BRAZIL AND THE POST 2015-SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL AGENDA: WHAT HAS IT BEEN DEFENDING SO FAR?
Layla Saad

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Layla Saad is Deputy Director at the RIO+ Centre for Sustainable Development. This paper is based on the principles agreed upon and set forth by the Government of Brazil’s Inter-ministerial Working Group on post-2015 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
INTRODUCTION

For the past fifteen (15) years, the international development agenda and discourse has been dominated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of eight Goals agreed to by 189 countries in the year 2000 as a blueprint for reducing poverty and achieving health, education, gender and environment goals. While the MDGs received their fair share of criticism and praise from various interest groups, clear gains in education, health and poverty levels were achieved with some of the greatest advances occurring in the some of the poorest countries around the world. The MDGs represented an unprecedented global effort that mobilized governments and civil society towards common goals and channeled national and donor resources towards an anti-poverty agenda. With a series of monitoring tools through reporting on MDG advances nationally and at the United Nations, the Goals helped to create positive peer pressure among countries and encourage more action. The MDG agenda placed the onus of achieving the Goals on governments of the global South – mainly least development nations and emerging countries – whose efforts were to be supported by the financial commitments of official development assistance (ODA). Through Goal 8 of the MDGs, ODA was meant to represent 0.7% of donor countries GDP, however most did not live up to their commitments.

Two-thirds into MDG implementation, at the 2010 MDG Summit held during the UN General Assembly, the United Nations Secretary-General (SG) was requested to initiate thinking on a new global development agenda that could replace the MDGs beyond their 2015 finish mark. As such, in late 2011 the SG launched a major consultative process on “Post 2015” with inputs from Member States as lead stakeholders, the UN system, civil society organizations, voices of citizens at the global, regional and national level, businesses, academia and other parts of the scientific community. In tandem, the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Brazil in 2012, called for the creation of an Open Working Group (OWG) composed of 30 Member States who could lead an inclusive process for the development of a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) intended to replace the outgoing MDG agenda. Both these processes –post 2015 and SDGs ran in parallel with some linkages and overlap eventually converging into one proposal² that will be negotiated and adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015.

The debates and deliberations on what a new development agenda should consist of emerged at a time of deep questioning of and discontent with the current economic development model that has created deep-rooted disparities and an unequal distribution of wealth – concentrated in the hands of an increasingly shrinking elite - and negative socioenvironmental impacts – socialized amongst the poor majority of the world. Between January 2006 and July 2013 eight hundred and forty three (843) protests were documented in eighty seven (87) countries with the main drivers being the lack of economic and social justice, the perceived failure of political representation and the erosion of human rights³. The definition of the new post 2015 sustainable development agenda has benefitted from the input of a wide array of interest groups who have

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raised concerns with issues of inequalities, human rights, environmental protection and justice among others. Contrary to the MDGs, the new agenda will be universally applicable to both rich, poor and middle-income countries alike representing a global challenge and opportunity for transforming our societies and economies in favor of all citizens.

Brazil has played an active and at times leading role in the various post-2015/SDG committees, working groups and overall intergovernmental negotiations. As the world’s seventh largest economy and a development trajectory of increasing geopolitical influence, understanding Brazil’s perspective on what a post-2015/SDGs should entail, provides insight into the possible priorities and positioning of other developing and emerging countries from the global South. The following paper highlights the main principles underpinning the government of Brazil’s position in the post-2015/SDG intergovernmental negotiations with the aim of highlighting elements of a narrative of a key player in the global South where the sustainable development agenda holds enormous potential. It is based on a set of guiding principles outlined and validated by the Government of Brazil’s Inter-ministerial Working Group (GTI) setup by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to build a common Brazilian position that could be used throughout the UN intergovernmental negotiations.

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4 The Interministerial Working Group (GTI) was established in March 2014 as a forum for inter-ministerial discussion and debate on substantive content, policy guidelines and directives for the Brazilian position on post-2015 and SDGs. The agreed-upon position was used by the government in its intergovernmental negotiations mainly within the OWG. The GTI was convened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of Environment, of Social Development and Fight against Hunger and of the General Secretariat of the Presidency. Twenty-seven ministries are represented in the Group.
BRAZIL AS A LEADER IN THE SOUTH?

