

The Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP
Briefing Session
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Conference Room 4

Agenda Item 4.11: Briefing on integrated approaches on the 2030 Agenda: The UN Development Programme –UN Environment Programme Poverty-Environment Initiative

Introduction

The poverty-environment nexus is at the heart of Agenda 2030, as it embodies the contribution of environmental and natural resource sustainability to growth, employment and livelihoods and the equitable access by women and men to environmental and natural resources. The experiences from the Poverty-Environment Initiative can contribute in operationalizing integrated approaches.

Current status – Practical Experiences from the Poverty-Environment Initiative

The Poverty Environment Initiative and its Government partners have important experiences in addressing the practical challenge of how to achieve an integrated approach, for example, using inter-ministerial mechanisms to break down silos between different sectors and to better align sector strategies with national level plans and budgets. The approach includes capacity building and the use of economic evidence to demonstrate the links between the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development to promote policy and budget coherence.

One concrete example of how integrated evidence is helping to bring about integrated policy making comes from PEI's partnership with UN Women and the World Bank in costing the gender gap in agricultural productivity. The report provides specific evidence of the links between women's empowerment, sustainable agricultural production and economic growth and a unique quantification of the costs in terms of lost growth opportunities and an estimate of what societies would gain were the gender gaps in agricultural productivity to be addressed.

If the gender gap in agriculture productivity would be closed in Malawi 238,000 people could be lifted out of poverty, crop production increase by 7.3% and GDP by 100 million every year while enhancing sustainability efforts. In response to these findings and with support from the Poverty Environment Initiative and its partners Malawi's new National Agricultural Policy takes an integrated approach to agricultural development. The policy promotes investments in climate-smart agriculture and sustainable land and water management while having a strong focus on empowering women to close gender gaps.

Further information is available at the following link: <http://www.unpei.org/knowledge-resources/publications/the-cost-of-the-gender-gap-in-agricultural-productivity-in-malawi-tanzania-and-uganda>.

Way forward and conclusion

The Poverty Environment Initiative programme is coming to an end in December 2017. However, based on Government demand the Poverty Environment Initiative team is currently working on the formulation of a successor programme which will help build institutional capacity to increase investments in pro-poor environmental sustainability and contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017 and beyond, Poverty Environment Initiative and UN Women aim to further the work on closing the gender gap in agriculture. There is still a need to better understand the links between agricultural productivity, climate-smart approaches and gender equality and build capacity to ensure that actions that help to close the gender gap and further sustainability are implemented.

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