

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & THE 2030 AGENDA

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

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This publication adapts and updates the content of the e-learning training course “Strengthening stakeholder engagement for the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda”, developed by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of UN DESA and UNITAR from 2016-2019.

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ABOUT UN DESA

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.



ABOUT UNITAR

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) delivers innovative learning solutions to enhance global decision-making and support country-level action for shaping a better future. Over the years, UNITAR has acquired unique expertise in the provision of customized and creative learning solutions to institutions and individuals from both public and private sectors. With a strategy fully focused on achieving the SDGs, UNITAR supports Governments to implement the 2030 Agenda. Its 2030 team supports countries and organizations in developing integrated strategies and policies as well as builds the knowledge and skills of their staff to design and implement evidence-based decisions, maximizing positive impacts across all Goals and Pillars of the 2030 Agenda.



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FOREWORD

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core, reflect the aspirations of millions of people from all over the world, for the world they want. Civil society, major groups and other stakeholders, showing unprecedented commitment and dynamism, made concrete contributions to the intergovernmental process that resulted in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by Heads of State and Government in September 2015. Therefore, the 2030 agenda is an Agenda “of the people, by the people and for the people” and it is expected to be implemented with the participation of “all countries, all stakeholders and all people”.

The 17 SDGs cut across several interlinked challenges. Tackling climate change and achieving sustainable production and consumption patterns, for instance, are central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and can unlock vast potential for economic growth in all regions and for all people. Creating peaceful and just societies are cornerstones of the 2030 Agenda, with the interrelation between security, humanitarian action and development being the very basis for the achievement of all SDGs.

The success of our collective journey to 2030 will greatly depend on how effectively Governments, who are in the driving seat of implementation of this transformative and universal agenda, engage national parliaments, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, the scientific and academic community and the private sector in follow-up and implementation efforts and bridge the gap between people’s needs and national policy setting.

The multi-stakeholder nature of the 2030 Agenda demands an enabling environment for participation by all, as well as new ways of working in partnerships to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources at all levels.

This publication, which adapts the content of an e-learning course developed by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), is designed for government officials and stakeholders interested in enhancing participation and inclusion in the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda at all levels. It contains key information about participatory approaches in SDG implementation and provides concrete tools and methods in this regard.

Ensuring concerted action is critical as we embark upon the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs. We hope this publication can be a supporting tool in this regard.



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ABOUT THIS PRACTICAL GUIDE

This publication adapts, updates and expands the content of the e-learning course “**Strengthening stakeholder engagement for the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda**”, which was developed by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Implemented from 2016-2019 as a semi-facilitated course, it has to date mobilized almost 300 government representatives aiming at strengthening their capacity to engage stakeholders in the 2030 Agenda implementation, including the preparation of their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

Since November 2019, the course has been offered as a massive open online course (MOOC) with a view to reaching out to a higher number of governmental officials and other stakeholders such as UN staff, local governments, civil society and others who expressed an interest in taking this course¹.

This publication is organized as follows:

CHAPTER 1 - THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CALL FOR PARTICIPATION: Presents key aspects of the 2030 Agenda and its follow up and review framework as well as the commitments related to stakeholder participation at global, regional and national levels.

CHAPTER 2 - STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND THE 2030 AGENDA: Focus on concrete aspects, principles and constituencies related to meaningful stakeholder engagement and provisions for participation, including leaving no one behind.

CHAPTER 3 - APPROACHES AND TOOLS FOR STRENGTHENING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR THE SDGs: brings concrete examples, tools and methods that can be adapted by government representatives and other stakeholders in setting up and implementing stakeholder engagement plans.

All chapters are illustrated with concrete examples from countries from all regions of the world.

¹ More information on the MOOC can be found here: <https://www.unitar.org/event/full-catalog/mooc-strengthening-stakeholder-engagement-implementation-and-review-2030-agenda>



OUR
GENERATION
WILL
CHANGE
THE WORLD
ONWARD?

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1

THE
UNITED NATIONS
2030 AGENDA
FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT:
A CALL FOR PARTICIPATION



THE 2030 AGENDA

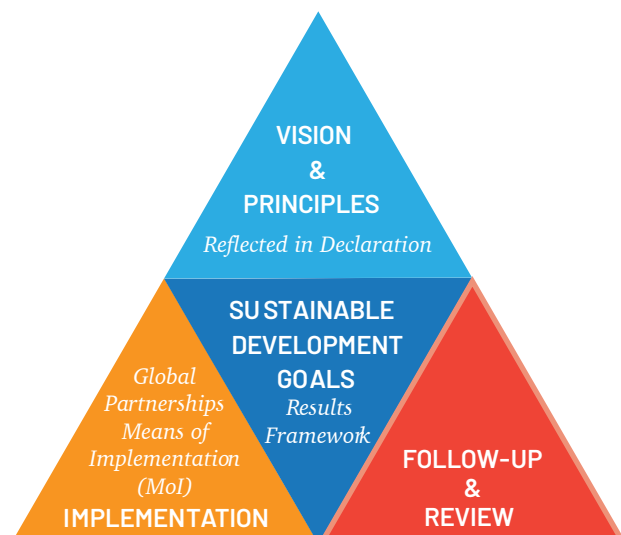


In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the “[2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)” to guide sustainable development efforts, focusing on people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, for the period from 2016 to 2030.

The 2030 Agenda sets out [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) and 169 targets which jointly constitute a comprehensive plan of action to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development in an integrated and balanced manner. The Agenda is universal, applicable to all countries, and considers “different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities”. The goals and targets are “integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development”. The 2030 Agenda is comprised of four main parts: 1) a Declaration, which presents its vision and principles; 2) the Sustainable Development Goals; 3) the Global Partnership and Means of Implementation and 4) the Follow-Up and review.

Importantly, the 2030 Agenda is based on the principle of interconnectedness in all its dimensions and at all levels: between goals, between countries and between global, regional and national levels. The Agenda is integrated and indivisible and calls for all countries and all people to make a collective effort for sustainable development. This underscores the idea of the 2030 Agenda as a global partnership for sustainable development.

