



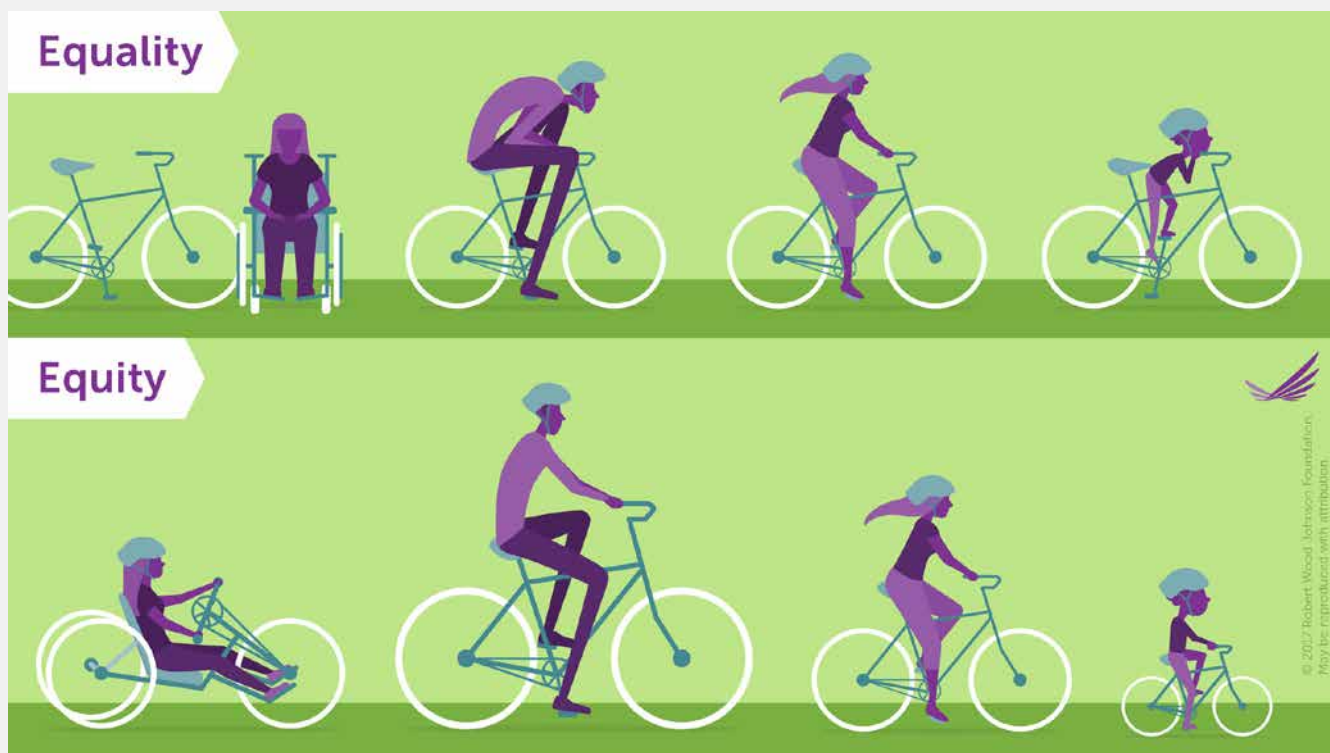
THE INTEGRATION BY UNDP OF THE PRINCIPLES OF LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND (LNOB)



The world is vastly unequal.

Extreme wealth and opportunity coexist alongside extreme poverty, marginalization and adversity. The poorest half of the world's population owns 2 percent of global wealth, while the richest 10 percent own 76 percent of all wealth. Discrimination according to ethnicity, gender, geographic location, forcible displacement, sexual orientation, disability and age exist to some degree in every country. Add to this climate change, conflict and a global pandemic, and the risk of leaving people behind grows.

The commitments to 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) and 'Reach the Furthest Behind First' (RFBF) are a central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the terminology is characteristic of the post-2015 development era. They have become increasingly central to UNDP's approach, and appear in a common chapter in UNDP's 2018-21 Strategic Plan. In the 2022-25 Strategic Plan, LNOB is one of three organizational 'directions of change' for UNDP, signifying its centrality to the organization's architecture. The central premises of LNOB are equality, equity and non-discrimination.



How well is UNDP doing?

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

UNDP's early adoption of LNOB positions it well to lead, especially on equality and equity. More work is needed to enhance understanding of heterogeneity and intersectionality, and to integrate non-discrimination. A coordinated approach with dedicated staff, knowledge-sharing mechanisms and adequate funding should help integrate LNOB. The organization practices caution, and has limited dialogue around power and social norms in some contexts.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The 2022-25 Strategic Plan foregrounds LNOB, but implementation varies, often due to unclear criteria, sparse guidance, funding limitations and projectized approaches. LNOB is often driven by motivated staff rather than designated experts, and tone setting on LNOB messaging is uneven across the organization. At the signature solution level, LNOB is still referred to in an aspirational tone, without proper attention to operationalizing an intersectional approach. The move to a portfolio approach should bring cohesion, provided LNOB can be mainstreamed.

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

UNDP is increasingly focusing on strategic and innovative pathways, including integrated development financing and upstream capacity building. Efforts in conflict prevention, disaster risk reduction, health and rule of law programming have seen success, and energy interventions, including those funded through the Global Environment Facility, are most impactful in reaching the furthest behind first. Hindrances are an ongoing siloed approach, and lessons can be learned from UNDP's efforts to mainstream gender equality.



Where can UNDP improve?

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE IEO

- 1 Systematically adopt an "equality+" promise, with a stronger commitment to non-discrimination initiatives, and aligned with corporate moonshots.
- 2 Turn commitments into action by devising a clear and implementable glide path to operationalize UNDP's commitment to LNOB, with adequate technical, financial and human resources and clearly defined institutional, programmatic and advocacy outcomes.
- 3 Devise and implement programming that reaches the furthest behind first, and provide training and resources to contextualize staff understanding of LNOB and RFBF in the context in which they work.
- 4 Strengthen engagement with civil society organizations and the private sector to motivate civic engagement with citizen's rights and support changes in social norms, especially at the local level. Include Civil Society Organizations more systematically in programming to build sustainable partnerships.
- 5 Match funding with ambitions, taking the LNOB marker into consideration when allocating resources. A budget line should be included in donor agreements, and an LNOB lens built into pooled funds and similar.
- 6 Invest in and improve the corporate results framework, systems and metrics for LNOB that highlight the perspectives of those furthest behind and consider intersectionality. Revise and improve the LNOB marker to reflect the multiplicity of identities and build on lessons learned from the gender marker.

What happens next?

6 KEY LESSONS FOR INTEGRATING LNOB AND RFBF

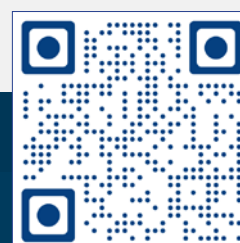
- 1 Comparator organizations with different mandates and scopes of work went through internal consultative processes to define how to best to integrate LNOB principles.
- 2 There is no 'one size fits all' for translating organizational commitments into effective programming for LNOB.
- 3 Simply elevating LNOB in strategic documents will not necessarily lead to the organizational focus and resources required.
- 4 A group-by-group approach alone is neither practical nor efficient, as it creates overlapping accountabilities, is open-ended (ever-more groups can be added) and neglects intersectionalities.
- 5 A change in mindset requires staff diversity, leaders and a common understanding of why LNOB and RFBF are central.
- 6 Obtaining and using data are critical for identifying those left behind and for relevance and effectiveness of interventions.

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