

Facilitator's Report

National Stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Dublin Castle, 30th July 2019

Chris Chapman : The Change Exploratory



An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D. addressing the National Stakeholder Forum on SDG's, 30th July 2019

Background:

The underlying vision of the SDG Stakeholder Forum, convened by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment (DCCA), is to be "a mechanism for all stakeholders to discuss national implementation and reporting processes, share examples of best practice in implementing the SDGs, and discuss challenges to achieving the SDGs and to be informed of SDG relevant events and processes taking place internationally".

(The SDGs were part of Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly: "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".)



This was the fourth National Stakeholder Forum, attended by over 250 people from the NGO community, other civil society groups, the private sector, the trade union movement, agricultural sector, youth, education, government departments and local government.

The forum was facilitated by a team of Chris Chapman (www.changeexploratory.com), Ali Warner (www.aliwarner.com), Davie Philip (www.cultivate.ie) and Elizabeth McShane (www.responsecrowd.eu) who looked after sil.do – the audience interaction app.

This agenda of the forum has been included in this report as Appendix One.

This meeting had three main purposes:

- A. Demonstrating cross-government support for the SDG's (evidenced by the address from An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar T.D., the speech by Minister Pat Breen T.D. and presentations on behalf of Department of Business, Enterprise and innovation, Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Department of Rural and Community Development)
- B. Further developing work on SDG 8 : Decent Work and Economic Growth (Targets and Indicators for SDG 8 are included as Appendix Two to this report)
- C. Supporting the establishment of Working Groups to look at a) SDG communications and b) Mapping SDG activity in Ireland

A : Demonstrating Cross-Government Support for SDG's

Links to presentations given and other resources in connections with the SDG National Stakeholder Forum are available on [Department Website](#)

Presentations were given by:

- David Hegarty, Assistant Secretary in the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation on “Future Jobs Ireland and Future Skills Needs”
- Bernie McNally, Assistant Secretary in the Department of Children and Youth Affairs on “Supporting Decent Work and Economic Growth through First Five, a whole of government strategy for babies, young children and families”
- Andrew Forde, Principal Officer in the Department of Rural and Community Development on “Social Enterprise”

During the presentations, questions and comments were gathered from participants using the sli.do app. These are listed in Appendix Three to this report.

Facilitator Reflections

It was very positive to witness the increasing levels of support for SDG's across government and the increasing ability of government to work across Departments.

However, some in attendance felt that the ratio of presentations to discussions was too high and the lack of trade union and civil society speakers was also raised.

As the forum continues to evolve, it is hoped that it will be possible to facilitate engagement earlier in the policy cycle, in areas where overall intention is clear (building on the direction set by the SDG's) and stakeholders can work with government as to how we can together make progress with the challenges we face in achieving the SDG's in Ireland.

Participants have identified many such areas that could be tackled in greater detail in future forum meetings.

B: Further developing work on SDG 8 : Decent Work and Economic Growth

In the morning, participants had been asked via the sli.do app ‘Which aspects of SDG 8 most need attention in Ireland ?’ – Responses to this question are listed in Appendix Four to this report.

In the afternoon, participants were asked a further three questions, as below (again via the sli.do app) – Responses to these questions are listed in Appendix Five to this report

1. Where do people see the government as doing well in relation to SDG 8 ? (include areas where policies are working)
2. Where do people see the government doing not so well in relation to SDG 8 ? (areas where people would like to see improvement)
3. What do people see as the main challenges for us in achieving SDG 8 ?

More detailed discussions then followed on four specific aspects of SDG 8 (the topics having been chosen by participants):

- (i) The tension between Economic Growth and Environmental Degradation
- (ii) Policy and Government Approach to SDG 8
- (iii) Decent Jobs and Rights
- (iv) Education

Discussions were ‘harvested’ in a common format, as below, with participants being asked for each topic:

- **STOP** - What do we need to stop doing ?
- **GO** – What do we need to start doing ?
- **GROW** – What do we need to do more / increase ?

(i) The tension between Economic Growth and Environmental Degradation

<p>Stop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring growth based on GDP • Capitalism 	<p>Go (Start)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefining how we measure growth, i.e. happiness, balance etc • Discussing Universal Basic Income and Sufficiency (and thus empowering grass-roots level action)
<p>Grow (Increase)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching of critical thinking, early on and consistently 	

(ii) Policy and Government Approach to SDG 8

Stop	Go (Start)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wasting the resources in waste (energy / potential raw materials) • Lowest price procurement in public sector – approach needs to get more sophisticated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just Transition Teams now • A Circular Economy Approach to energy and materials • Insisting large public projects engage a given % with social enterprise • Decentralising government and devolving powers to lower levels • More social dialogue
Grow (Increase)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with stakeholders and opportunities to engage with forums • Diversity in attendance at forums • Collaboration that joins up policies • Transparency of policy development processes and how they are influenced • Incentives for businesses to do green procurement 	

