UN in Kenya joins hands with partners to highlight Sustainable Development Goals

In an effort to highlight the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kenya ahead of the UN global summit in New York, the UN system organized a media briefing on 18 September, 2015.

In her opening remarks, the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas reiterated how inclusive the SDGs process was and how citizens from all walks of life articulated their needs and priorities. She emphasized that the attainment of the new ambitious development targets is possible if governments rally civil society organizations, private sector, foundations and citizens, among others, to support them.

“The SDGs are about people, planet and prosperity. They call for involvement of every stakeholder to realize the key targets outlined in the new global development framework,” Ms. Bekele-Thomas said.

She further emphasized that the SDGs would redefine global development, governance, gender relations and environmental protection, adding that the goals would fill gaps and advance the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which have hit the 2015 deadline.

Speaking on behalf of the Government,

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- Kenya launches HIV Situation Room
- UNFPA and private sector to battle maternal mortality in Kenya
- UN-Habitat and University of Cambridge help Mathare slum dwellers to design community hall
- Community radio stations in Kenya to exercise more accountability in the interest of the public
- Africa Engineering Week shows that it’s cool to be an engineer!- Mentoring for more engineers for a secure and sustainable future

Upcoming Events:

- 6 November  International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
- 16 November  International Day of Tolerance
- 19 November  World Toilet Day
- 20 November  Africa Industrialization Day
- 21 November  World Television Day
- 25 November  International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- 29 November  International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

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the Director of the MDGs Unit in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, Mr. Gideon Mailu explained: “The MDGs had mixed results; there was success in poverty reduction, school enrollment and gender equality. We expect SDGs to accelerate progress towards achieving a prosperous, healthier, green and equal planet”.

A representative of Standard Chartered Bank in Kenya, Ms. Olga Kimani, pledged to involve everyone in the SDGs through the power of technology, particularly mobile phones. She underlined the role of the private sector, as a key partner in leading the process of achieving the SDGs.

With the leadership of the Government, the UN and other partners expect to reach out to a diverse audience to garner their support and involvement in the implementation of the SDGs in Kenya.

UN strengthens its commitment to the people of Turkana

THE United Nations Country Team has reinforced its commitment to the people of Turkana County. This follows a meeting held in Lodwar between the UN and the Turkana County leadership team to review the annual progress for the UN joint programme in the County. The people of Turkana are repetitively exposed to a number of natural calamities that result in devastating impacts on their development efforts. To help alleviate this suffering, the UN developed a joint programme for the County that is supporting the country in a number of areas including health, education, water, sanitation, food security and community cohesion.

The first joint programme steering committee meeting resolved to scale up and hasten implementation of projects as outlined in the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) to ensure speedy and sustainable realization of development gains in the County. The Governor of Turkana, Mr. Josphat Nanok, thanked the UN for its development efforts in the County and pledged closer collaboration. He also asked the UN to assist with the construction of large water dams to support the pastoral community in addition to establishing irrigation schemes which will greatly reduce the vulnerability experienced by the people. He promised to have the CIDP reviewed to accommodate emerging challenges such as the invasive prosopis plant, popularly known as mathenge. The plant has taken over more than half of the
Dignitaries from the Kenya Government, South Sudan, Uganda, and Ethiopia, neighbouring county governments, UN agencies, development partners, international and local public benefit organizations, faith-based organizations and pastoralist communities in the region graced the event. (photo by RCO/UNDP)

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Kenya launches HIV Situation Room

On 17 September 2015, President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and the Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, launched an innovative new tool, **HIV Situation Room**. The application is software that draws data from several independent sub-systems, including the Maisha reporting system and counties health facilities, and conveys the information in simple graphics.

In his remarks, President Kenyatta applauded the new application for providing up to date information for prioritization, planning, decision-making and accountability at national and county levels. The President also launched an operational plan, as well as a national campaign to end stigma and discrimination on adolescents living with HIV/AIDS.

“I am pleased that an Internet-based dashboard, the **Kenya HIV Situation Room**, has now been availed at my office. I am very delighted to launch it today. Kenya has made significant progress in reducing HIV/AIDS”.

*President Kenyatta launching the HIV Situation Room. (photo by PPS)*
AIDS. The HIV Situation Room will help in tracking progress targets for the country’s Vision Care 2030,” he noted.

He further stated that the use of ICT is a priority for his Government and plans are underway for counties to have their specific situation rooms that provide one-stop shops to track HIV/AIDS progress, plan and allocate resources.

Mr. Sidibé acknowledged the efforts made by the Government of Kenya in accelerating progress towards ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic. He further noted how the country had reduced HIV/AIDS-related deaths by 74 per cent, with new infections falling by 77 percent.