The SDG agenda has had strong and visible Southern leadership from the start, with Colombia and Guatemala championing a proposal in the lead up to and during the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 and with the appointment of Kenya as one of the co-chairs of the 30-member OWG. Brazil has played a strong leadership role in the discussions on the MDGs and the broader process of engagement around the SDGs, with representation in various Committees set up to support the Post 2015 process. In 2012 H.E. Ambassador Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti of Brazil was appointed by the Secretary General to help shape the role of the High-Level Political Forum to follow-up on the Implementation of Sustainable Development. Minister of Environment Izabella Teixeira was part of the High Level Panel for Post 2015, the Vice-Minister of Environment is currently part of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and Brazil through their Ministry of Foreign Affairs played an influential role in the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals (OWG). Together these four groups represent the main deliberation and agenda setting bodies of the SDG and post 2015 process. In addition to the above, having hosted the first UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio 1992) and the Rio+20 Conference (2012) which mandated the creation of the OWG and the drafting of a set of SDGs, Brazil has a stake and natural leadership role in pushing the sustainable development agenda forward.

Beyond its active role in various UN committees for post 2015 and sustainable development, Brazil is also seen as an important reference point on successes in achieving and even surpassing the MDGs and continues to be a sustainable development leader at the global level. This is underpinned by the design and implementation of a number of innovative and structural public policies and practices in areas of environment and the reduction of poverty and inequality. For example, between 2006 and 2012 Brazil experienced consistent and steady decline in deforestation, particularly in the Amazon. Although this trend began to reverse during the second half of 2012 through to mid-2013, the latter period of increase still represents the second lowest annual figure for forest loss in absolute terms5. Brazil is the first emerging country and one of the first developing countries to make a concrete commitment to reduce CO2 emissions by 20206 and is one of the world’s leading producers of ethanol (mainly from sugar-cane byproducts) which it uses for electricity.

On poverty and inequality, over the past 10 years Brazilian social and economic policies helped to lift 36 million people out of extreme poverty by increasing formal employment, significantly raising minimum wages and creating the world’s largest conditional cash transfer programme7. Policies specifically targeting inequalities saw the income of the poorest segments of the population grow at least double as fast as that of the richest. From 2002 to 2012, the poorest 40% saw a 6.4% annual increase in their per capita income while during the same period, the richest 5% experienced a 2.4 increase8. Accompanying these advances was a remarkable increase in citizen access to health, education, housing, piped water and social assistance services

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6 Höhne et al., Greenhouse gas emission reduction proposals and national climate policies of major economies: Policy Brief, PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, November 2012
8 Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada - IPEA, Comunicado No. 159, Duas Décadas de Desigualdade e Pobreza no Brasil medidas pela Pnad/IBGE, Outubro 2013
supported by programmes such as Light for All and Water for All amongst others.

Given both its prominent role in the SDG and post 2015 processes to date and its solid base of positive development experiences and results on MDG achievement and beyond, Brazil has earned the respect of several governments north and south and become a reference point for social policies. The current period of defining development frameworks and models presents a valuable opportunity for Brazil to use its political influence and contribute to a Southern consensus on the SDG agenda that could shape the political and substantive discourse on SDGs globally ensuring it is relevant and fair to the countries of the global South. The time is still ripe for the latter to happen in the lead up to the General Assembly decision on post 2015 that will occur at the UN in New York, September 2015. In the following section, the main perspective and principles that underline the Brazilian position used in the intergovernmental negotiations are presented in order to provide insight into where Brazil’s thinking stands to date.

THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE MDGS AND THE TRANSITION TO SDGS

According to the Brazilian position, the main challenge and responsibility of the Post 2015/SDG agenda is to create a framework for equitable, fair and sustainable development that is applicable to all countries both rich and poor, each with commitments and responsibilities that are commensurate with their capabilities and developmental status. The MDGs provided the minimum floor requirements for meeting the basic needs of the poor while attempting to address the multidimensional nature of poverty. This continues to be fundamental even as the minimum floor MDG approach is bridged with the ambition of a broader SDG agenda that aims to tackle the structural barriers of current development models responsible for creating unequal and unsustainable development. In the lead up to the 2015 MDG finish line and in light of the ongoing process to define a post 2015/SDG agenda, the unfinished business of the MDGs must be integrated into any new framework to give continuity to unmet goals and targets, ensure gains reach all citizens and that they are sustainable over time. The past 15 years of MDG implementation offer a massive opportunity to learn from the gaps of the MDG agenda while looking forward post 2015.