(iii) Decent Jobs and Rights

Stop	Go (Start)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of rights and access to work for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Migrant workers - Minority Groups • Indecent Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bogus self-employment - Precarious work - Zero hours contracts • Discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Living Wage • Exploring Universal Basic Income • New forms of work that facilitate work-life balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 day remote - 4 day weeks • Matching new world of work and financial realities • Supporting Union role in new world of work
Grow (Increase)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of workers in Just Transition Teams • Social Dialogue • Valuing social transfers in care economy • Value placed on unpaid work, as well as paid work 	

(iv) Education

<p>Stop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ignoring reality that education today for many isn't leading to jobs that enable you to buy a house (the notional model isn't working)• Precarious work• Centralisation – there needs to be more emphasis on growth of jobs in regions	<p>Go (start)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Intervention – Be proactive in upskilling / reskilling. Engage young unemployed e.g. Docks Programme• Cost Benefit Analysis, e.g. an investment of €1 in education, returns how much ?• Assessment / Review of Programmes, before and after• Focusing on how we will keep young people in Ireland
<p>Grow (increase)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities for people in Direct Provision to work• Flexible apprenticeship opportunities• Literacy and Numeracy Programmes• Links between Public Procurement and support for programmes promoting lifelong learning• German model (distinguishing between academic and skills)• Flexible development of Programmes re Organic Growing• Changes in school curriculum to meet future needs• Coder Dojo – responding to an increasingly technological future	

Facilitator Reflections

SDG 8 includes many different complex topics ranging from sustainable tourism to modern slavery to gender, disability, youth and labour rights issues and much much more besides - all of which deserve and require attention.

Not surprisingly, different issues are more or less prominent for different stakeholders.

The four discussions above all highlight particular issues where further progress is needed and the Forum has the potential to contribute to progress in Ireland.

Predictably, for many participants, there are fundamental issues built into the current model and definitions of economic growth.

C: Supporting the establishment of Working Groups to look at: a) SDG Communications, and b) Mapping SDG Activity in Ireland

In order to capture and amplify the messages on SDG activity already taking place in Ireland, it was decided to establish two SDG related Working Groups to carry this out.

The First SDG Communications Working Group will coordinate and amplify SDG messages, mainly on social media with the aim of raising national awareness around SDGs generally but also to encourage greater take up among people in SDG activity.

The second SDG Mapping and Activity Working Group will focus on capturing existing SDG activity in Ireland and looking to ensure that it is, where possible, included in Ireland's overall SDG reporting process. This group will work very closely with the Central Statistics Office/ESRI/OSI, who works with the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment on reporting of Ireland's progress on the SDG targets, through the SDG Data Hub.

A breakout group in the afternoon looked at what would be most important, if these Working Groups are to be successful and then sought volunteers to participate in the Working Groups.

(A total of approximately 42 people came forward to volunteer to participate in the working groups – 29 for the first and 23 for the second.)

Prior to the breakout group, a plenary presentation was given by Lorraine McNerney (Chief Information Officer) and Katie Goodwin (Data Team Lead) from Ordinance Survey Ireland on Geohive and SDG Data Collection. Questions and comments in relation to this presentation are included as Appendix Six to this Report.

The notes below, from the breakout discussions, relate to both Working Groups:

- Groups need to be broadly balanced, representing a diversity of sectors and diverse demography and making efforts to include voices who are often marginalised (especially including young people)
- Groups need to keep in mind that the ultimate point is to support actions and impacts in relation to the SDG's
- Groups should make sure they are seen to have some early wins / impacts.
- Groups need to adopt clear priorities, not trying to do too much at once and making use of the expertise / experience of members.
- Groups need to emphasise the interconnections between SDG's, the need for collaboration (particularly across sectors) to achieve Goals and to show empowering examples of collaboration working to achieve change.
- Opportunities should be sought to work with schools, wherever possible, as they can have high impact in normalising SDG's within communities and helping the work to be fun and not too academic.
- Groups should start by making sure people know what structures are already there and activities already happening (to avoid duplication and re-inventing wheel)

Facilitator Reflections:

It is a very positive sign that so many people wanted to volunteer to be part of these Working Groups and discussions have been useful to help frame ways forward. The subjects of Communications and Data Mapping are clearly fundamental building blocks for the achievement of the SDG's in Ireland.

The level of interest in working groups (and previously in the SDG Champions Programme) is very encouraging. The challenge is how to organise to make the most of that interest, both to move work forward effectively and to accelerate progress by involving more and more people.

