

Policy Recommendations for the Exchange of Views Session of 31st COMCEC Session

The 30th COMCEC Session decided on “Post-2015 Development Agenda and Development Challenges of the Islamic Ummah: Improving Basic Service Delivery” as the theme of the Exchange of Views of 31st Session of the COMCEC and requested the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group to come up with policy recommendations on the aforementioned topic and report it to the 31st COMCEC Session.

In this framework, the participants, in light of the discussions taken place during the 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group and findings of the COMCEC-IDB Joint Study on critical success factors for the implementation of the SDGs and research report prepared specifically for this Meeting, have come up with the following challenges and problems and possible policy options with regard to implementation of SDGs in the member countries.

Challenges and Problems:

The participants, in line with the discussions taken place during the 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group which covered the basic services delivery systems in the Member Countries and the critical success factors (namely governance, data and monitoring, capacity building, finance and policy coherence) for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, highlighted the following possible challenges and problems in the course of the implementation phase of the SDGs in the OIC Member Countries:

- Inadequate coordination in/among the member countries and relevant institutions in the areas related to the SDGs.
- Inadequate financial resources for the implementation of the SDGs.
- Data gaps in the member countries such as inadequate disaggregated, quality, comparable and timely data which bears great importance for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the SDGs.
- Weak statistical systems of the member countries due to poor capacity of both national statistical offices and the concerned national institutions and inefficient coordination.
- Weak institutional and human capacity and inadequate infrastructure in delivery of SDGs in the Member Countries.
- Adverse effects of the poor governance on the development efforts of the member countries due to inadequate transparency and access to information, complex

bureaucratic practices, exclusion of stakeholders from the decision making process and insufficient responsiveness of public administrations.

- Weak participation of the citizens in both design and implementation of delivery of the basic services and limited options of citizens in terms of basic services providers.
- Poor monitoring and evaluation systems for the ongoing programs.
- Inadequate public awareness about the SDGs and their implementation.
- The need for ensuring a peaceful and enabling environment for successful implementation of the SDGs in some parts of the OIC.
- Inadequate capacity of the member countries to prepare/develop and implement projects so that they can utilize the COMCEC PCM and other possible financing mechanisms.

Policy Recommendations:

Considering the above-mentioned challenges and problems, the participants of the 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group prepared a set of policy recommendations that would promote effective implementation of the SDGs in the OIC Member Countries. The recommendations are as follows:

At National Level

- Encouraging the member countries to align policies that have impact on the achievement of the SDGs to the extent possible.
- Encouraging the member countries to embed the SDGs to the national development plans, strategies, programmes and projects.
- Encouraging the member countries to integrate the SDGs indicators in their data collection systems including Census and Surveys.
- Encouraging the member countries to improve governance in all areas through ensuring transparency, easy access to information, predictability and involvement of relevant stakeholders.
- Enhancing governance in basic services delivery chain through raising public awareness, improving monitoring and evaluation of the ongoing/future programs, and providing direct citizen involvement in service provision by utilising community-participation models, cooperatives and complaint and response mechanisms.
- Designating an institution or authoritative body as the focal point for coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.

- Ensuring active involvement of civil society, NGOs, business world, scientific and academic circles into the implementation process of SDGs.
- Diversifying basic services providers through contracting private companies, ensuring competition among providers with the central governments' supervision and monitoring and utilising Public-Private Partnership mechanisms.
- Developing a financial framework for better delivery of SDGs with possible national resources and possible contributions from donor countries and international institutions.
- Supporting domestic revenue mobilizing efforts of the concerned member countries through capacity building programmes/activities such as tax collection, which would be an essential component of SDGs' financing framework.
- Enhancing partnership and cooperation for mobilising and effectively utilising international public finance, encouraging domestic and international private sector, boosting trade and investments and attracting FDI investments in the OIC Countries.
- Strengthening solidarity among the member countries through, among others, enhancing the support of high income member countries to low income countries in the implementation of the SDGs.
- Encouraging OIC Member Countries to incorporate Islamic finance instruments to promote financial stability, financial inclusion, in their financial systems as a complementary mechanism in financing the implementation of the SDGs and to finance large scale infrastructure projects.
- Encouraging the member countries to increase the use/efficiency of mechanisms/Islamic instruments such as Waqfs, Zakah, Sadaka for better contributing to the financing and implementation of the SDGs.
- Improving the monitoring mechanisms for better implementation of the SDGs.

At the OIC Level

- A comprehensive and holistic approach with required human, institutional and financial resources need to be developed for the effective delivery of the SDGs in order to meet the ambitious aims of the SDGs within the OIC.
- Incorporating the SDGs in the relevant OIC documents to the extent possible.
- Encouraging OIC institutions to incorporate and reflect the views and inputs of the civil society, NGOs, business world, scientific and academic circles, wherever possible, in their activities for implementation of the SDGs.

- Developing effective cooperation mechanisms involving OIC countries/organizations and non-OIC countries/organizations for successful implementation of the SDGs.
- Enhancing capacity of the OIC institutions to provide better services to member states for the effective implementation of the SDGs.
- Encouraging the OIC Institutions to promote higher and effective utilization of the Islamic financial services in the OIC Member Countries within the context of implementation of the SDGs.
- Improving the existing capacity building programmes and initiatives such as SESRIC-STATCAB and IDB - STATCAB and developing similar ones that can enhance the capacity of national statistical offices (NSOs) and statistical capacity of the relevant institutions.
- Establishing/developing data banks for SDGs related statistics in line with UN system and internationally agreed practices.
- Harmonizing data collection methods related to SDGs in order to close data gaps and produce comparable data sets and statistics.
- Assisting the member countries to improve their project preparation/development and implementation capacity such as in the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism, IDB's reverse linkage program, SESRIC's OIC-VET as well as in the design and preparation of PPPs, with a view to better utilizing funds towards the realization of the SDGs.
- Enhancing institutional and financial capacity of the IDB and the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) to provide stronger financial and technical support to the low income member countries in the implementation of the SDGs.