One of the key issues defended by the Brazilian government throughout the intergovernmental negotiations of the OWG -and a key flaw of the MDGs- is that of inequality. The MDG experience demonstrated that despite the significant progress achieved in key MDG areas over time, their formulation in terms that measure aggregate progress and with the use of national averages to measure countries’ performance, served to disguise a picture of uneven achievement characterized by deep disparities between social groups. Little attention was directed towards these growing inequalities and injustice, which ultimately became a leading factor responsible for slowing down the overarching poverty eradication mandate of the Goals. While the MDGs were exclusively the domain of developing countries, research has shown that in every country both rich and poor, in every region of the world, certain people are systematically left out of the socioeconomic development of their countries often on the mere basis of determinants such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability and even location.

In their aim to be concise, measurable and easier to implement, the MDGs were divided into sector Goals (e.g. education, poverty, health etc.) that failed to take a systems approach to development that recognizes and makes actionable the inextricable link between the social, economic, environmental and political dimensions of development. Environmental issues for example were treated in isolation to their social and economic counterparts, a perspective that today is hardly feasible given...
the obvious of the intersectoral implications of environmental and/or economic policy and practice on people. Both inequality and integrated development are considered fundamental areas to be addressed in post 2015/SDG discourse and follow up action as was highlighted in the Rio+20 Conference.

RIO+20: THE HIGHEST POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Brazil believes that the content of post 2015/SDGs must be aligned with the Outcome Document of the Rio+20 Conference (“The Future We Want”) which represents the most recent high level political agreement on sustainable development. The main assertion and underpinning principle of Rio+20 is the inextricable link between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development as well as the need to prioritize poverty eradication and tackle inequalities. As such, Brazil does not consider appropriate - in the context of the SDGs – the inclusion of topics that have not been discussed and agreed upon as part of Rio+20 including issues of national and international security.

BRAZIL AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: CONTENT AND PRINCIPLES

The main principles of the Brazilian position listed below consist of 12 points that relate to what should be in the agenda and how the agenda should be implemented. The narrative that Brazil has defended internationally ranges from the importance of localizing the Goals for greater impact to ensuring that international financial and governance architectures are made more equitable and open to the participation of the developing countries of the global South. Brazil stipulates that poverty eradication should be the main priority and central axis of the SDGs and Post 2015 Agenda in accordance with the Rio+20 affirmation that poverty eradication is a precondition for the achievement of sustainable development.

1. Poverty Eradication: the Main Priority of the SDG and Post 2015 Agenda

Brazil acknowledges and highlights the multiple dimensions of poverty linking these to sustainable development including citizen rights and access to the use of natural resources. While measuring poverty is necessary for monitoring and policy responses, Brazil states that poverty needs to be understood as a human rights issue with its existence representing a violation of the right to live in freedom and dignity.

The poor cannot be seen as one homogenous group, since there are socially excluded groups that exist amongst the poor and these are often systematically left out of development efforts in part because they tend to be difficult to reach through traditional policy implementation. As such, Brazil promotes an approach to poverty eradication that balances equality with difference or universal measures with targeted ones since often, excluded groups face barriers in accessing universal benefits. Universality should not be reduced to uniformity but rather accommodate plurality within universal frameworks of provision. For the SDG-Post 2015 framework, this means having goals, targets and indicators that are both expressed in universal terms (i.e. “for all”) as well as with specific targets/indicators aimed at improving the reality of specific excluded groups. These can be reflected by allocating greater weight and importance to advances that are made amongst the poorest quintile, or amongst well-diagnosed excluded groups who score far lower on all human development indicators. Advances made at this level should be worth more than advances made amongst sectors that are already faring well (top decile or quintile).