PARTS OF THE 2030 AGENDA





1.2

FEATURES OF THE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW FRAMEWORK FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The 2030 Agenda provides for a dedicated follow-up and review framework which is expected to operate at national, regional and global levels, and to comprise review processes that draw on country-led evaluations and data. Robust monitoring and evaluation components are therefore critical sources of evidence, feeding into periodic reviews of progress at various levels.

The section of the 2030 Agenda dedicated to the follow-up and review outlines **key features and principles of the agreed review framework** and describes **the objectives and possible mechanisms at different levels**.

It calls for a **robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated review framework** operating at **national, regional and global levels**. It specifies that review processes will be **government-led, voluntary and consider national realities, capacities and levels of development**, while also respecting the national policy space and priorities. The importance of national ownership is key as the national-level review processes ultimately inform the reviews at regional and global levels.

The 2030 Agenda calls on the review processes at all levels to be “rigorous and based on evidence, **informed by country-led evaluations and data** which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts”. It recognizes that “they will require enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries, including the strengthening of national data systems and evaluation programs, particularly in African countries, LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs and middle-income countries”.

PRINCIPLES OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW FRAMEWORK

1.3

The follow-up and review framework is also based on a number of additional specific principles:

2030 AGENDA : PRINCIPLES OF FOLLOW UP AND REVIEW

VOLUNTARY AND COUNTRY-LED

Countries are encouraged to participate in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to be presented at the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF), which should be ‘state-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants’ and should ‘provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.’ The outcome from national level processes are the foundation for reviews at regional and global levels.

TRACK PROGRESS

Reviews track progress in the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, respecting their universal, integrated and interrelated nature and their three dimensions – environmental, social and economic -- of sustainable development.

LONG TERM

Aim to identify success factors, challenges and gaps. Support countries to make informed policy choices and support mobilization of the means of implementation and relevant partnerships. Identify solutions and best practices.

OPEN, INCLUSIVE, PARTICIPATORY

All stakeholders should be included in the processes that lead to reporting at the HLPF.

PEOPLE-CENTERED

Processes should respect human rights and gender sensitivity, and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.

BUILD ON WHAT ALREADY EXISTS

Processes should build upon existing platforms and respond to national circumstances, capacities, needs and priorities. They must avoid duplication and minimize the reporting burden.

RIGOROUS AND EVIDENCE BASED

Informed by country-led evaluations and high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data.

REQUIRE SUPPORT

Developing countries may require capacity-building support in a range of areas, including national data systems and evaluation.

SUPPORTED

Processes shall benefit from the active support of the UN system and other multilateral institutions including the Secretary-General’s voluntary common reporting [guidelines](#) which may be used by countries in the preparation of their VNRs.

The 2030 Agenda builds upon a set of core principles, including to “**leave no one behind**”. This commitment is based on a human rights-based approach and means that people living in poverty and those most marginalized should be given highest priority within the Agenda. Leaving no one behind means that people should not only be allowed to thrive through necessary policy interventions, but that they should also have a voice and be able to effectively engage and shape the overall course of development.

It is important to identify and understand the key barriers faced by these vulnerable groups including in their access to resources, services and opportunities to find solutions to address such challenges. New and innovative ways of making policies at all levels should be employed so that those groups that are often excluded from such processes can also have their voices and views heard.

Some of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups identified in the 2030 Agenda include: people living in extreme poverty, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, marginalized children and youth, older persons, migrants and refugees and others.

2030 AGENDA: THREE LEVELS OF FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW



The follow-up and review framework operate at **three levels**:

NATIONAL LEVEL

With each government conducting “*regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels*” (Para 79) providing the foundation for all other levels.

REGIONAL LEVEL

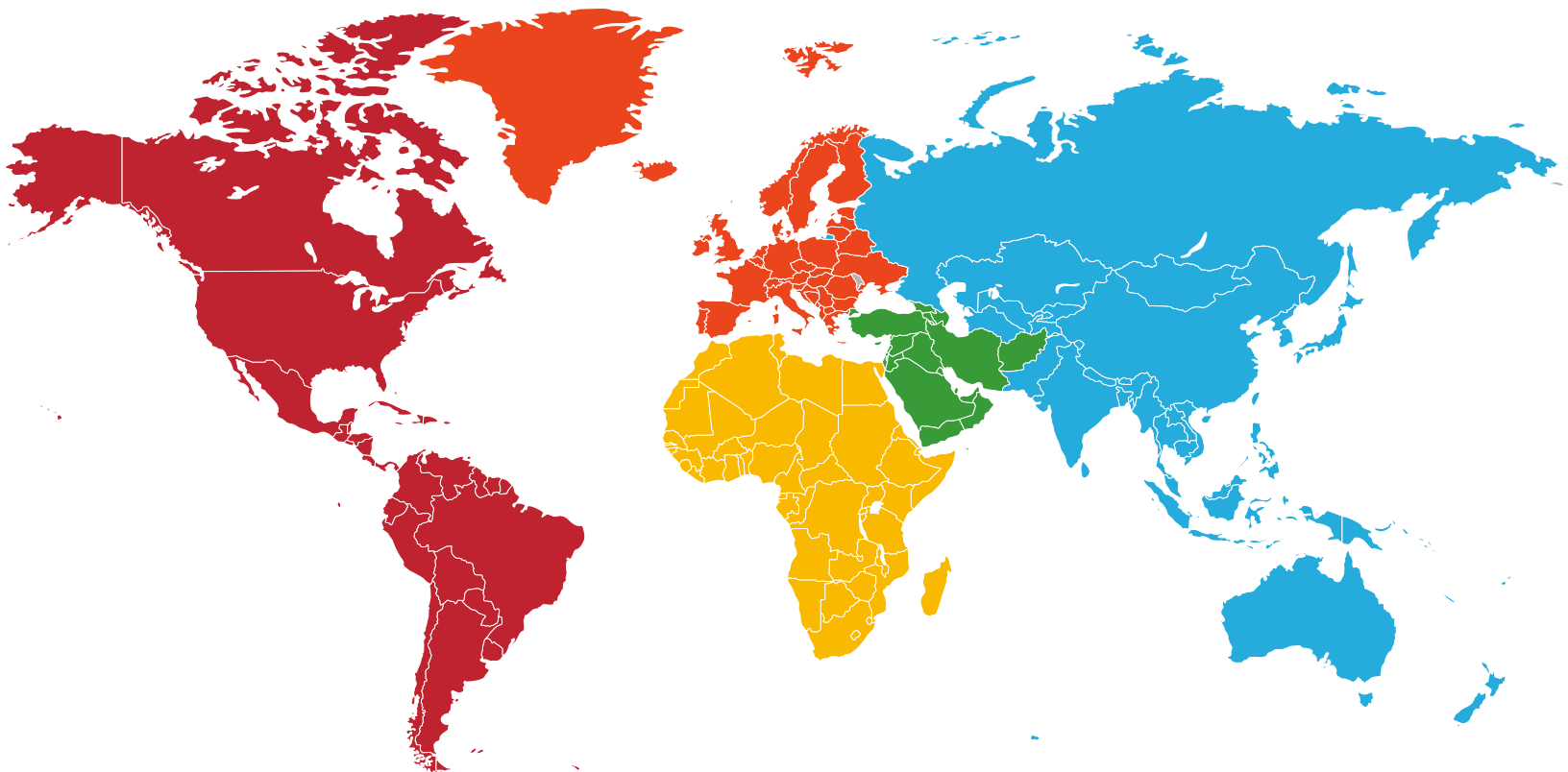
The 2030 Agenda recognizes the pivotal role of the regional dimension to promote integration and cooperation and translate global goals into national sustainable development realities. The UN regional commissions convene the Regional Forums for Sustainable Development for regional follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, feeding into the HLPF. The regional forums are multi-stakeholder in nature, including Member States, UN system, Major Groups and other Stakeholders.