“I congratulate Kenya under the leadership of President Uhuru Kenyatta for being the first country in the world to launch the HIV Situation Room. This tool will revolutionize Kenya’s HIV roadmap, and if adhered to, the country will meet the 90-90-90 target that has been set by the UNAIDS,” said Mr. Sidibé.

Speaking at the same occasion, the Health Cabinet Secretary, Mr. James Macharia, noted that the HIV Situation Room would utilize existing data to present select indicators from diverse sources in a single interactive and dynamic platform. The progress towards achieving the Kenya AIDS Strategic Framework goals will be monitored, as well as mapping the situation of HIV-related commodities in the country and availing easy data for decision-making for Government and other partners.

The Situation Room was developed by the Kenya National AIDS Control Council and the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with UNAIDS, with support from the Government of Japan. It aims to bring together data from four separate sources: the Kenya Medical Supply Agency; Kenya’s HIV estimates; the District Health Information System; and the National AIDS Control Council, on programme implementation and service delivery.

UNFPA and private sector to battle maternal mortality in Kenya

In support of the Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ health, UNFPA Kenya is coordinating a new public-private partnership that will initially work in six counties with the heaviest maternal mortality burden.

Companies that have signed onto the initiative include: Safaricom, MSD, Philips, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Huawei. Kenya Healthcare Federation and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will convene partners and coordinate the implementation of this joint-commitment.

The ground-breaking initiative will harness the strength, resources and expertise of the private sector, in alignment with the Global Financing Facility and close collaboration with the Government of Kenya, World Bank and other partners.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon lauded the initiative during last September’s launch of the ‘Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health’ to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNFPA is leading the implementation of the H4+ partners 6-County RMNCAH Initiative in Kenya which focuses on the six counties contributing to nearly 50% of maternal deaths in Kenya. These are Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir, Isiolo, Lamu and Migori.

The counties have been identified because of their remoteness, very high burden of maternal death and limited levels of support.

The partnership will complement efforts ongoing and target a number of activities in these six counties, notably: strengthening supply chain management for health commodities; increasing availability and demand for youth-friendly health services; capacity-building for health professionals; innovations to health management systems; increasing access to energy for facilities, youth empowerment; research; and resource mobilization.

“Public-private partnerships allow us to build models that offer the best of both public and private sectors, with great potential for scaling-up the delivery of affordable and quality care, not only in Kenya, but all over the world,” says Siddharth Chatterjee, UNFPA Kenya Representative.

The initiative is expected to reach, by 2020, over 3.5 million women, newborns, children, and adolescents.
UN-Habitat and University of Cambridge help Mathare slum dwellers to design community hall

UN-Habitat and University of Cambridge help Mathare slum dwellers to design community hall

In a landmark project initiated by UN-Habitat and coordinated by the Global Network for Sustainable Housing, the University of Cambridge has engaged a team of researchers to design a community centre in one of Kenya’s biggest and oldest slums. The team of Cambridge researchers and students has been working on a project to design and build a new community centre in the heart of Mathare 3A – one of Kenya’s oldest and largest slums.

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In addition, it is hoped that the community centre will provide a scalable model for future projects with other communities and both international and local institutions.

Project Manager Maximilian Bock, from the Cambridge University Department of Architecture, said: “The aim of the participatory design is not to change the rich culture that already exists in Mathare, but rather to understand it deeply enough to design a space that is useful to and reflective of the community.”

“Using wall charts, pictures, models and coloured stickers,” lead designer Elizabeth Wagemann said, “we were able to find out what residents thought of other community centre projects, the potential risks to the hall, how they hoped to use the facility, and what skills they could contribute to constructing and managing it.”

“Involving the community from the beginning is important in ensuring that, once it is built, the community will manage, maintain, and above all, make use of the centre,” said Bock.

Gregor Herda, the project coordinator for UN-Habitat, concluded: “We have to start thinking differently about how we promote new approaches to housing construction, both from a materials and design point-of-view. Scepticism towards uncommon materials is a natural reaction. That is why there is no better way of introducing these materials than by way of an iconic public structure.”

Community radio stations in Kenya to exercise more accountability in the interest of the public

UNESCO organized a mentoring workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, on local radio management for eight community radios taking part in the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)-funded project, “Empowering Local Radios with ICTs”. The two-day workshop saw participants deliberating on various management issues within their particular radio stations, as well as on measures to be taken to ensure that the needs of their respective communities are met. Participants learnt from each other and experts attending the workshop about best practices to make their radio stations run smoothly, ensuring the production of quality content.

