

Chapter 6

Global governance

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Introduction

Regarding target 16.8 – Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance – of 16th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 16), it is almost inevitable asking ourselves “What for? How? When? Where?” Obviously, it is not enough to say that this spreading and strengthening are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, because it would be an unnecessary tautologism.

If the United Nations system member states recognize that “eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,” this could be a broad field for joint action. It seems clear that when talking about broadening participation, it is assumed that there are gaps in the structures of institutions of global governance. When talking about strengthening, we search a more effective and efficient participation of all involved.

New UN 2030 Agenda has replaced the [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDG), and the success of SDGs depends on a new global citizen diplomacy that, in addition to governmental parties, assumes the greater participation of developing countries with direct involvement of private sector and organized civil society.

It is worth mentioning that, in line with target 16.8, it is important that developing countries play a major role in objectively proposing solutions for the institutions leading efforts to follow the 2030 Agenda.

To play this role, first, they should be effectively committed to the targets set out in the goals, which must be clearly reflected in the main public policies and in several forms of strategic alliances with civil society and its (non-governmental and private) organizations.

Second, they should be (and have) an active voice in several formal spaces already available in global governance institutions, particularly in the UN system, effectively becoming part of solutions to global problems.

And, third, they should search for necessary and sufficient conditions for exchanging good practices and experiences to enable the improvement of living, work, health, housing, education, food, and water access conditions for needy people, as well as for developing resilient, integrated and sustainable systems for agricultural, forestry and fisheries production.

As a great mobilizing utopia, 2030 Agenda is very important. However, with 12 years remaining for its full implementation, it is still possible to see that many indicators are beyond where they should already be. And implementing them in real life is not trivial. The world is increasingly complex, with serious issues which go beyond country borders, each with its own political system, ethical, cultural and institutional foundations which must be considered and respected.

For this reason, target 16.8 is greatly relevant and meaningful in its two-way call: on the one hand, decision-making bodies of UN and other global governance institutions to open more and make themselves more democratic by welcoming the participation of developing countries; on the other hand, this participation to be leading, proactive and bearer of virtuous paths and solutions for a peaceful, sustainable and fair world.

Global governance: importance of STI institutions

With a permanent representative since 1947, we could certainly say that Brazil is one of the countries where the UN system is very well represented. As already described in the [introductory chapter](#), among specialized agencies, funds, and programs, [26 institutions are in Brazil](#). Obviously, how the United Nations System supports Brazil changes from one agency to another, since they perform, in our country, the tasks indicated by their respective mandates and work in specific areas.

During the *First Annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals*, which took place at UN headquarters in 2016, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) organized a side event which addressed the importance of different science, technology and innovation (STI) components necessary to ensure that these areas really reach their potential as facilitators for achieving SDGs and 2030 Agenda.

Discussions were moderated by Unesco Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, Flavia Schlegel, were integrated with key issues of STI Forum,

and resulted in a brief strategic summary with factual recommendations on the forum topic: Realize the potential of science, technology and innovation for all to achieve sustainable development goals. In her opening speech, the assistant director-general stressed the needs and requirements of science and research, technology and innovation, public policies and international scientific cooperation to design and improve STI systems so that they provide solutions to challenges concerning sustainable development and benefit the most vulnerable and marginalized persons, not leaving anyone behind.

Contributions of Embrapa

Due to its widespread reach, skills and national and international recognition, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) has historically played a leading role on global governance institutions, especially some UN specialized agencies. Complying with its mission and its link to the Brazilian State through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (Mapa), Embrapa directly and indirectly takes part in Brazilian participation in international forums. This is due to a wide portfolio of technological solutions developed over 45 years in a country whose vast rural area is occupied with heterogeneous agriculture on at least five different biomes.

In Brazil, the international technical and scientific cooperation policy follows the guidelines from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), for which

[...] international cooperation should be understood as a development tool guided by respect for the well-being of Brazilian people and aimed at providing universities, research institutions and private companies with the sophistication, specialization and competitiveness required by the new global economy. (MFA cited by Embrapa, 2009, our translation).

In this sense, the concept of innovation diplomacy is aimed at strengthening international negotiations in order to facilitate technology dissemination and implementation, promote new management learning and make new products, services and knowledge available to society.