Appendix One : Agenda



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

National SDG Stakeholder Forum

AGENDA

30 July 2019

Dublin Castle, Main Conference Centre

- 9.45 Welcome and outline of the day
- 10.15 Introduction of An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D by Minister Pat Breen T.D
Key Note Address by An Taoiseach – **"Ireland's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals"**
- 10.45 Speech by Minister Pat Breen T.D. – **"The Department of Business, Enterprise & Innovation's role in facilitating Decent Work and Economic Growth"**
- 11.15 *Tea/Coffee – Networking*
- 11.45 David Hegarty, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation – **" Future Jobs Ireland and future skills needs"**
- 12.15 Bernie McNally, Department of Children and Youth Affairs – **"Supporting Decent Work and Economic Growth through First 5, A Whole of Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families"**
- 12.35 Andrew Forde, Department of Rural and Community Development – Presentation on social enterprise
- 12.55 *Lunch and Networking*



14.00 **Lorraine McNerney/Katie Goodwin OSi
Presentation on GeoHive and SDG data
collection, followed by Q&A.**

14.45 Breakout sessions A and B.

Session A Detailed discussion on Decent Work and
Economic Growth – stakeholders' views

Session B Establishment of Working Group(s) to look
at SDG communications and Mapping SDG
activity in Ireland working group - CSO to
lead

16.15 Wrap-up and conclusion

Dates for working groups to meet

Next meeting 18 October - Dublin Castle

Appendix Two : Targets and Indicators for SDG 8

Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable
Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1)

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda)

Indicators

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors	8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person
8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex
8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead	8.4.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP 8.4.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training
8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms	8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age
8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment	8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status 8.8.2 Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status
8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate 8.9.2 Number of jobs in tourism industries as a proportion of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex
8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	8.10.1 Number of commercial bank branches and automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults 8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
8.a Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries	8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements
8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization	8.b.1 Total government spending in social protection and employment programmes as a proportion of the national budgets and GDP

Appendix Three :

Questions and Comments Arising from Morning Presentations

(150 collected via sli.do)

General queries re SDG 8 / SDG's as a whole

What is sustainable growth? It's a little vague

Is it an oversight that agribusiness isn't mentioned in the key elements of SDG8? Other industries that spring to mind are airline industry and energy sector.

How come as a country we only have 25 companies participating in the UN global compact initiative compared to the UK who have 500+?

What are government and other organisations doing to improve buy in to the SDGs from the public? And to raise awareness?

I've never seen an advertisement on tv/radio etc for the SDGs. Everyone has a part to play so there needs to be a public awareness campaign

Suggestion: make a TV advert with each SDG and its 3 actions and raise public awareness of what the individual can do. The leaflet "50 Daily Actions" is great!

This is the first time I've heard of the SDG champions, and I consider myself reasonably well informed. This suggests that there is a communication problem

How are we educating the youth on the SDGs so that they grow up with an understanding of how their actions impact the world?

How can we get people who watch Love Island to understand we need to change how society operates radically because we're in an ecological emergency?

How are the new Irish being involved in this conversation of sustainable development goals?

How does government propose to give people the opportunity and the resources needed to deliver on the SDG's promise to leave no one behind?

Will DCCA be drafting a report on what happened at the HLPF or is there somewhere we can find it online?

Future of the economy / economic model in Ireland

As the Taoiseach says, the shape of the future economy is going to need to be very different. Why are we still focusing on economic growth as the answer to all?

How does the Taoiseach and Minister Breen plan to develop an economy not based on degrading the natural world that is the fundamental basis for wellbeing of all?

How does Ireland aim to decouple economic growth from environmental impact?

Productivity and efficiency should not just be a mechanism for producing more and exploiting our natural resources even more

Given that 'decoupling' is proving to be a myth - how can SDG 8 (And Ireland) continue on the unsustainable perpetual growth path?

Can we respond to Climate Breakdown and continue to increase economic growth?

How is Govt engaging with the very real limits 2 growth when it continues 2 license fossil fuel

exploration rather than focusing on meaningful & just employment?

How's does Ireland deal with rapid closure of fossil fuel intensive industries and its effect on a major loss of jobs?

Can we create jobs that are aligned with the development of an environmentally sustainable agriculture sector yet also help preserve the fabric of rural Ireland?

#renewables # jobs. Transform Bord Na Mona bogs into solar farms to reverse job losses such as Lough Ree Power Station Closure

Should we be aiming for a Low Resource Usage Economy not just a Low Carbon? Resource over usage will get us before climate change - biodiversity loss etc

Can you elaborate on practical steps the Department is taking to support skills and jobs for a transition to a more Circular Economy?

How does the government consider the circular economy as a solution to provide economic growth and jobs while decoupling from resources use?

How can we help Irish enterprises transition to zero carbon models when there is a sustainability skills gap in the Irish Market?

