LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

A Guiding Principle of the Sustainable Development Goals

Leave no one behind (LNOB) is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It focuses on the commitment of all UN Member States to combat discrimination, rising inequalities, and their root causes within and amongst countries. This briefing sheet summarizes the concept of LNOB, key steps for its implementation, and the challenges and opportunities for tackling LNOB in the National Strategy.

KEY MESSAGES

- Addressing the principle of LNOB lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and constitutes a major stepping stone to achieving SDGs and their targets.

- Implementing LNOB in Canada's National Strategy presents opportunities and challenges for groups that have been historically left behind, including Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, youth, women and girls.

- Putting LNOB into practice requires a five-step process that prioritizes specific actions, monitors and measures progress and ensures accountability.
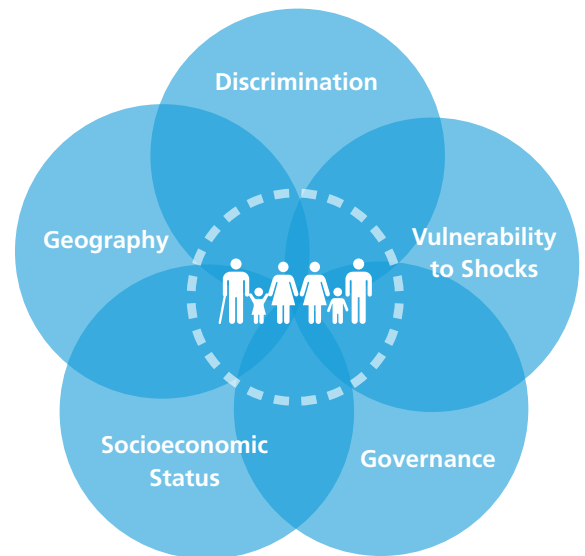
OVERVIEW OF THE SDGs

The commitment to leave no one behind is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was launched by the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in 2015. This includes 17 interdependent SDGs and their 169 associated targets. The 2030 Agenda sets the vision for global action towards achieving a more sustainable future for people and planet. The SDGs are balanced across three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environment) with a focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the population are not left behind.

KEY FACTORS DETERMINING LNOB

People can be left behind for a number of reasons, including living in poverty and facing exclusion, discrimination, and inequalities[1]. They are often economically, socially, spatially, and/or politically excluded due to ethnicity, race, gender, age, disability, or a combination of these factors. The United Nations' (UN) approach to LNOB aims to prioritize the dignity of human beings and ensure the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable communities are met. The five key factors used to assess who is being left behind, and why, includes: discrimination, geography, shocks and fragility, socio-economic status, and governance. People at the intersection of these factors face reinforcing and compounding disadvantage and deprivation, making them likely among the furthest behind.

Source: Adapted from UNDP 'What does it mean to leave no one behind?' (2018)

PUTTING LNOB INTO PRACTICE

The interim LNOB UNSDG Operational Guide for UN Country Teams, provides a five-step guideline to turn the principle and vision of LNOB into action[1].

Step 1: Evidence Gathering and Analysis Gather and analyze data, gaps and trends in SDG implementation between sub-populations and/or geographic localities. Analyze data using the five factor framework to understand who is left behind.

Step 2: Prioritization and analysis Policy makers should prioritize the most critical challenges based on who is the furthest behind.

Step 3: Decision-making Policy makers and practitioners should use the information gathered from Step 2 to identify actions to address the challenges, barriers, capacity gaps, and root causes.

Step 4: Monitoring and Evaluation Identify LNOB indicators and targets after considering available data and gaps.

Step 5: Accountability Integrate LNOB in SDG follow-up and review process, including national SDG Reports and Voluntary National Reviews.

Source: Adapted from BCCIC 'Reading between the lines: Accelerated Implementation of Agenda 2030' (2020)

LOCAL FOCUS

Who is left behind in the Peterborough region?

Poverty is a growing concern in the region, with nearly 16% of families live in poverty[2]. Although recent unemployment levels have been lower in the Peterborough region, relative to provincial and national averages, barriers to employment and housing disproportionately impact young people, Indigenous Peoples, and People of Colour.

Indigenous people living in Curve Lake First Nation and Hiawatha First Nation also experience unique inequities related to infrastructure, education, access to clean water, among others.

KEY CHALLENGES IN LNOB FOR CANADA

Certain barriers and challenges are present when tackling the key factors that cause people to be left behind. In Canada, groups that have been historically left behind include women, persons with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, LGBTQ2 and non-binary persons[3]. Indigenous Peoples, particularly those who are living in remote communities, face greater challenges in overcoming poverty, inequality, and injustice.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LNOB IMPLEMENTATION IN CANADA'S NATIONAL STRATEGY

Canada's success in advancing the 2030 Agenda and the pledge to Leave No One Behind will depend on leadership from the highest level of the government, to the community and everyday Canadians[3]. Collaboration and engagement with Indigenous partners and National Indigenous Organizations will be crucial to the central commitment to Leave No One Behind and provide a valuable integrated approach to achieving the SDGs.

ROLE OF INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE

Integrating Indigenous perspectives, priorities, and knowledge throughout the SDG framework will support capacity building and increase awareness of the 2030 Agenda. Indigenous Knowledge plays a significant role in implementing SDGs[4]. Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems, composed of distinct and diverse cultures, highlight the interconnectedness of people and nature. The customary use of and relationships with biological resources by Indigenous Peoples are relevant to achieving all the goals and targets of SDGs and can provide insights to measuring the progress of sustainable development[3]. Indigenous Knowledge, science, practices, and technologies can strengthen Canadian efforts to ensure sustainable livelihoods, support greater food security, and achieve a more balanced economy.

Further Reading

- **United Nations (2015) Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform** (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld)
- **United Nations Chief Executives Board (2017) Shared Framework on Leaving No One Behind** (https://www.unsceb.org/CEBPublicFiles/CEB%20equality%20framework-A4-web-rev3.pdf)
- **UNDP (2018) What does it mean to leave no one behind?** (https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/what-does-it-mean-to-leave-no-one-behind-.html)

References

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2. CFGP, Greater Peterborough's Vital Signs (2016), available from https://cfgp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CFGP_VitalSigns_WEB.pdf
3. Government of Canada, Towards Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy (2019), available from https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/programs/agenda-2030/7781_EmploymentSocialDevelopment_2030-ENv5.pdf
4. UN, Indigenous Peoples' Rights and the 2030 Agenda (2017), available from https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2016/10/Briefing-Paper-on-Indigenous-Peoples-Rights-and-the-2030-Agenda.pdf

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