGs are important policy framework to be used and implemented at all levels from global to local, in order to comprehensively approach sustainable development.

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