Sauti FM shared best practices in improving its social services to the community through better programming and addressing real issues of local concern. Through the establishment of networks with different organizations
and a participatory approach of both the community and experts, they were able to inform and engage the youth to change their career paths from fishing to more sustainable agriculture.

Muvumwe FM also shared its best practices in improving local news from an increased geographical area leading to a more diversified coverage and use of available media, as well as the better identification of community needs. The importance of targeting audience and tracking their impact through call-ins and call-outs was also highlighted.

Furthermore, Munambo Juweti FM was able to improve entrepreneurship skills positively affecting the management of the radio station, in the context of sustainability of local radios. It possesses increased knowledge on income generating activities through advertisements, the establishment of business-clients relationships to widen coverage, as well as partnerships for the supply of equipment.

Finally, Mang’ele FM shared its experiences in introducing social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter as examples of the use of ICT to benefit the community broadcasting outreach. These platforms helped them improve their programmes through increased interaction between the audience and correspondents.

Under the Empowering Local Radios with ICTs project, financed by SIDA, a series of capacity-building activities have been organized in local radio stations, aimed at improving the programming quality, providing training on the use of ICTs and helping the stations to increase their geographical range of news coverage with a network of correspondents. The project also focuses on gender equality and financial sustainability of the radio stations. The First Secretary from the Embassy of Sweden in Kenya, Ms. Louise Bermsjo, attended the event that commenced the second phase of the SIDA project. She pointed out that SIDA was committed to enhance democratic governance and human rights in cooperation with the Government of Kenya, media and civil society organizations.

Finally, the workshop was also an opportunity to interact with the Communications Authority of Kenya on procedures and requirements for community radios and the Media Council of Kenya, on accreditation for journalists and the use of the Code of Ethics for Journalism in Kenya.

Four new FM radio stations, namely Baliti, Bulala, Koch and Kwale Ranet, were also exposed to possible use of alternative online platforms such as Una Hakika, a mobile phone-based information platform joining networked technologies (including both basic and Internet-enabled mobile phones), together with traditional human networks (i.e. community ambassadors) to monitor and counter misinformation in the Tana Delta. The Sentinel Project, which is running the Una Hakika initiative, could join forces to strengthen the technical capacity of interested community radios through this information platform leading to increased participation and involvement of local communities in addressing issues of concern, as well as the improvement of investigative journalism skills, tools and sources. Other ICT cooperation opportunities were also presented, such as Brainstorm Africa.

The workshop took place within the framework of the project, “Empowering local radios with ICTs”, supported by SIDA, and aims at fostering the development of free, independent and pluralistic media. It also promotes institutional capacity-building through widened access to information.
Africa Engineering Week shows that it’s cool to be an engineer!- Mentoring for more engineers for a secure and sustainable future

On the occasion of the Africa Engineering Week, UNESCO, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the University of Nairobi, organised a three-day mentoring event to advocate for future engineers and their role in sustainable development. Increasing the visibility of engineering was the main goal of the Africa Engineering Week. UNESCO strongly believes in the important role that engineers play for a secure and sustainable future.

The event was designed to encourage girls and boys to pursue engineering studies and inform them of career opportunities in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The mentoring session provided secondary school students an opportunity to interact with engineering professors from STEM and students from the University of Nairobi.

The mentoring session consisted of a three-day immersion programme for 100 students from various boys’ and girls’ high schools in Kenya. The first day comprised mentoring talks from professional engineers working for the Government, the private sector, as well as the Engineering Department of the University of Nairobi. The role of engineers and their contributions to society were presented by various professors and graduate students of engineering. Practical requirements to enter the engineering department as well as current research projects in working with private sectors were also presented. Throughout the whole event, great importance was attached to interaction, as the main purpose was to inform students about every aspect of engineering.

Professor Mbuthia, Dean of the School of Engineering of the University of Nairobi, in her opening remarks, stressed the importance of engineers as service deliverers for society. “As engineers we can contribute to 90% of the creation of a country’s wealth and thereby improve the life of citizens and eliminate poverty. Engineers are needed to reach the Kenya Vision 2030 goals, based on statistics for the priorities in our country. We need engineers to realise these and in turn create jobs themselves.”

Dr. Siphila Mumenya, a female civil and construction engineer from the School of Engineering, University of Nairobi, explained the importance of STEM and basic requirements to become an engineer. She noted: “whether it is biology, physics, chemistry or mathematics, they are systems and models to describe a situation. As engineers become creative, we use basic sciences to manipulate and apply the laws of nature to design a solution”. Dr. Mumenya is one of the role models for female students and also chairs the Department of Civil and Construction Engineering at the University of Nairobi.