Re Just Transitions, let's address the vital role of environment & sustainable agriculture/forestry in creating new opportunities for meaningful employment

Surely just transition teams should already be in place or at least their formation accelerated? Jobs already in jeopardy e.g. Midlands, Moneypoint.

Transitioning to a low carbon economy - what are the real changes that government will introduce?

The Just transition was mentioned by Minister Breen numerous times. How this will be achieved is unclear?

Do you believe Corporations should pay more or less in taxes?

Yesterday was World Overshoot Day, when will it occur in 2030 if we attempt to grow GDP at 5%.

Clue: at 5% growth resource usage will double in 14 years.

How can we change the governance system to prioritise investments that have no immediate benefits but are essential for the longer-term?

International / Global Perspectives

What about the global context? How much do you think it matters if Ireland and the EU are working towards sustainable goals if the US, Russia and China are not?

What is the current level of development aid and when was 0.7% put in place? Has it ever been met as a goal?

How will the Minister and his Department work across government departments to ensure Global Citizenship Education for all in Ireland?

The Government's position on supporting the UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights needs clarification to ensure that multinationals adhere to HR norms

Will Ireland sign up to just transition framework being promoted by Spain and Peru in September UN summit?

What will the government's response be to the absolute failure of national governments and international frameworks to address growing inequalities in local and global settings, now at the highest levels and with a record amount of institutional/private wealth hoarding in human history?

Relationship with other SDG's / areas of government policy (including climate)

The eradication of poverty, Goal 1, should overarch all other goals

We are not replacing the Bord Na Mona job losses in the midlands. So goal 8 and 1 are failing. The Midlands is the first casualty of job losses due to climate change measures. Is our failure to deal with this a sign that we are facilitating poverty?

Rural areas, taking the brunt of climate Change transition, with Bord Na Mona job losses
Just Transition

Collaboration in the energy sector can ensure "always on" power which will help ensure a just transition for those in carbon intensive roles today

SDG8 should be linked with SDG3 more. (Health / wellbeing)

Wellbeing in the workplace-burn-out, obesity and unhealthy eating habits are a huge issue in Ireland. We need to create more links between SDG 8 & SDG 3

We should start by looking at future wellbeing and equality for all as one of the key bases for planning for our people country and planet

Clever use of resources? People are our best resource. Invest in their wellbeing

Why encourage people to stay in work when older. Surely health and wellbeing should be a focus and linked to sdg8 more. Working into older age is stressful.

Dept of Education and SDG 4 is central to achievement of SDG 8 ...so closer links of Gov Depts to ensure successful outcomes for sustainable and decent work

How is Ireland preparing our young generation in Environmental Education & SDGs in Schools' Leaving Cert, to embrace SDG 4, 8 & 13 by 2030?

Education must include interpersonal and environmental considerations, not just specialized technical skills

Ensure that every school has a garden where kids grow their own fruits & veg. a strategy to learn good habits of optimum nutrition & respect for environment

Great to hear David Hegarty speak about SDG 4 role and the joined up thinking of Gov Depts

Life on land & under water, climate and healthy waters are fundamental to the success of all the goals. Why is the Govt failing so badly on all of these?

Climate action (#ecological emergency) plan needs to be consistent. How can a commitment include supporting current practices in agri, transportation and energy? How does the FG gov commitment to sustainable economic growth fit with the issuing of so many exploration and extraction licences against both leading climate science and democratic desire of the population?

There is growing job opportunities, but nowhere for people to live in urban areas. This really needs to be addressed ASAP.

We're hearing a lot about creating more jobs. Are these jobs going to pay a decent wage so that people can afford to live in our incredibly expensive city?

Homeless figures rising. Leave no one behind ?. Action not measuring up to words

Project Ireland public transport investment heavily weighted towards urban centres. Rural areas in greater need of functioning public transport

Can DBEI's concept of innovation be updated to incl. transformative innovation/innovation for transformative societal change? This could make it a tool for SDGs

Do we make enough use of State Aid exemptions for R&D in supporting greater SME productivity?

Need to ensure Govt. Depts collaboration to develop cooperative strategies to meet demand for

enterprise/skills/ career resilience & career construction skills.

Why no mention of zero carbon business skills as part of training programmes? All skill sets need to apply a sustainability lens

On Future Jobs goal to link SMEs and MNs to HEIs (IoT and universities), more joined up thinking between DTIF scheme/other DBEI funded programs, eg SFI Centres

Public Procurement has a significant role to play on all SDG deliverables, in particular the circular economy. Is OGP engaging on the SDGs? No sign to date

For some years Govt has had a Green Public Procurement Policy. It has not been implemented. €14,000,000,000 of tax payers money is spent, for better or worse – How about introducing SDG/CSR criteria in public procurement selection?