GLOBAL LEVEL

With the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) serving as the central platform for follow-up and review, supported by the reviews of the ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental fora.

THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Held annually, the Regional Forums for Sustainable Development engage Member States, United Nations institutions and other organizations, as well as Major Groups and other Stakeholders, aiming to strengthen the National Government's implementation efforts, exchange experiences, promote cooperation and articulate regional inputs to the HLPF:



Asia Pacific: [Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development \(APFSD\)](#), convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Africa: [African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(ARFSD\)](#), convened by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Arab Region: [Arab Forum on Sustainable Development \(ArFSD\)](#), convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Latin America and the Caribbean: [Forum of Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development](#), convened by The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Europe: [Regional Forum on Sustainable Development \(RFSD\)](#), convened by the United Nations Commission for Europe (UNESCE).

THE GLOBAL LEVEL: THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (HLPF)

The HLPF meets annually under the auspices of ECOSOC and every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly.

The Forum facilitates the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned and provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations for follow-up. It promotes system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies. It ensures that the 2030 Agenda remains relevant and ambitious and focuses on the assessment of progress, achievements and challenges faced by developed and developing countries as well as new and emerging issues. Effective linkages are made with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including on least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries.

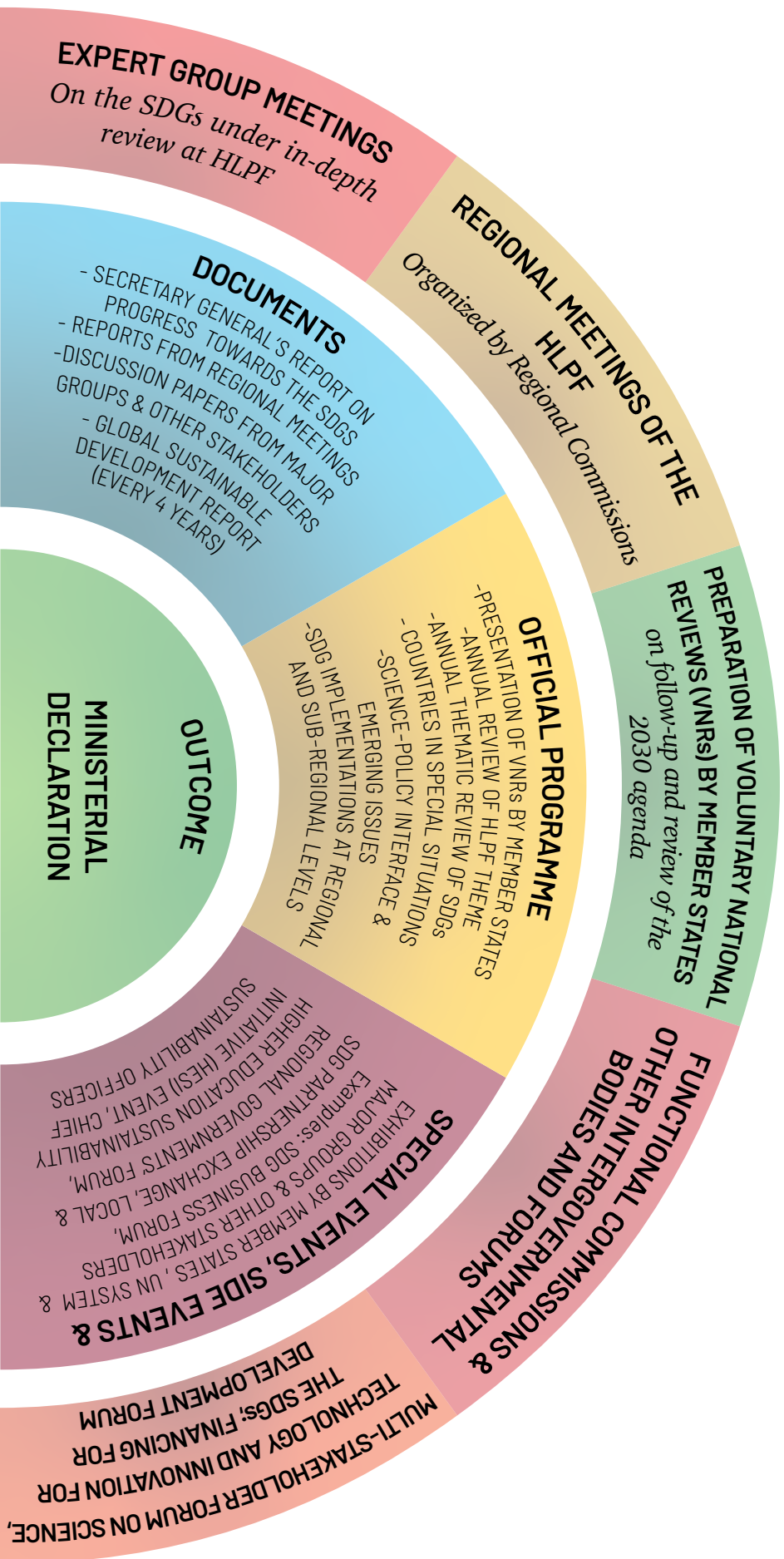
A central feature of the HLPF are the [voluntary national reviews \(VNRs\)](#) that it receives from Member States on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda

and the SDGs. Regularly undertaken by both developed and developing countries, the VNRs provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of [major groups and other relevant stakeholders](#). Additionally, the follow-up and review processes provide an opportunity for countries to assess progress related to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

The HLPF has also been undertaking annual thematic reviews of the SDGs including cross-cutting issues.

Follow up and review at the HLPF is informed by an annual progress report on the SDGs prepared by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The HLPF is also informed by the [Global Sustainable Development Report \(GSDR\)](#), which strengthens the science-policy interface and is issued every four years. The follow up and review at the HLPF is also informed by other relevant inputs, including the outcomes of the [Financing for Development Forum](#) and the [Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs](#).

MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE GLOBAL-LEVEL REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA AT HLPF:



PERIODIC REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION

1.5

Periodic reviews of progress on the SDGs should go beyond only mentioning institutional progress being made, such as the integration of the SDGs into national plans, strategies and policies, adjusting institutional arrangements and tailoring the SDGs to national circumstances. While it is important to mention these institutional frameworks, reviews should seek to include a strong focus on actual achievement of the SDGs. This involves the tracking of progress against targets and indicators (informed by monitoring frameworks), drawing on the outcomes of evaluations of policies and programmes and reflecting the results of the reviews in national reports. Areas of notable success in achievement, as well as key challenges, should also be included.

At the national level, many countries have mainstreamed the SDGs into national plans and strategies and created coordination mechanisms. A number of countries have designed national monitoring frameworks and in some cases evaluation strategies. Several governments are also defining the format, frequency and methodology for the preparation of national reviews and reports.

At the regional level, progress has already been achieved on developing the follow-up and review architecture, including through Regional Forums on Sustainable Development (RFSDs).

Finally, at the global level, the **HLPF** sessions held in July of each year host VNRs presentations, launch the annual SDG progress reports, and provide space for thematic reviews of progress, presentations of regional perspectives, inputs from Major Groups and other Stakeholders and inputs from other processes. VNR reports are made available **online**. The UN Secretary-General has prepared voluntary common reporting guidelines to assist VNR countries. A handbook for the preparation of VNRs as well as a synthesis report are prepared by UN DESA annually as additional supporting tools for countries undertaking voluntary reviews. All updated information is made available **here**.

It is expected that the VNRs build on the outcomes of subnational, national and regional reviews of progress, and should be perceived as cycles rather than discrete, isolated exercises. Presenting a VNR to the HLPF is an intrinsic part of a continuous cycle of review of progress on implementation of sustainable development and an opportunity for a frank assessment of national achievements and shortcomings. It results in effective planning and coordination for national implementation of the SDGs, and for achievements, challenges, gaps, success factors and recommendations to be appropriately identified. Countries should continuously work to identify and prepare mechanisms for regular and participatory reviews of progress and the production of national reports.

The preparation of national reports should serve as a base to strengthen partnerships for the SDGs, including between governments and ministries, institutions, civil society, academia and the private sector. They should also spur action: on integrated policy development, adjusting existing policies with the 2030 Agenda; on developing and strengthening multi-stakeholder institutions; to appropriately reform institutional mechanisms to support a more integrated approach to implementation; and collaborate and coordinate efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals with appropriate provincial and local mechanisms.

National VNRs and reports should be built on strong data systems and evidence, and should be developed in an inclusive, open and participatory manner.



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Inequality our first entry point we refer to a multi-dimensional poverty index which is an integrated database. This has been used



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2

STAKEHOLDER
PARTICIPATION
AND THE
2030 AGENDA

“The Agenda and Goals reflect the voices of millions of people from all over the world, and their aspirations for the future they want. I saw first-hand the unprecedented commitment, dynamism and concrete contributions that stakeholders from all sectors of society brought to the intergovernmental process leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. As a result, the Agenda is “of the people, by the people and for the people” and is expected to be implemented with the participation of “all countries, all stakeholders and all people”, Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations”.