Embrapa approach to global policy aims to monitor and manage institutional positions in worldwide conventions, agreements, protocols, treaties, commissions and forums. Embrapa also deals with public policies, as an important partner of Itamaraty regarding decision-making on national and global policies,

thus providing technical and scientific support for both MFA and Mapa. Thus, Embrapa supports not only Brazilian delegations in conventions, treaties and other agreements ratified by our country, but also parties involved in discussing new laws in Brazilian Congress, along with parliamentary fronts and special commissions.

Thus, Brazil, represented by Embrapa, takes part in the international agricultural arena, either as a member or as a contracting party. International conventions, treaties and agreements and commissions intertwine at national and international levels, thus creating a network of technical and political instances, a context in which Embrapa needs to know how to navigate and spot bottlenecks to support the Brazilian government in its best negotiation strategy (Embrapa, 2009).

This set of agreements, treaties and guidelines of Brazilian government needs to be taken into account when Embrapa supports global public policies design and improvement by offering its scientific and technological knowledge in order to guarantee biomes and native ecosystems sustainability and human adaptation to a climate change and water scarcity scenario.

Embrapa, as a public organization, can continue to play a leading role in strengthening developing countries for greater participation in global governance. By revealing how its work is in line with the international commitment with SDGs, Embrapa is held accountable by society and shows how it is possible to end poverty in all its forms in Brazil by offering alternatives which can also be adopted in several countries worldwide.

As food and agriculture are linked to practically all SDGs, Embrapa has carried out a comprehensive evaluation concerning its agricultural research and innovation activities and mapped interfaces and synergies with SDG and its targets. The work was based on mapping Impact Axis and 12 Strategic Goals mentioned in the [VI Master Plan](#) of Embrapa related to the 17 SDGs (Embrapa, 2015).

When looking at the relationship between SDG targets and Embrapa actions with the Plano Plurianual 2016-2019 (2016-2019 Multi-Annual Plan – MAP) of the federal government – focusing on SDG 16 and target 16.8, on broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in global governance institutions – two MAP goals and four budget targets stand out. These goals and targets address the production of scientific and technological knowledge and the improvement of partnerships, processes, human resources and infrastructure for developing agricultural innovations, in order to strengthen institutions, produce

knowledge to support public policy design, preserve Brazilian and planetary biodiversity, and cement international alliances through representatives in decision-making institutions by means of international cooperation projects and partnerships.

Embrapa is designing a mechanism to monitor SDGs and its targets, and, for its new Master Plan revision, there is a proposal for greater alignment with SDGs, since, according to the UN, the 2030 Agenda is not restricted to proposing SDGs, but equally addresses the means to implement these goals and their targets. This discussion involves systemic issues, such as funding for development, transfer and exchange of knowledge and technologies, technical training and international trade, which will require innovative and active arrangements. These mechanisms should help countries and their institutions to disseminate their achievements and identify their challenges, so that they can devise strategies and advance their commitments to the sustainable development of the planet.

Final considerations

From a historical perspective, it is important to note that global challenges change and, as a rule, become more complex as society evolves. Obviously, this movement requires that local, national and global institutions also change over time in order to remain leading actors in solving serious problems which affect the population, especially segments that are more fragile and vulnerable to the uneven development countless regions of the planet.

And so it has been. Since the creation of UN in 1945 and Bretton Woods institutions in 1944, countries have sought ways to deal with transnational and cross-border issues by creating and strengthening global governance institutions. And more than 70 years since the establishment of these pioneering institutions, despite tremendous economic and social advances and progress, the 2030 Agenda persists in showing humanity that many challenges are yet to be faced. Many of them were thought to have been overcome, such as great universal scourges.

In this sense, SDGs and 2030 Agenda are actual, challenging and important for moving towards a more fair, worthy and sustainable world. Of course, this path is neither easy nor trivial, given its comprehensiveness and complexity. Therefore, the challenge is for everyone, and it could not fail to be for a large-sized and historically important institution like Embrapa. In a complex, unequal and troubled

21st century world , strengthened and democratic global governance institutions jointly acting in synergy will certainly be crucial.

References

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