Why does the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies not mention SDGs at all? Does that risk showing lack of leadership?

Decent Work (and Poverty)

How is 'decent work' defined?

We have 110,000 working poor. Over 33,000 underemployed. Continued precarious employment. Decent work must be sustainable and pay a living wage.

How can we prevent causing poverty, while implementing SDG's?

Why no mention on SDG8 decent work to reality of working poor, underemployment & precarious employment? SDG8 must be framed within 'Leave No One Behind' Promise

Previously being in work meant that more was possible but today there is a significant and growing group of working poor, who find it difficult to pay rent, own property or provide for their children.

How can we address this so that decent work will provide a decent standard of living?

Poverty and loss of jobs in the midlands

Transition Teams....do we have a definite date? Job losses happening now in the midlands. Need action now and not sometime in the future.

Gap between the wealthy and working poor is widening. There is a huge amount of wealth in particular areas while working class areas are under severe pressure

Government commitment to implementation of SDG8 decent work must include commitment to Minimum Essential Standard of Living to ensure all have adequate income.

When will government increase minimum wage to Living Wage? Would benefit women most
Shortage of workers is not vulnerability it's an opportunity for skilled workers to demand higher wages/conditions & opportunity to drive efficiency through tech

Any thoughts on a universal basic income?

Is now not the moment to look seriously at a universal basic income. Unleash the creativity and protect all from poverty

What are the plans to protect self-employed people better? Brave enough to work to create jobs yet v restricted access to social protection. It's too big a risk

Decent work also requires more affordable childcare. We're excluding too many women from progressing as it doesn't pay to work due to extortionate childcare costs
Why are there no financial supports or incentives for employees to return to education for QQI levels 1, 2 and 3 - for example tax relief (like other courses)

'Work' needs to be defined with reference to more than just a job / employment. Carers and work in the home provide invaluable services
We need to address the value given to childcare, care of elderly, disability.

With 1 in 6 adults in Ireland having unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills needs, why is there no intensive workplace literacy programme?

Under skills and talent pillar what is happening on improving basic skills of literacy and numeracy - Skills For Work offers 30hr courses to 3K per year - more?

Could improve basic skills in the workplace & increase participation by introducing targeted paid learning leave for workers with less than a level 4 qual

Unemployed people suffer from very low self-esteem. This is a critical barrier to securing employment, yet rarely addressed

Great that NEETs is recognised within the SDGs. How is this translating into action in Ireland?

Challenge to promote DECENT employment, particularly for the Precariat: impartial Guidance for all can facilitate talent and career construction skills.

Re PES Services & Guidance counselling, Dept. Education: SOLAS fund existing professional free & impartial Adult Guidance Counselling, 37 regional services Guidance support to Social Inclusion & Enterprise:

Adult Guidance Services to Rural communities, lifelong learners, those most distant from 'decent work.

What about allowing those people who want to work to do so, and get a wage that allows a reasonable quality of life, e.g. people in direct provision?

Does all this focus on AI and technology not mean less people in employment, replaced by machines. Good example banks, self service kiosks have replace tellers.

Embracing innovation & Tech change: Note significant development in Ed & training Technology Enhanced Learning and Technology Enhanced Guidance provision a goal

Technology and innovation without understanding values that underpin people's choices is hollow. What about including research into attitudes and values?

Who is preparing the National AI and Digitisation strategies? Important that both strategies will include 'application' aspects and consider ethics.

Loads of sustainable jobs in civil society and social enterprise with the right strategy and focus. 1 in 13 workers already work in these sectors

Are government ready to reduce the extra hours imposed on workforce.? Most unfamily-friendly policy ever implemented

Early Years and Childcare

First 5 suggests an excellent template for 'Whole of Govt.' approach!

Would you consider creating an accessible document that summarises practices you're implementing to bring the First Five aspirations into being?

First 5 needs to support very disadvantaged families in particular - those in emergency accommodation and DP

What about children born and raised in direct provision centres in Ireland in 2019?

The NCS will afford all earners with access to childcare but an obvious ask is how are those never employed, those furthest behind to access childcare. LNOB

In support of healthy children, a healthy diet plays a crucial role.

In Ireland 250,000 children go hungry every day without dinner or breakfast. We must look at developing sustainable organic food systems that children have food

In recognising the need for care and education, more emphasis needs to be placed on all kinds of child care. Including working in the home

Can the responsibility for early childhood care be left to market forces?

In light of recent scandals in childcare services is there any intention of moving from the private for profit sector to publicly funded quality services

Why reliance on profit seeking private sector for early childhood care?