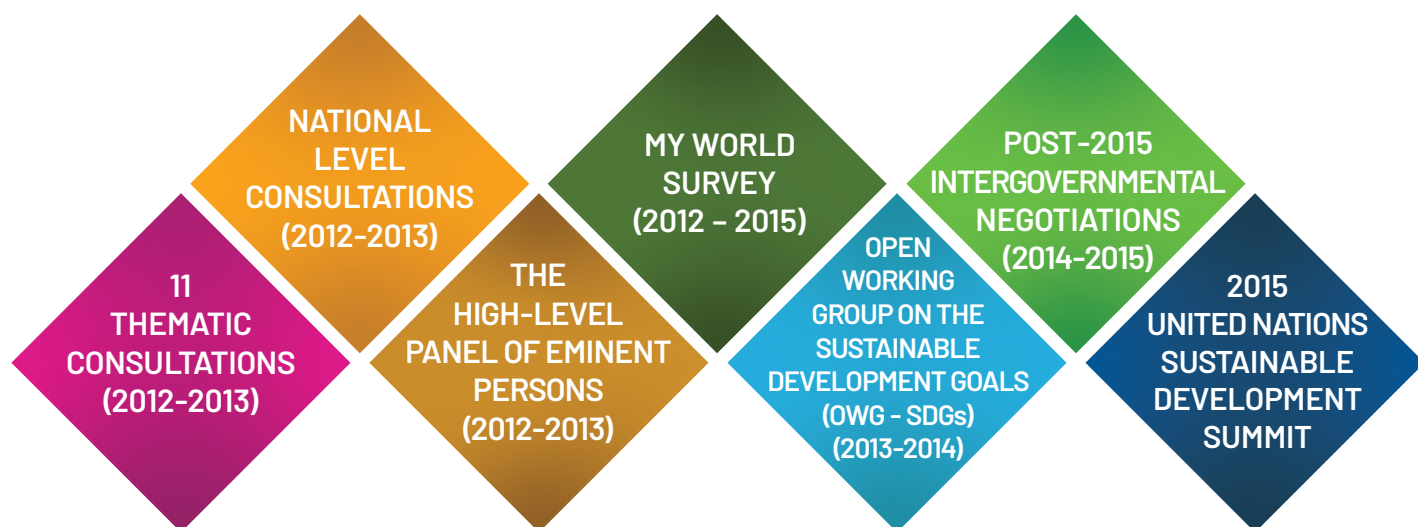
AMINA MOHAMMED

DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, 2018²

² <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/participation-consultation-and-engagement-critical-elements-effective-implementation-2030-agenda>

PARTICIPATORY PROCESS TO DEFINE THE 2030 AGENDA

The process to decide the 2030 Agenda was characterized by an unprecedented participation of civil society and other stakeholders. This process included:



Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)³ were involved in every step of the process, organizing national deliberations in advance of national consultations, responding officially to thematic consultations, promoting the *My World Survey* with partners, organizing deep and meaningful discussions with communities experiencing poverty and inequality, planning side events at the margins of the OWG SDGs, the intergovernmental negotiations and the Special Events coinciding with annual General

Assemblies, and participating directly in the OWG meetings and intergovernmental negotiations.

MGoS have been a crucial part of the process to define the 2030 Agenda. It is important to ensure that they continue to meaningfully participate in the implementation and review process of the Agenda, respecting each one of the principles on which the review process is founded: **openness, inclusion and participation.**

³ It is important to note that “Major Groups and other stakeholders” is the terminology used to refer to the participation of diverse sectors at intergovernmental deliberations at the global level. At regional and national level, the terminology may differ when referring to broad stakeholder participation. More details on major groups and other stakeholders can be found on chapter 2.

2.2

PARTICIPATION AND THE 2030 AGENDA

“We the Peoples” are the celebrated opening words of the UN Charter. It is “We the Peoples” who are embarking today on the road to 2030. Our journey will involve Governments as well as Parliaments, the UN system and other international institutions, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community – and all people. Millions have already engaged with, and will own, this Agenda. It is an Agenda of the people, by the people, and for the people – and this, we believe, will ensure its success”.

PARAGRAPH 52 OF THE 2030 AGENDA

The importance of participation is emphasized throughout the 2030 Agenda. The Preamble highlights *“a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.”*

The Declaration recalls how the Sustainable Development Goals are *“the result of over two years of intensive public consultation and engagement with civil society and other stakeholders around the world, which paid particular attention to the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable.”*

The SDGs include specific targets on participation, notably:

5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

The 2030 Agenda commits States to “a robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework” (para. 72). It clarifies that review processes will be based on certain principles, including being “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people” (para. 74d), having a “particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind” (para. 74e). Governments are encouraged to “draw on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders” (para. 79).





2.3

ORIGINS OF THE 2030 AGENDA'S PRINCIPLE OF PARTICIPATION

The principle of participation rests on a number of international human rights standards, including the right to participate in public affairs and the rights to freedom of expression, information and association. These standards have been reflected in numerous international agreements, on which the 2030 Agenda draws, including, but not limited to:

AGENDA 21

Sets out the rationale behind the need for the nine Major Groups to participate in decision-making processes.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR), ART.21:

Sets out the basic human rights to participate in public life.

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR):

Aims to ensure the protection of economic, social and cultural rights including: the right to self-determination of all peoples; the right to non-discrimination; the right to work; the right to form and join trade unions; the right to social security; protection and assistance to the family; the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to health; the right to education; and the right to cultural freedoms.

THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW):

Provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life -- including the right to vote and to stand for election -- as well as education, health and employment.

INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR), ART.25:

Defines obligations of states regarding the human rights to participate in public life.

DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT:

Establishes development as a right and puts people at the centre of the development process.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT OUTCOME

Draws a range of global challenges related to development, terrorism, peacebuilding, the responsibility to protect from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, human rights, the environment, international health, and humanitarian assistance, among others.

MILLENNIUM DECLARATION:

Cites freedom, equality (of individuals and nations), solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility as six values fundamental to international relations for the twenty-first century.

WHAT DO SUCH AGREEMENTS MEAN FOR STATE PARTIES?

If a country is a '**State Party**' to a particular treaty, it means that it has ratified or acceded to that particular treaty and is therefore legally bound by the provisions in the instrument.

If your country is a '**Signatory**' of a treaty, it means that it has provided a preliminary endorsement of the instrument. Signing does not create a binding legal obligation but does demonstrate the State's intent to examine the treaty domestically and consider ratifying it.

Click [here](#) to check the status of the different international human rights Treaties.



