



**UN System Chief Executives Board
Statement of Commitment: Putting the imperative
to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of UN efforts
to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Development must be more equitable if it is to be sustainable.

Deepening, divisive and destabilising inequalities within and among countries are threatening social progress and economic and political stability, affecting all pillars of the UN's work, including development, human rights and peace and security. As the Secretary-General has warned, 'if inequalities continue to widen, development may not be sustainable'.¹

At the United Nations summit held in September 2015, Member States adopted the post 2015 global development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (General Assembly resolution 70/1). The 2030 Agenda is a universal, transformative, and people-centred plan of action, strongly grounded in international human rights law that aims to collectively work towards achieving sustainable development through cooperation and integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States have recognised that 'rising inequalities within and among countries' and 'enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power' as well as persistent 'gender inequality' are 'immense challenges' confronting the world today. In response, and building on the lessons of the MDGs, the new Agenda therefore puts at its heart the commitments to 'leave no one behind' and to 'reach the furthest behind first'. It aims not only to end poverty and hunger, but to 'combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; and to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls', to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality in a healthy environment.

Member States have committed in the 2030 Agenda to achieving more inclusive economies and societies where 'wealth is shared and income inequality addressed' and where gender equality is achieved and all forms of discrimination are eliminated. So central is the challenge of inequality to the 2030 Agenda that two of its 17 goals are dedicated entirely to this objective, including Goal 5 on ensuring gender equality and Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries — which aims to combat income inequality as well as 'promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status; ensuring equal opportunity and reducing inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices; by adopting policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieving greater equality, as well as by improving the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and ensuring enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions'.

¹ Opening Remarks of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the informal General Assembly thematic debate on inequality, 8 July 2013.

Indeed, the imperative to promote more equitable development permeates all 17 goals of the new Agenda, including through promoting universal, equitable and inclusive access to health, education, water, services, justice, opportunities and outcomes across many of the targets. This is further underscored by a cross-cutting commitment to the disaggregation of data, which will help to ensure that no one is being left behind. The new Agenda gives special attention to the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalized, including women and girls, all children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced people, migrants, minorities, stateless people and all people facing discrimination.

The whole Agenda is underpinned by a commitment to achieve ‘universal respect ... for equality and non-discrimination’, and to ‘respect, protect and promote human rights, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinions, national and social origin, property, birth, disability or other status’. Data is to be disaggregated by ‘income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts’, aligning with grounds of discrimination prohibited in international law, whilst taking account of the commitment to support developing countries in this regard.

Against this background, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), while recognising the respective mandates of its member organizations:

- a. Shares and strongly supports Member States’ ambitions for a more equal world, that is respectful of human rights and dignity;
- b. Affirms the United Nations system’s commitment at the highest level to pursue this vision, putting the imperative to eliminate discrimination and reduce inequalities — within and among countries — at the forefront of UN efforts to support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- c. Reaffirms the United Nations system’s commitment under the UN Charter to promote and encourage respect for human rights, including the principle of equality and non-discrimination for all people;
- d. Calls on the CEB’s three pillars (HLCP, HLCM, and UNDG) and CEB member organizations to put this imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the centre of their strategic frameworks, policy guidance and global plans of action, as relevant, in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda over the next 15 years, including to ensure that UN efforts prioritize the needs of those furthest behind first and ensure that no one is left behind;
- e. Requests the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) develop a coherent, strategic, whole-of- system approach to implementing this imperative, in the form of a “Shared Framework for Action on Combatting Inequalities and Discrimination”, that is operationally oriented and fully grounded in the UN’s normative standards, and universally applicable for all SDGs in all countries;
- f. Asks the HLCP to reflect on how this approach could be operationalized in all countries and regions, including through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG); and
- g. Calls on the HLCP to present the “Shared Framework for Action on Combatting Inequalities and Discrimination” to the CEB at its 2nd regular session of 2016.