As a country with a long experience in using social protection policies to address issues of poverty and exclusion, Brazil advocates for the adoption of universal measures of social protection within the post 2015/SDG agenda. This would help secure a minimum floor of
protection to prevent and/or reduce poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. According to the Brazilian experience, universal social protection floors are affordable, socially and economically necessary and should be considered a human rights imperative. Beyond their value in the redistribution of income, depending on their design social protection programmes can also have transformative impacts that not only help meet the basic needs of the poor, but strengthen their capacity to do so themselves thereby weakening the persistence of their vulnerability.

2. Economic Development: A Prerequisite for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development

Economic growth and development continues to be fundamental for Brazil and a necessary input for its poverty eradication efforts and the implementation of sustainable development in its integrated form. Brazil believes in a Grow-Include-Protect model as a means to respond (respectively) to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development as put forth by President Dilma Rousseff during the Rio+20 Conference. Brazil's pursuit of sustainable development is likely to follow this order with emphasis placed on bolstering the economy in order to continue to finance industry and social programmes. Reconciling the dichotomy between economic growth and environmental protection/management will require the search for new sources of growth and shifts in current models and practices of growth. Economic growth in many developing countries continues to be based on the extraction and export of natural resources whether minerals, petrol or large agribusiness all of which have negative impacts on the environment, create few decent jobs and tend to concentrate wealth in the hands of few while socializing the negative socioenvironmental impacts the amongst poor and middle class majority.

Brazil believes that it is the right of developing countries to continue to grow and in its effort to reconcile this aim with a transition to more sustainable pathways, it will look to identify policies and practices that allow it to leapfrog over the mistakes of the developed world that is now having to assume the unforeseen costs of inequitable and unsustainable growth patterns. In placing emphasis on the economic dimension of development within the SDG and post 2015 agenda, Brazil also points to the need to ensure that financial resources, technology transfer and fair economic opportunities are made available for developing countries. Financial and technical inputs mainly from rich countries are considered fundamental for the achievement of the SDGs in their totality.

3. Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights: A Central Axis that must Permeate all Goals

Directly linked to poverty eradication is the urgent need to tackle various forms of inequality. Evidence from around the world shows that inequalities are responsible for slowing down the rate at which a given level of economic growth can be translated into poverty reduction. At the macroeconomic level, a country could have a spectacular year in terms of economic growth but if the benefits of this growth are concentrated in the hands of few (based on unequal societal structures), then a limited amount of revenue is directed towards the poor and towards poverty reduction initiatives. Beyond macroeconomics, at the societal level inequalities create high levels of social tension that are often expressed through increases in crime and conflict. When these inequalities are group based (where one or more groups of society are consistently left out of the development and opportunities of their country), this tension can lead to prolonged conflict and even war. At the level of a person, inequalities also matters because they erode people's sense of pride, self and agency that

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often renders them unproductive\textsuperscript{10}.

For Brazil, overcoming inequality both at the national and international levels must be a central axis of the post 2015/SDG framework and should permeate all of the Goals and their associated targets. The SDG framework must be rooted in principles of equality, dignity, justice and the fulfillment of human rights and these need to be made actionable through the targets and indicators. The world has already formalized these commitments through international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965); the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979); Convention on Child Rights (1989); the International Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (2006) amongst others. These existing conventions, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be used to design targets and indicators of the new SDG framework in order to bolster their legally binding nature and foster greater accountability as is being advocated by Amnesty International for example\textsuperscript{11}. Tackling inequality is a difficult development challenge and understanding the multiple and intersecting dynamics of inequalities in the creation of social exclusion provides important guidance for policy makers aiming to tackle the structural causes and not just symptoms of unequal development. Acknowledging that inequalities are at a minimum economic, cultural/racial, political and spatial is fundamental to an adequate design and inclusion of goals, targets and indicators that can address these. Brazil differentiates and defends the inclusion of both targets on equality of opportunity and equality of outcome in the SDG framework with the understanding that often structural inequalities present obstacles for excluded groups to achieve successful outcomes even when access to opportunities are open to all.