If children are to spend less time in care centres, crèches need to be forced to provide more part time places. Almost impossible to get part time places

What is the median hourly pay for child care workers? Probably a lot lower than the average

Need more support for parents with unmet literacy and numeracy needs - hard to support your kids if you struggle with these yourself. Focus on family literacy

Remote working won't do enough for parents. Yes it cuts commute times but you can't look after kids while honestly working so it won't negate the need for childcare

Unpaid parental leave only works if you can get income from elsewhere. If you're self-employed, and a single parent, what protections are in place?

Will parents take up unpaid leave, even if it is extended? What are the incentive behind this and when will they be implemented

How can we create a society in which parental leave is shared between men and women?

Do you support the climate strikes for children? What early education strategies do you have to help children understand the kind of world they'll inherit?

Our young need different skills beyond Aistear etc. if they are to be resilient to climate breakdown. Required skills can't just be linked with productivity

Anything on insurance issues in child care provision?

How high does early child care sit in the list of priorities for DBEI?

Social Enterprise

Where do cooperatives fit into Social Enterprise Model?

Is there a definition of the difference between social enterprise and charity?

If we are serious about Agenda2030, every business must operate as a social enterprise

In social enterprise, what is the role of the cooperative sector and community ownership in meeting the SDGs?

Rural & Community Development can play a major role in helping regeneration of the rural economy by exploring environment/eco-tourism opportunity

Good to hear about Social Enterprise Strategy. I was not aware of its publication. Why 3-year strategy?

29% of people 3 years and more in long term unemployment, the need for self-belief and career vision. Solution linkage DSP & Area Partnerships and SoEnt

Comments re SDG Stakeholder Forum – Content and Speakers

Great to be covering these subjects. Would like to hear from suitable NGO's as well as central government - Listening can't help feel government policy is being absolutely cleared of any failings. Feels like the forum has been hijacked by government to push its own growth narrative. SDGs little more than a backdrop.

Is the word poverty excluded from this forum?

Are there any youth councils etc represented here? Speaking to young people about the SDGs, they've great ideas. This affects them the most, they should be represented

Why no Trade Union rep on panel considering that 'Decent Work' is a main part of SDG 8?

SDG8 was reviewed at the HLPF this year at the UN. Why no report from Coalition 2030 who attended with DCCAE at this event? This would be most recent & informative

We know that only 1 in 9 CEO's in large enterprises are women - why are we echoing those figures today with such little representation of women so far?

Comments re SDG Stakeholder Forum – Process

Finding this forum really difficult to engage with

Recommendation going forward - break up the sessions to include more participatory methods of engagement - nearly 3 hours of being spoken at is not effective.

Too many presentations this morning. Feel like there is lack of mood / engagement in the room. For the next forum, it'd be good to have the panels replaced by working groups with the key speakers that result in outcomes/deliverables/timeline

Is Slido a none-too-subtle mechanism for conference control? Are we inputters or participants? No scope for interactive, in-the-moment plenary discussion.

It would be great if we could interact with others taking part in this Slido discussion. I have responses and questions for others. Will any speakers respond?

Inter-Departmental Working Group Stakeholders want to work more closely with you! How about the Stakeholders/DCCAE co-creating the Oct. Stakeholder Forum?

This Forum needs to be shaken up and learn from the model in place in the DFAT NGO Human Rights Forum held annually. A joint working group amongst other issues

Appendix Four : Responses to Question re aspects of SDG 8 most needing attention in Ireland (58 contributions)

Fundamentals / Views of the system

- Creating perspective change
- The UN Agenda 2030 is the overarching framework for sustainability for the next 10 years. All policy needs to be embedded in this framework. Not tacked on as an afterthought. There are significant opportunities for the new frontier of sustainable, green, meaningful work, skills development, innovation & social enterprise. Future jobs needs to have Just Transition at its core.
- Social and environmental sustainable development must not be sacrificed at the altar of economic growth. **Challenge** : How to marry economic growth with sustainable development - Decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation of our limited world. *(this point repeated by many)*
- Just transition for workers and others requires energy security to be considered. We need to address that economic growth does not necessarily equate with “decent work”
- Climate justice is going to be a key for a range of people including in particular in agriculture and energy.
- We need to move away from GDP and embrace natural capital economic thinking as advocated by the Irish Forum on Natural Capital - see www.naturalcapitalireland.com This approach adopts an analysis of our stocks of natural resources how they are utilized, run down or enhanced due to utilization. It includes social capital as well as environmental capital and adopting this approach will help meet SDG targets
- Measuring participation should focus on participation in society not just the economy
- Development of rural Ireland and employment existing and sustaining outside of Dublin.
- Progress is far far too slow across all elements. We need to leap ahead and increase ambition