2.4

MEANINGFUL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PROVISIONS FOR PARTICIPATIONS

“Participatory governance requires a political framework and an organisational and procedural structure in order to become operative. Stakeholder engagement in long-term sustainable development works best if it is organised as a continuous process rather than being conducted on an ad-hoc basis or through unrelated one-off engagement exercises at different points of the policy cycle. A structured process enables stakeholders as well as governments to plan ahead, to assemble evidence, reports and other material to make well-researched contributions at the appropriate time in the policy cycle. Standing institutional arrangements allow the capacities of civil society representatives to be strengthened over time and the trusting relationships of support and cooperation to be built up”.

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC SOCIAL COMMITTEE, 2015

Participation has been associated with a range of positive effects in development, humanitarian aid and poverty reduction programmes, notably **better assessment of needs and capacities, and improvements in implementation and sustainability**. Participatory processes have shown positive outcomes including in tackling poverty and social exclusion; improving services and service delivery; ensuring a better use of resources geared towards meeting the communities’ needs; fostering greater state responsiveness to citizens’ needs; creating spaces for citizen engagement and empowering local voices, amongst others.

Ultimately, the fulfilment of the right to participation can benefit society as a whole, building trust and solidarity, creating better social cohesion, contributing to more inclusive and pluralistic societies, and bringing new issues and voices into the public arena. That being said, participation alone is not a ‘silver bullet’ for development. It must be combined with multiple other inputs (improvements in education, public services, accountability mechanisms) if it is to have a truly long term and lasting effect on development outcomes.

Rationale for why governments should make provisions for stakeholders to participate in the implementation and review process of the 2030 Agenda at all levels:

Stakeholders participated meaningfully in negotiations of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels. They have built up a wealth of crucial experience and expertise are being useful in the implementation and review process.

Stakeholders, as autonomous and independent actors, can create the space for representing the ideas and the interests of ordinary citizens.

Stakeholders can give voice to excluded groups, helping ensure that their challenges and experiences are taken into account.

Stakeholders can promote accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

Stakeholders are involved directly in service delivery, often targeting those most affected by poverty and inequality. They can bring this experience and sectoral knowledge into the planning, implementation and review processes.

Stakeholders can reach grassroots partners – which is often difficult for national governments. If MGoS are meaningfully participating in the planning, implementation and review processes, they will naturally integrate it into their work and act as multipliers, thus reaching a higher percentage of the population. Participation will thus create the necessary ownership that will allow for effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Stakeholders can use the contents of the 2030 Agenda as an independent benchmark to assess the status of the implementation of the SDGs and as a tool for advocacy and activism in the area.

Stakeholders can make recommendations on laws, programs and policies and assess their compliance with the 2030 Agenda, including monitoring the performance of the governments on implementation of the goals.

Representative and transformative participation can lead to many positive developmental outcomes, outlined in the next section.

To be meaningful, **engagement processes for the 2030 Agenda** should be set up early on and could reflect the following best practices:

LONG-TERM, REGULAR AND CONTINUOUS:

Ideally this means being involved in early discussions about what the implementation and review processes will look like, rather than once decisions have already been taken or as an ad hoc exercise. This will build trust among stakeholders, strengthen ownership, and improve legitimacy of decisions.

OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND CLEAR about the intended level of engagement at each step: Participating stakeholders should be aware of the objectives and expected outcomes of the process, as well as of how their contribution will be used. All relevant information should be shared in a transparent manner prior to, during and after each step of the process. This information should be accessible in the relevant languages for the country, and to those affected by disabilities.

SYSTEMATIC, WELL-PLANNED AND STRUCTURED, where available/possible, supported by standing institutional arrangements: The process should be designed drawing on a well-defined methodology; its different steps should be well planned and include specific objectives as well as clear focus areas in which consensus is sought/possible to reach. Participating stakeholders should be aware of specific procedures, and have a good understanding of the objectives, the focus of discussions, and subject of negotiations at each stage.

HIGH QUALITY AND AIMING FOR HIGHER LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT whenever possible: While different levels of engagement can be used for different purposes the overall, long-term stakeholder engagement strategies for the SDGs and related processes should aim for higher levels of engagement such as involvement and contribution to strengthen the quality and relevance of resulting decisions, ownership, and accountability.

WELL ORGANIZED AND WITH EQUITABLE ACCESS TO NEEDED RESOURCES: Those stakeholders who have limited resources should be able to participate in meetings with related travel and accommodation costs covered and have access to funding for conducting related activities. Other barriers to participation such as administrative procedures or language may need to be addressed.

EMPOWERING STAKEHOLDERS, ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE GROUPS, FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION:

All concerned stakeholders should be well informed about how various decisions may affect them. This may include capacity-building activities. Where necessary, opportunities need to be provided to those stakeholders who need to strengthen their knowledge or competences for effective participation.

ENCOURAGING CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPLEMENTATION AND STAKEHOLDER ACCOUNTABILITY:

Beyond fostering inputs and participation in policy design and reviews, stakeholder engagement processes can help encourage relevant stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of SDG programmes and projects and to report on their contributions.

MINDFUL OF THE NEED TO FOLLOW UP

on lessons learned, undertake course corrections and keep stakeholders informed: A key part of a good participatory process is the follow up. There should be clarity about how and when follow up will occur, and who is responsible for doing so. Relevant information and decisions should be shared with stakeholders participating in implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda, including how such information or decisions will be used in relevant reports or policies. Feedback should be shared consistently, constructively and broadly.

INCLUSIVE OF AND STRENGTHENING THE VOICE OF THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS:

It is important to engage directly with NGOs and groups that represent underserved constituencies. It will be useful to undertake a stakeholder mapping to ensure no one is left behind, and to allocate resources to ensure participation of marginalized groups.

HAVING A CLEAR LINK TO THE 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESSES:

It should be clear exactly how stakeholder consultations and other processes will feed into national reviews of progress on the SDGs. Ideally, for government-led processes, comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategies may need to be designed to provide an overall framework and ensure engagement has been addressed at different levels, relevant review mechanisms have been involved and no stakeholder group has been left behind.