4. Democratizing International Platforms for Decision Making

Brazil is critical of the lack lustre discussions around systemic barriers found at the international level that obstruct an enabling environment for the implementation of equitable and sustainable development including unfair international trade agreements, issues of external debt, technology transfer, international financial architecture and global economic governance reform. There needs to be discussions and concrete actions taken to democratize international platforms of decision making on the above and other subjects. These are part of the efforts to reduce inequality between countries and can have a profound impact in altering power imbalances between the global North and the global South. Since the post 2015/SDG agenda is universally applicable to all, the countries from the global South must be considered decision makers on a par with their northern counterparts.

5. Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns in an Unequal World

At the first Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 and its follow up conferences in Johannesburg (2002) and Rio+20 (2012), the need to address unsustainable consumption and production patterns were emphasized as critical in the pursuit of sustainable development. Brazil has insisted that this issue needs to be given greater importance in SDGs discussions. Until now there has been excessive emphasis on the production side of the equation with less

\textsuperscript{10} Kabeer, Naila, “Can the MDGs provide a pathway to social justice: the challenge of intersecting inequalities”, United Nations MDG Achievement Fund & Institute of Development Studies 2010

attention afforded to consumption patterns that are characterized by deep inequalities both between developed and developing countries – with the former responsible for extremely high levels of natural resource consumption which dwarf those of most developing countries – but also between national elites and increasing middle class segments of society and the poor majority. For example, consumption by the richest 20% of the world population accounted for two thirds of world total consumption while the bottom 50% of the world population got only 9.5%^12. Addressing unequal consumption patterns will require strong commitment and action on behalf of developed countries and national elites who are following in the same footsteps.

Therefore, Brazil believes that the implementation of the post 2015/SDG agenda should be coordinated with the implementation of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns that was adopted at Rio+20. The 10 Year Framework underscores the need for developed countries to assume leadership in adopting more sustainable consumption patterns considering their capacity and historic responsibilities to do so.

6. A Universal Agenda with Built in Differences

Brazil believes that the transformational potential of the post 2015/SDG framework is rooted in its combination of universality and difference. According to Rio+20 the SDGs will be a universal agenda applicable to all countries taking into consideration their national differences, capacities and levels of development (paragraph 247 “The Future We Want”). Brazil fully supports Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration (1992) on “common but differentiated responsibilities” and proposes it be the basis of an international agreement on SDGs. This position appears to be backed by almost all developing countries that have been part of the deliberations on post 2015/SDGs. Principles of universality with difference will only be effective if the parameters of developed and developing countries commitments are incorporated when designing Goal targets and indicators. Alternately, the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities runs the risk of remaining rhetorical with weak application in practical terms.

7. Appropriation and Nationalization is Key to Success

The MDG experience showed that some of the most successful countries in advancing the Goals were the ones who nationalized their MDG strategies making them relevant to their own context and developmental priorities. Guaranteeing that each country has the liberty to choose their own sustainable development path and trajectory to SDG achievement is critical to promote broad based appropriation of the agenda by the international community. At Rio+20 the feasibility of accommodating different national realities into a single global framework while respecting national priorities and policy making was positively regarded by participating countries. Brazil has a remarkable experience nationalizing its MDG strategy and bringing it down to the municipal level expanding Goals in areas that needed further attention (e.g. inequality) and adjusting monitoring to systems to track them accordingly. Given the positive results achieved, this could be a good example to build on in other countries as well.

It is expected that the post 2015/SDGs agenda charter the way for identifying new benchmarks for defining development at the national and international level using criteria to define and evaluate the progress and developmental success of both developing and developed nations against sustainable development principles. This would be a great equalizing force among nations.

^12 http://apsanet3b.inetu.net/imgtest/75ThingsYouMayNotKnowAboutGlobalInequality.pdf
8. Shifting from Sectoral Policies to Policy Coherence

Implementing sustainable development that promotes the balanced integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions will require shifting the way policy making has been done by most governments (i.e. sector policies are usually made by specific sectoral ministries). Moving towards methodologies that allow for intersectoral and coherent policy making that accounts for the different dimensions of development will be fundamental. It is evident that environmental policies for example can no longer be discussed within the exclusive domain of Ministries of Environment, but rather need to be discussed together with the economic, social and political arms of governments. Brazil owes its success in reducing poverty and inequality to a combination of government programmes, policies and practices that together have helped shift the socioeconomic demographics of the nation. These range from health to income to nutritional programmes that support family farming. Understanding these examples for their collective and cumulative positive impacts could help define methodologies for integrated policy making that can drive the transition towards more equitable and sustainable development. This may be the least discussed part of making sustainable development shifts but creating institutional arrangements that are conducive to the implementation of SDGs will be fundamental and provides a valuable opportunity for governments to innovate their institutional set up.