Decent work

- Focus on the 'decent' in decent jobs – Not only decent work, but decent work conditions - End precarious work and underemployment – Protection of labour rights and support. Particularly in relation to self-employed and the arts sector.
- Remote working – Accommodating personal situations – flexi-working
- The concept of 'work' as being beyond employment to include carers and working in the home
- Raise min wage to living wage for a start. Decent wages - people work long hours for minimal pay compared to the cost of living - address in-work poverty.
- Greater focus on the quality of employment for young people - Will today's young people and future generations enjoy the same employment quality, stability, and opportunity?
- Collective bargaining rights enshrined in law, especially needed for those on personal contracts.
- Invest in education and training, including apprenticeship-type programmes and increased funding in research in HEIs.
- Inclusive Employment for Economic Migrants (Dependants)

Enterprise (and Employment) Development

- Inclusive employment and training – Bringing people who are stuck in a rut and/or addictions into the workforce. This includes addressing gambling, alcohol and drug addiction.
- Promoting Social Enterprise :)
- Making sure that everyone can benefit from having good functional CSR frameworks in the companies they work for.
- Addressing the 'displacement issue' in competition policy so that social enterprise and social economy can support inclusive economic growth
- Cost of insurance prohibitive to SMES starting up
- The system does not make it economically feasible for SMEs to employ people to grow their businesses

Parenting and Childcare, Gender and Work / Life Balance

- The gender pay gap and ensuring affordable childcare for parents.
- Balance work and family life. Foundation, first family (children and elderly) being cared for in safe environment. Value people working in care and support training and upskilling.
- Affordable, safe, well-regulated childcare; support for breastfeeding in the workplace (helps more women rejoin the workforce and is also an investment in the health of our future workforce)
- For children with extra needs, their parents would benefit from paid parental leave at later ages

Education and Lifelong learning / adaptation

- Education, training & marketing
- Informal education sector
- Meeting unmet literacy, numeracy and digital skills of young people not in work or FET needs a rethink - holistic approach with customised supports inc decent work placement
- The idea of career vision being provided at every stage of a person's career.
- Shorter hours for workers after retirement age

Agriculture

- Development of appropriate environmental agriculture
- Ireland must address the fact that we import over 75% of our food. This is absolutely unacceptable. Farmers need to be given all the resources to transition to reducing the ruminant beef/dairy herds & diversifying their revenue streams to be self-sufficient & resilient. Ireland has the potential to lead in the conservation of farmers, their farms & environmental heritage through the CAP, ecotourism, artisanal food production – a new version of REPS.
- Availability of land for people interested in growing their own food and with no access to space, more funding for organic growers to improve infrastructure and income.

Sustainability / Approach to SDG's

- Employees and employers to be aware of SDGs. Still a lack of awareness and unknown how they can contribute or make change
- Engage your own employees with the SDGs through training and education programmes.
- More focus on #SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing when focusing on SDG8 – need to ensure healthier workplaces
- Training and skills for sustainability – improving skills for sustainable development
- Less talk about monitoring TARGETS and more ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN.
- WE NEED TO LOOK AT FINANCING THE SDGs
- Training SDG reps in gov./city & county councils to promote SDGs
- POLICY COHERENCE!
- Cross-department cooperation and collaboration
- Ensuring proper two-way dialogue takes place
- Climate action
- To challenge disparity between what's said on the tin of the SDG's and the reality of economic growth as it exists. The impacts wealth disparities have on formal democratic politics
- Very little attention to developing resilience and cooperation which is vital in the ecological emergency. More here, please.
- Public Transport, cycling and pedestrian investments have significant potential to improve quality of life.
- The creation of a real and immediate circular and green economy, which rebuilds Nature, rather than continuing to destroy it.
- Sustainable energy

Appendix Five : Responses to Questions in relation to government performance on SDG 8 and challenges to be faced (21 Contributors)

Government doing well in relation to SDG 8	Not doing so well in relation to SDG 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political will and policy framing. • Thought children's affairs /rural were positive • First 5 Strategy. • Future skills policy is good. Now need to meet these targets and objectives. – Future Jobs Programme appears to be a priority and has funding and investment backing it to achieve it. • Policies on social enterprise and future jobs • The new social enterprise policy is a good way forward! We need to support business that does good rather than harm. • Launch of professional apprenticeships • Policy might be doing well at ODA • Private sector focus – Focusing on the business and capital aspect (and not focused on people and rights) – Building indigenous sector • Creating some employment (albeit much of it precarious) – Achieving full employment • Ratification of ILO • Recent legislation on zero hour contracts is a step forward in addressing precarious work • Not sure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really disappointed at lack of overarching understanding of the urgency of the issue and of a lack of addressing attitude and therefore behaviour change. • Community awareness – communicating issues at a local level and public mobilisation- Not doing well in educating citizens about SDG's • Not tackling 'decent' work / Living wage • Labour rights. Union recognition. - Lack of social dialogue and no legislation around collective bargaining • Adequate wages for high living costs - Gap between National Minimum Wage and a living wage. • Lots of talk on stats, but no analysis on the actual jobs. Increase in precarious work alarming and government not legislating enough protection • Just Transition. Preparedness for fast moving technological change • Supporting young people for all areas and communities in Ireland • Patchy level of connectivity between Pay equality for women, inclusivity at work - Maternity Leave & Childcare Inconsistencies • Access to 3rd level education for ALL • Anti-trafficking response. Work /labour rights for migrant workers, particularly those in the Irish fishing fleet • Employment, training and skill development opportunities for those in direct provision - Employment opportunities for marginalised communities • Communication, implementation, resourcing tangible initiatives to achieve the Goal

