2019 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD 5) Evaluation
ARFS 5 took place from 16 to 18 April, 2019 in Marrakech, Morocco.

The theme was “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.”


Aim to advance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the goals set out in Africa’s Agenda 2063 by providing a multi-stakeholder platform.

To help improve the effectiveness, efficiency and results, participants and staff were asked to provide feedback on the organization and conduct of the forum.

Sixty-six participants provided feedback.
Profile of respondents

**Affiliation**
- Government official: 49%
- International organization: 14%
- United Nations system organization: 16%
- Major groups: 9%
- Others: 12%

**Gender**
- Male: 75%
- Female: 25%

49% or respondents were government officials
Overall Satisfaction with the Forum

Rate your overall satisfaction with the regional forum

56% and 34% of respondents respectively were satisfied or very satisfied with the forum
52% indicated that the overall objective of the Forum was fully achieved.
56% of respondents indicated that key messages reflected outcomes of discussions to a large extent and 20% said they did reflect to a full extent.
30% indicated that in session support fully contributed to the effective conduct of the Forum and 57% said it contributed to a large extent.
81% said after attending the Forum, they are highly motivated to participate in VNR processes.
39% and 51% of respondents noted that side events gave them fresh viewpoints fully and to a large extent respectively.
Usefulness of Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please rate the sessions by usefulness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="chart.png" alt="Bar chart showing the distribution of ratings for different sessions." /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

91% indicated that the round table panel on VNRs and peer learning on implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 was good to excellent in terms of its usefulness.
83% indicated that the round table panel on VNRs and peer learning on implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 was good to excellent in terms of its quality
The majority of respondents rated the timeliness, quality and usefulness of documents provided as being very good.
### How would you rate the meeting arrangements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation of documents</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel facilities</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting venue facilities</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea and coffee, lunch and reception</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed programme and information package</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of invitation letters and documents</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback and support (questions answered quickly)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics (visa, transport, accommodation)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the meeting arrangements, translation of documents was the most positively rated and logistics and hotel facilities were the most poorly rated.
What Worked Well

- Overall, the Forum was well organized
- Side events were well organized
- Space given to the disabled to add their voice in the discussions
- Good meeting facilities
- Good communication and response rate to queries

Qualitative Highlights from participants

- Experience and knowledge sharing among member States was valuable
- "Great work. Get better always. Truly impressed as you have improved considerably."

Areas for Improvement

- Key messages- not formulated in a transparent manner + not discussed sufficiently+ the need to make them more actionable
- Some panel discussions had too many speakers + some with long speeches
- Not enough time was allocated to learning and exchanges of best practices
- Secretariat could have better integrated comments from the audience into the outcome documents

Qualitative Highlights from participants

- Time management- “The need to improve time management...Kindly improve on time. Being Africans does not mean we cannot keep time on engagements”
- Civil society was not given enough space for participation during the plenary sessions
- Logistics
  - Tickets done on last minute
  - Unnecessary long and inconvenient itineraries
  - Visa issues +
  - Airport pick-up and drop-off
- Shuttle/Transport
- Expensive hotels for the amount of DSA

Comments from Participants
Feedback from ECA staff

**What Worked Well**
- Overall, the Forum was well organized with good support from host country
- Side events were well organized
- The involvement of CSOs enriched debates and discussions
- Organized drafting team including Quality assurance
- Good meeting facilities, information to participants, protocol was good
- Task Force and good cooperation with the organizing team at ECA level

**Areas for Improvement**
- Inadequate support to member States from ECA during the VNR process—before the actual Forum
- Internally, ECA lacks coordination on SDG work which also affects forum preparation
- Drafting of the issue papers started late and no clarity on the role of UN agencies contributions to papers
- Limited contribution and involvement of private sector
- Drafting of the issue papers started late and no clarity on the role of UN agencies contributions to papers
- Task force and good cooperation with the organizing team at ECA level
- Logistics - Tickets done on last minute
- Unnecessary long and inconvenient itineraries
- Airport pick-up and drop-off
- Shuttle/Transport

Feedback from Staff
Recommendations

- Need to allocate more time to sessions that provide guidance on aligning and integrating 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 during the Forum.

- ECA should be training member States on SDG reporting and integration of the two agendas. The trainings should be organized every year by IDEP.

- Need for better time management especially of plenary sessions- “The closing session started with a 3-hour delay, with no explanation /reason provided to the participants.”

- Need to be more vigilant in following up on invitations sent to stakeholders.

- Start preparations for the Forum early enough preferably immediately after the previous one. This also entail ensuring that the timing of the Forum should not be too close to other major events such as COM.
Recommendations

- Internally for ECA, there is need for a clear strategy, approach and coordination for SDGs.

- Have broader engagements and consultations in house about the Forum even if only selected SDGs are under review and concern one or two Divisions- the Forum is more than just reviewing those specific SDGs.

- There should be clarity on the actual role of ECA-is it to draft progress on selected SDGs or facilitate the forum with other UN entities?

- The need to clarify the role of specialized agencies in developing background papers for the Forum.

- Consider sharing majority of documents in electronic format to ensure the forum is environment friendly.
THANK YOU!

More: www.uneca.org