9. Monitoring Mechanisms that Adequately Reflect National Progress

Brazil believes that national mechanisms that are based on country contexts and not global development trends should be devised for monitoring the post 2015/SDG advances. These starting points – or national benchmarks – should include assessments of social and environmental conditions of countries that have already reached economic development (i.e. developed countries). This would portray with greater accuracy where countries start out in relation to sustainable development and not only economic development. The indicators of the post 2015/SDG agenda should observe and reward progress over time irrespective of the initial level of human development and sustainability that a country has registered. In other words, progress in absolute terms, even if a country continues to score lower than others should still be recognized as an important advance. Conversely, countries that have very poor starting points will continue to rank poorly in comparison to other countries with a stronger starting point, even if they achieve significant advances. This happened with the MDGs and served to fuel negative stereotypes of several developing countries when in reality some of the poorest countries in the world made the greatest achievements in absolute terms. Progress should be measured both in relative terms (countries with the fastest rates of progress relative to their starting position which highlights the degree to which they have closed the gap with the MDG target) and in absolute terms (countries that have seen the biggest positive change on the indicators regardless of their initial conditions) 13.

Understanding national starting points and tracking progress over time in relation to them will also allow assessment of the potential increases in levels of poverty, inequality and sustainability in developed countries. In this regard, for Brazil the post 2015/SDG agenda is an opportunity to establish converging dynamics of development and not only a static ranking of one country’s performance in relation to another. It can help breakdown false dichotomies of developed versus developing countries commitment to and progress on the adoption of equitable and sustainable policies and practices, opening an opportunity for countries in the global South to show leadership in making the changes necessary in the transition towards sustainable development.

13 Overseas Development Institute, “Millennium Development Goals Report Card, Measuring Progress Across Countries”. 2010
10. Data Disaggregated is Key

Adequate monitoring systems that shed light on the disaggregated picture of development advances and shortcomings at the national level are fundamental for an agenda that is seeking to reduce poverty, inequality, vulnerability and achieve dignity for all. The lack of adequate disaggregated data at the national level was an important challenge in monitoring the progress of the MDGs for specific communities and segments of society, particularly those that suffer from persistent exclusion. Having data disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age and location for example is critical for guiding the policy making process and reversing trends of marginalization and sluggish advances towards key development goals. Producing disaggregated data in order to adequately evaluate progress towards the post 2015/SDGs targets and indicators will be needed to ensure a true portrayal of national advances rather than one that counts on aggregate figures that mask disparities. It is therefore important to invest in national statistical systems and innovative forms of data collection and analysis to make disaggregation possible and effective.

11. Participatory Development and Localization

Pivotal to the success of any development framework is the active involvement of local authorities, civil society and active citizens in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. By way of example, in Brazil, in 2005, the Federal Government established the Brazil MDG Prize, which had support from UNDP and a group of private companies and organizations. The prizes were directed towards municipal government policies and practices and towards NGOs that advanced Brazilian MDG indicators. Prizes were given in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011. The fifth and closing edition took place in 2014. This initiative was highly successful in galvanizing support for the MDGs and creating positive peer pressure for greater action at the municipal level. Municipal governments across the country got involved and took pride in the advances made and the recognition received from the federal government. In light of the successes that this initiative had in localizing the MDGs, a similar approach could be used for the SDGs.