Main challenges for us in achieving SDG 8

- Citizen engagement is low. Needs to be more mainstream - Most people have never heard of the SDG's
- Communities need to be empowered. Not engaged with reason to achieve SDG's
- Lack of vision. It exists, but requires real work to elicit a coherent response
- Adopting a whole of society response to achieving the goal.
- Implementing the policy inclusively - Tackling discrimination
- Proper engagement with "partners" - Government commitment and engagement with civil society
- Collaboration, change management, leadership,
- Understanding we can have a comfortable lifestyle with sustainability, and leaving no one behind in the transition.
- Funding, funding and funding. Servicing a national debt of €209billion is a huge burden to investing sufficiently
- Need more local and regional government autonomy. Too much centralised decision-making now. Doesn't give enough flexibility to enable local regional innovation to achieve SDG's progress
- Change education system/curriculum to meet current and future needs of young people
- Boosting the currency of further education & skills
- Lack of investment in HEIs
- The trade-off between flexible work and vulnerable work / gig economy
- Putting an end to precarious forms of work
- Maintaining quality employment in digitalization of businesses
- If action not backed by worker's rights legislation, it will be ignored
- Career guidance for older people in transitioning to new forms of work
- Corporate accountability
- Time
- The need for universal basic income
- It requires that we rethink how economy fits within ecological context. Huge but possible, just.
- SDG8 itself referring to growth.
- Capitalism

Appendix Six : Responses to Geohive Presentation (21 Contributors)

“Excellent presentation on CSO/ OSI's Geohive SDGs Platform. Looks like a practical solution to capture data on SDGs”

General Perceived Benefits

- A support system reinforcing national stance on actively achieving the SDG's
- Making the SDGs locatable and relatable to individuals and communities. Bringing the SDGs home.
- Cross-community involvement, social engagement, participation and sharing, nationally and locally.
- Giving local communities the opportunities to directly upload data on their contribution to the SDGs
- Visibility to the work happening on the ground. Also what themes and issues are being worked on?
- It will be important in that data received will highlight data gaps and perhaps how and where to access new relevant data. Seems like a great opportunity to gather information and quantify progress + spot specific areas and locations that need support and improvement.
- To allow for more informed decision-making around the SDGs and the areas we represent/study in/work in. The ability to include local data and stories. Evidence-based policy development
- Knowledge management is a great tool to educate, empower & motivate people.
- Greater monitoring of the implementation of then SDGs. Using hard data to know exactly where we stand with SDGs in Ireland Transformation from aspiration to actualisation
- It could be used to understand attitudes and thus raise awareness
- Advocacy use with government and corporate groups
- That people can contribute to data and influence the metrics
- Collaboration around geography

Specific Benefit

- An ability to target specific measures under CAP to addressing at sub-catchment level climate mitigation and biodiversity enhancement. Specifically one can target pinch points such as effluent outfalls to remediate pollution. Also the most suitable area in a floodplain can be targeted Re tree planting to reduce flows and alleviate flooding

To achieve potential...

- This really needs to be communicated broadly with community groups, with industry who are actively engaging in the SDGs, with the public etc. Huge opportunity here. Need to drive this further
- Community dashboards are key to this so communities can input big data at that local scale. Check out etownz.com. Those guys are already doing this
- Needs to be linked to targets for reporting
- Clear guidelines for data input from industry, community and other organisations

Questions

- How can we input to it or share possible data? (I have data that I think would address some of the goals and indicators. How do I get this data onto GeoHive?)
- You mentioned that that this platform was launched in 2017. What has been the involvement of this stakeholder group so far?
- Are civil society, NGOs and academic community able to contribute and input into the development of national indicators?
- "Manage" and "maintain" IDs, but do you recognize and acknowledge the difference between human-made, human-managed, and wild objects?
- How will Geohive account for the integrity of the data gathered?

Appendix Seven : Feelings re Progress with SDG's

At the very beginning of the Forum, participants were asked to give one word to describe how they felt about progress towards achieving the SDG's in Ireland. The Word Cloud based on 99 responses is given below:

