

SDGs. Finally, there will be a policy discussion. The outline is being revised and will be shared with the entire group in the coming days following this meeting. The group asks that any comments and inputs be submitted by end of the year.

Mr. Harris highlighted that the Secretary-General has called for an understanding of the role of the UN in managing the deployment of technologies, especially regarding its effects on the future of work and inequality. He asked if this group should start thinking about a value-based set of norms, principles or standards to develop regulatory frameworks for managing rapid technological changes. Mr. Harris also called for alignment with the ongoing system wide effort around the 75th anniversary, about the future of the UN in context of rapid technological change and attacks on multilateralism. He noted the work by UNDP and UNCDF on fintech and inclusion where they analyzed trends, the contributions to financial services for those undeserved by the financial system, and the challenges posed for regulating and monitoring. He suggested the chapter should take note of this work from the perspective of inclusion.

The group noted UNCTAD's work on big data, which is very relevant to the issue of technology, and suggested the TDR 2018 report as a useful resource. It also noted that the chapter could use many resources available in the CEB website that represent agreed UN position on many technology-related issues. The group drew attention to the ongoing internal discussions on cryptocurrencies and suggested that a box on this issue may be of interest. They also agreed on the need for defining a system-wide framework for technology to support a strong normative structure. Colleagues were asked to share ideas for normative principles that we can support.

4. Fourth working group – demographic trends - ageing

The co-leads of the fourth working group held bilateral discussions and shared an outline on 3 December. The group now includes UNWOMEN and has extended an invitation to UNFPA. It met on 10 December to discuss the contents and the timeline of the chapter.

Mr. Harris noted that there is some degree of (rare) global consensus around the topic of ageing and growing concerns regarding its effects on societal structures. He noted the lack of a link to migration in the ongoing discussions. He asked if this

funds. UNCTAD is doing research on this very issue and will share any findings to help inform the chapter. There was also mention of the demographic trends in China. The group should also coordinate the framing of demographic issues to match the framing of the 75th Anniversary work, spearheaded by USG Fabrizio Hochschild, that includes overall population increase, the youth bulge, ageing and urbanization. There was also a suggestion to include a discussion on the interactions between demographic and technology trends, particularly regarding automation effects on job creation and declining future contributions to pension funds.

5. Fifth working group – Inequalities

The fifth working group circulated the first outline for comments. The group decided to address the issue in two parts. The first part discusses the trends on inequality and why they matter. The second discusses the key drivers of these trends.

Regarding the trends, the group suggested to go beyond an income definition to include wealth and horizontal/group-based inequalities to reflect differences in access to services and opportunities. This will also help separate the experience of developed and developing countries since it matters if the state can provide services or not. A key point is that the world is far from the goal of equal opportunities. The drivers of inequality will not be treated exhaustively as the chapter will focus on interlinkages to other megatrends as the niche for this report.

The chapter will include a discussion on institutions as a driver of inequality, presenting arguments in favor of universal policies, not just targeted policies. It will also touch on labour markets and productivity issues. Mr. Harris noted that there is much existing work on inequalities, including the recent HDR and the upcoming WSR, and ILO's work on the future of work. This group should consider how to establish and explain the limits of what to cover. He noted that differences between those with and without university education are increasing and the outcomes of markets are deepening income inequality. Progressive taxation is less effective as the number of people of higher incomes is not growing enough to cover the depth of inequality. What can be done on wealth side? Mr. Harris also asked that the issue of data and measurement be addressed directly. He also noted the usefulness of this chapter in helping to prepare the SG speeches on inequality during 2020.

Participants noted the usefulness of taking a lifecycle perspective to understanding inequality. Productivity differentials are a key determinant of inequality and it is important to understand initial conditions and have policies in the pre-labor force stage. The issue of fairness and its role in recent upheavals was also raised, which is linked to global action and how to think of the future. Recent trends on market concentration should also be included as drivers of inequality, linking to the technology question. It was noted that the role of the middle class is missing in this discussion, where the sense of insecurity is growing. The group also called for discussing the role

of SMEs in addressing inequalities. Not much is known about the productivity gap between large/small firms in developing countries compared to in industrialized countries. The positive role of the social solidarity economy was also mentioned.

6. Sixth working group – urbanization

The sixth working group is currently discussing the scope of the chapter. Effects of urbanization transcend cities and has also implications for rural areas. From the economic lens, this also has implications for the future of agriculture and manufacturing and the relationship between them. Related to this are issues of imbalances in regions within countries (e.g., Northern Brazil, Northern India, Western China). What policies are needed to address these imbalances? It also raises questions of how inequality is reproduced over time given the spatial dimension of development. This dynamic also exists within cities where spatial separation reinforces inequality. The working group is focusing on how megatrends impact each other, especially technology. The group is wondering if the chapters are meant to be descriptive or to be more deliberative.

Mr. Harris stated that yes, the chapters should be assertive and deliberative. The message is that

He also suggested that work be done in stages. First, agencies could be asked to signal their interest and capacities to contribute, followed by a polling of individuals to identify a critical mass of voluntaries. In the event of a surge in demand, the network could organize collective events and other solutions. There is also a training component being discussed. The use of a platform to channel requests is also being considered.

Participants noted that the importance of connecting with UN Regional Commissions and a wider network of economists. Participants from Regional Commissions informed that as part of the UNDS reform at the regional level, regional knowledge hubs are being established, including rosters of experts. There is a clear need for avoiding duplications of efforts, given that the Regional Commissions were frequently in contact with the UN Resident Coordinator Offices/UN