Expanding and extending formal and informal channels of citizen participation in the design and implementation and monitoring of MDG policies, practices and programmes has shown positive results in Brazil as well as globally. This is seen by Brazil as an important part of the fulfillment of citizen rights within the exercise of democracy and active citizenship. Organized civil society can play an important watchdog role and help national and local governments abide by their commitments to the fulfillment of sustainable development by monitoring policies, budget allocations and assessing impacts of SDG programming. To date, civil society participation has been an important element of Brazil’s positioning in the Post 2015 negotiation process and as such, Brazil defends the inclusion of active citizen participation by all countries and by the UN as an integral part of the efforts to implement the SDGs. Civil society, citizens and their organizations, media and other interest groups should be brought into the SDG process and seen as a positive contributor rather than a threat.

12. Means of Implementation for Sustainable Development

Brazil believes that identifying means of implementation (MoI) that are commensurate with the ambition of the SDGs is an essential part of this intergovernmental process and includes carrying over the unachieved Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments stipulated under Goal 8 of the MDG framework. Since the challenge of implementing the SDGs, including the transition to a low carbon economy, goes far beyond that of the MDGs, it is fundamental for developing countries to count on additional financial resources as well as an international climate that is favorable to technology sharing and fairer trade rules.
While national resources have become an increasingly important source for financing national policies and programmes, Brazil insists on the importance of fulfilling ODA, commitments within the new post 2015/SDG framework.

Brazil is also concerned with the increasing dependence of the UN system on partnerships with the corporate sector and private foundations that do not necessarily operate within the same policy lines articulated by member States. For Brazil, UN-private sector partnerships should be understood as a complementary input to intergovernmental negotiations and should have a strong institutional oversight that is consistent with the governance mechanisms of the UN. In other words, private sector interests should not supersede those of Member States. Globally, the discussions on strengthening private sector partnerships for sustainable development fail to put forth clear, time-bound commitments by actors, especially developed countries, international institutions and large businesses, which are key to ensuring accountability between countries not least in the area of human rights as seen across goals. There must be provisions included in the Means of Implementation of the SDG framework to ensure that the private sector and international financial institutions remain accountable for their actions and respect human rights and the environment in the countries where they operate.

With the understanding that global power dynamics, reflected through financial, trade and governance structures, play a critical role in the ability of developing countries to fulfill their SDG plans, Brazil emphasizes that an individual goal on MoI (i.e. a renewed “partnership for development” Goal) should be incorporated into the SDGs as well as having a MoI integrated into all other Goals.
CONCLUSION

Brazil has been an active member of the various post 2015/SDG committees that have been tasked with deliberating, negotiating and putting forth concrete proposals to the Secretary General in order to be presented to Member States for their consideration. As an emerging economy that has earned significant geopolitical space and influence over the past decade (although somewhat declined in more recent years), Brazil sits in a favorable position to trigger south-south consensus and bolster the voice of the global South in the overall sustainable development debate. The key principles that underpin Brazil’s position in the intergovernmental process to date resonate clearly with the G77 and their concern of ensuring that the sustainable development agenda is relevant to their context and does not disguise under a “green facade” restrictions on growth and development. While most countries will continue to prioritize economic growth and believe it will fuel poverty reduction, the challenge lies in building in the necessary social and environmental safeguards into economic policies in a way that does not represent a limit to growth but a shift to a different way of growing. To implement sustainable development as outlined in Rio+20, it is important to rethink the economic base of our societies and make them more compatible with sustainable development priorities not only in terms of reducing the environmental externalities of economic practices, but also regarding how wealth that is generated through economic growth is directed towards the social sector and distributed more evenly amongst society using instruments such as progressive taxation and social programmes.

While the decisive 2015 UN General Assembly nears and intergovernmental negotiations intensify, the hope is that the agenda that is decided upon adequately responds to the concerns raised by the millions of citizens who have voiced their perspectives through the formal and informal process on what needs to change in order to achieve a life of dignity for all. Ultimately, the action will need to be seen and assessed at the national level and for this, both governments and civil society groups across the board should be gearing up to deliver on a be accountable for development with social, environmental and economic justice in 2015.

The World Centre for Sustainable Development (RIO+): One of the most important legacies of the RIO+20 Conference was the launching, during the High-Level Segment of the Conference, of the “World Centre for Sustainable Development - RIO+“. Established on June 24th, 2013, the RIO+ Centre works to reaffirm and make actionable the inextricable link between social, economic and environmental policies for the achievement of sustainable development and human well-being.