Ruth Wan, a recent graduate engineering student from the University of Nairobi, put theory into practice with the presentation of her graduation project, a self-balancing robot to showcase the importance of knowledge of the various basic sciences. In an interactive discussion, she challenged the students to analyse how the robot combines the different sciences.

In addition, Rosemary Gitonga, a retired female electrical engineer at the Kenya Power and Lighting Company, shared her duties going beyond her regular office job tasks, but requiring both entrepreneurship and soft skills. She testified that being an engineer meant “solving problems and coming up with an innovative solution. The real world has to do with the economy and in order to make changes, therefore, you must be an entrepreneur and let innovation and money-making go hand-in-hand with soft skills such as marketing and sales.”

The following day the students were divided in small groups to take part in laboratory exercises to learn more about engineering through hands-on activities.

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and demonstrations. The laboratories belong to the various subdivisions in engineering, thus providing the students with a more practical idea of various STEM components. For example, Julie Ochieng, a 17-year old girl from Mary Leakey High School, reflected on her geospatial and space technology lab as a memorable experience. “They use cameras to take pictures of the earth. It’s my first time to see this kind of thing. The labs are better than (normal) classes. It’s different because now we get to do things practically.”

Another 16-year old aspiring engineer from the same school liked the mechanical lab most “because it’s so interesting to learn about the way machines work. Things just move from one process to another. The machines are similar to those I saw at my grandfather’s place, but the technology is more advanced. We normally don’t have classes like these dealing with practice. This program reduces boredom in class, so it is really fun and exciting”.

Andrew Mwangi, from Thika High School noted that the three-day mentoring session was a positive experience. He commented: “this programme encourages you to study engineering. They take you to the labs and teach you basic concepts in university. High schools don’t have these labs. There is a lot of engineering equipment. It’s nice to see all these machines.”

The decline of engineers raises major concerns, as they are needed to overcome global challenges such as climate change and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. One goal of the UNESCO Engineering Initiative (UEI) is to increase the number of students studying engineering at the tertiary level so as to maintain and improve the socio-economic development of societies.

To ensure the world will have enough engineers for future sustainable development, it is necessary to encourage and inspire youth to take on contemporary challenges. It is in this context that UNESCO also organizes scientific Camps of Excellence on STEM within the framework of its science education activities for a secure and sustainable future for all. The camps address the gender inequality starting at high school levels and provide girls with the necessary skills to pursue studies and a career in the sciences, engineering, technology and mathematics, while simultaneously becoming powerful agents for gender equality. The camps also seek to empower the girls to start projects, activities and science clubs at schools, to facilitate further mentorship and networking opportunities.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

at your fingertips

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Child health

• 17,000 fewer children die each day than in 1990, but more than six million children still die before their fifth birthday each year.
• Since 2000, measles vaccines have averted nearly 15.6 million deaths.
• Despite global progress, an increasing proportion of child deaths are in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. Four out of every five deaths of children under age five occur in these regions.

Maternal health

• Globally, maternal mortality has fallen by almost 50% since 1990.
• In Eastern Asia, Northern Africa and Southern Asia, maternal mortality has declined by around two-thirds. But, the maternal mortality ratio – the proportion of mothers that do not survive childbirth compared to those who do – in developing regions is still 14 times higher than in the developed regions.
• Only half of women in developing regions receive the recommended amount of health care.

HIV/AIDS
• By 2014, there were 13.6 million people accessing antiretroviral therapy, an increase from just 800,000 in 2003.
• New HIV infections in 2013 were estimated at 2.1 million, which was 38% lower than in 2001.
• At the end of 2013, there were an estimated 35 million people living with HIV.
• At the end of 2013, 240,000 children were newly infected with HIV.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
• Enrolment in primary education in developing countries has reached 91%, but 57 million children remain out of school.
• More than half of children who have not enrolled in school live in sub-Saharan Africa.
• An estimated 50% of out-of-school children of primary school age live in conflict-affected areas. Children in the poorest households are 4 times as likely to be out of school as children in the richest households.
• The world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education.
• Among youth aged 15 to 24, the literacy rate has improved globally from 83 per cent to 91 per cent between 1990 and 2015.

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   fuel use in many nations
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6. Fights poverty, helping millions of rural poor achieve better
   lives
7. Protects and promotes human rights on site and through
   some 80 treaties/declarations
8. Mobilizes US$ billions in humanitarian aid to help people
   affected by emergencies
9. Advances democracy, assisting many countries a year with
   their elections
10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of millions of
    women a year

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