2.5

PARTICIPATION OF MARGINALISED PEOPLE

Participation can give marginalised people and groups power over decisions that affect their lives, transforming power structures in society. This is why the monitoring and review process for the 2030 Agenda highlights the importance of participation of marginalised people and their representatives – reflecting the important principle of “leaving no one behind”.

For example, it is important to engage people living in extreme poverty who have first-hand knowledge of the effects of poverty on the ground, as well as the motors that drive them and key barriers. They possess unique knowledge sets and should be recognized as active members of society who offer valuable insights gained from life experience. Testimonies from people living in poverty confirm that meaningful and effective participation can have important effects on them, including:

-  Building self-respect and gaining the respect of others
-  Creating a sense of belonging; becoming part of a network where they can recount their experience and feel they are listened to and supported by others
-  Regaining self-confidence, self-esteem and feelings of empowerment to address issues facing their communities
-  Discovering inner potential and capacity, and a sense of worth
-  Giving strength and a feeling of solidarity - knowing that they are not alone in their struggle with the same issues
-  Building confidence, self-esteem and feelings of empowerment to challenge issues facing the community
-  Feeling ‘heard’ and ‘listened to’ by those in power

SENEGAL

In Senegal, the Civil Society Working Group, through its Council of Non-Governmental Organizations for Development Support (CONGAD) conducted consultations and collaborative workshops in several regions and produced a contribution to the national VNR report focusing on the principle of “leaving no one behind” in addition to an alternative report. The platform of civil society organizations to monitor the SDGs (POSCO 2030) also contributed to the VNR process and to the national report presented at the HLPF. ([Senegal Voluntary National Review 2018](#))

TIMOR LESTE

In Timor Leste, in addition to civil society being represented on the SDG Working Group, a CSO advisory group was established. The purpose of the group was to advise the VNR secretariat on how to effectively engage excluded groups in the consultation process. The advisory group supported the design of the consultations and assisted in the facilitation of the consultation meetings in Dili and Bacau. The CSO advisory group advised on how to meaningfully engage with young women and men, children, persons with disabilities, excluded rural populations and the Martial Arts Regulatory Regulatory Commission in the consultation process ([Timor Leste Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

LESOTHO

In Lesotho, the National VNR Validation Conference discussions were boosted by live-stream coverage through social media platforms supported by Vodacom Lesotho outreaching to more than 2,000 people across the country. The Conference was preceded by districts consultations with the support of UN Lesotho Youth Advisory Panel (UNYAP) engaging with citizens, including youth, adults, elderly, PWD and other marginalized groups on VNR and Lesotho’s progress towards the implementation of SDGs ([Lesotho Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

2.6

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATION

Obstacles to equal political and public participation exist in many contexts. These barriers may include direct and indirect discrimination on grounds such as race, descent, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic or social origins, property, birth, disability, nationality or other statuses.

Other practical challenges to participation include:

The costs of participating in meetings.

The linguistic needs of different communities which often necessitate translation or interpretation.

Agreeing who should participate – including how to ensure that the voices of the most marginalized are also heard.

Those most excluded and discriminated against may lack the training, expertise and confidence to effectively participate in shaping and monitoring the policies that affect them. To ensure strong discussions and innovative ideas, it may be necessary to bring in experienced facilitators.

The assumption (tacit or explicit) that people experiencing poverty and marginalisation are powerless, passive victims of these policies rather than political agents capable of participating in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives.

The difficulty of reaching the most marginalized groups – governments' representatives should thus make concerted efforts to do so.

Sustaining long term and meaningful participation.

In some instances, a lack of possession of recognized identification documents may prevent people experiencing poverty from participating in the civic and political life of their country.

People living in poverty may have other more pressing priorities, such as earning enough money to feed their family.

MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

2.7



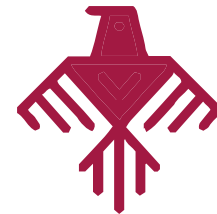
Since the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, also known as the “Earth Summit”, it was recognized that achieving sustainable development would require the active participation of all sectors of society and all types of people. [Agenda 21](#), adopted at the Earth Summit, drew upon this sentiment and formalized nine sectors of society as the main channels through which broad participation would be facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These sectors are officially referred to as “Major Groups” and include:



WOMEN



CHILDREN
& YOUTH



INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES



NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATIONS



LOCAL
AUTHORITIES



WORKERS &
TRADE UNIONS



BUSINESS &
INDUSTRY



SCIENTIFIC &
TECHNOLOGICAL
COMMUNITY



FARMERS

Two decades after the Earth Summit, the importance of effectively engaging these nine sectors of society was reaffirmed by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also known as **the Rio+20 Conference**. Its outcome document “**The Future We Want**” highlights the role that Major Groups can play in pursuing sustainable societies for future generations.

Through “The Future We Want” and the establishment of the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), in 2013 (RES/67/290), other relevant stakeholders are also invited to participate in UN processes related to sustainable development. Other relevant stakeholders include:



**LOCAL
COMMUNITIES**



**EDUCATIONAL &
ACADEMIC ENTITIES**



FAITH GROUPS



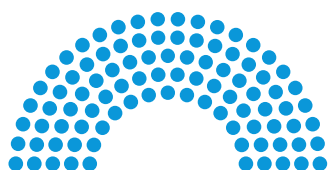
**FOUNDATIONS &
PRIVATE PHILANTHROPIC
ORGANISATIONS**



**MIGRANTS &
THEIR FAMILIES**



OLDER PERSONS



**PARLIAMENTARY
NETWORKS &
ASSOCIATIONS**



**PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**



VOLUNTEER GROUPS

To learn more about the history of MGoS, please click [here](#).

The 2030 Agenda refers to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/290, which clarifies the need to include “*other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development*”, who may not fit easily into any of the above categories. This recognizes the need to adjust and work with the most relevant actors for specific processes, even if they do not fit neatly within existing global frameworks.

MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' ROLE IN THE HLPF

2.8

At the global level, Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) have been granted comprehensive participatory opportunities in the HLPF through the [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/67/290](#). Paragraph 15 of the Resolution states that, while retaining the intergovernmental character of the HLPF, Major Group representatives and other relevant Stakeholders shall be allowed to:

- Attend all official meetings of the forum
- Submit documents and present written and oral contributions
- Have access to all official information and documents
- Make recommendations
- Intervene in official meetings
- Organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat

Additionally, the Resolution encourages Major Groups and other Stakeholders to autonomously establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms for participation in the HLPF and for actions derived from that participation at the global, regional and national levels, in a way that ensures effective, broad and balanced participation by region and by type of organization.

It should be noted, however, that United Nations Member States ultimately decide upon the modalities of participation of MGoS. Thus, the engagement and participation of MGoS in intergovernmental processes related to sustainable development varies depending on the particular sustainable development topic under discussion.

In order to establish and maintain effective coordination between MGoS and the intergovernmental process, each Major Group organizes autonomously according to its membership profile and areas of focus. To facilitate communication and streamline its outreach, UN DESA consults with key actors from MGoS as well as relevant UN system entities to solicit recommendations of Organizing Partners and Focal Points who volunteer their time and the resources of their organizations to collaborate with the intergovernmental process on behalf of their constituencies.

These Organizing Partners and Focal Points are unpaid and typically represent long-standing and credible networks from each sector, they are committed to maintaining transparent and inclusive working methods and possess the requisite institutional and legal personality to engage with the UN at a high level. They facilitate outreach and assist the United Nations Secretariat in generating and guiding the engagement of MGoS with specific political processes. The working methods of these arrangements are continuously under review to reflect the most current thinking and configuration of actors, and often serve as an example for other multi-stakeholder processes convened under the UN.

MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM

To facilitate participation in the High-Level Political Forum, Major Groups and other Stakeholders developed the MGoS HLPF Coordination Mechanism. The coordination mechanism is open to all representatives of the Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders active in sustainable development. UN DESA uses the coordination mechanism as the main channel through which information about the HLPF is shared with MGoS.

The objectives of the coordination mechanism are as follows:

- Ensure broad, open, transparent and inclusive participation in the HLPF.
- Ensure that the rights of access and inclusive participation of MGoS in the HLPF are protected and upheld as mandated by 67/290 and potentially expanded.
- Facilitate the coordination among, and promote the participation of, all stakeholders that are involved in the HLPF process and want to contribute to it, including organizations and groups that are not part of the MGoS HLPF Coordination Mechanism, to ensure the broadest participation possible.
- Convene an annual forum for MGoS at which an annual review of engagement activities is presented, including recommendations for future action.

The Terms of Reference of the HLPF MGoS Coordination Mechanism can be found [here](#). To learn more about Major Groups Governance [here](#).

ECOSOC ACCREDITATION

The first venue by which non-governmental organizations took a role in formal UN deliberations is through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 1945, 41 NGOs were granted consultative status by the council; by 1992 more than 700 NGOs had attained consultative status and the number has been steadily increasing ever since with more than 5,000 accredited organizations today⁴.

Consultative status provides NGOs with access to not only ECOSOC, but also to its many subsidiary bodies, to the various human rights mechanisms of the United Nations, ad-hoc processes, as well as special events organized by the President of the General Assembly.

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations meets twice a year to decide which NGOs applying for consultative status it will recommend to ECOSOC in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 1996/31.

For more information on ECOSOC accreditation please click [here](#).

⁴ Source: <http://csonet.org/> - Page consulted in July 2019.



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3

**APPROACHES AND
TOOLS FOR
STRENGTHENING
STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT FOR
THE SDGS**



3.1

THEORY OF PARTICIPATION

How can stakeholders' contributions be channeled to inform and support implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda? Should relevant engagement strategies be designed as a discrete exercise aimed essentially at preparing a presentation for the HLPF and limited to consultations? Or should they be linked to long-term national review mechanisms?

The theory of participation provides a useful foundation on what truly meaningful participation implies, as well as prerequisites for such participation.

The right to participation can be interpreted as encompassing the right to have access to information, to be consulted, or to directly participate in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of laws and policies. Human rights monitoring bodies have emphasized that “*participation should be understood broadly and requires concrete political, legal and institutional actions*” (A/HRC/23/36).

However, participation could mean different things to different people. The way participation is set up from the beginning can either build ownership and improve decision making, or, if not

effectively designed, promote distrust and division. It is therefore important to use the most effective tools and methods at the appropriate time for your specific audience.

This is especially true in the context of the 2030 Agenda which seeks to leave no one behind and views participation as one of its key principles. It calls, for example, on a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, to be “*based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people*”.

A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING AND ASSESSING QUALITY ENGAGEMENT



PURPOSEFUL

ENGAGEMENT IS PURPOSEFUL WHEN WE:

- Know why we are engaging – clearly define what we want to get out of the engagement
- Develop an engagement plan and allocate resources and responsibilities
- Build engagement into every phase – planning, delivery and follow-up and review
- Evaluate to improve engagement



INCLUSIVE

ENGAGEMENT IS INCLUSIVE WHEN WE:

- Map and analyse stakeholders
- Recognize stakeholders' views – even if we don't agree with them
- Have special mechanisms for those normally “left behind”
- Put in place ways to remove/reduce barriers that make participation difficult– language, geographic location or distance, abilities, age, income, connectivity, culture bias, discrimination
- Manage power imbalances and find ways to ensure that people feel safe to contribute (e.g. anonymity)
- Recognize and utilize traditional channels of engaging



TRANSFORMATIVE

ENGAGEMENT IS TRANSFORMATIVE WHEN WE:

- Choose methods that build understanding and collaboration across different groups in society, sharing information from diverse perspectives
- Encourage and recognize contribution - motivate stakeholder action through a “*whole of society*” approach
- Choose methods that integrate social, economic and environmental perspectives
- Choose methods that encourage dialogue and shared action across the SDG framework
- Are willing to take a participatory approaches to addressing important societal challenges



PROACTIVE

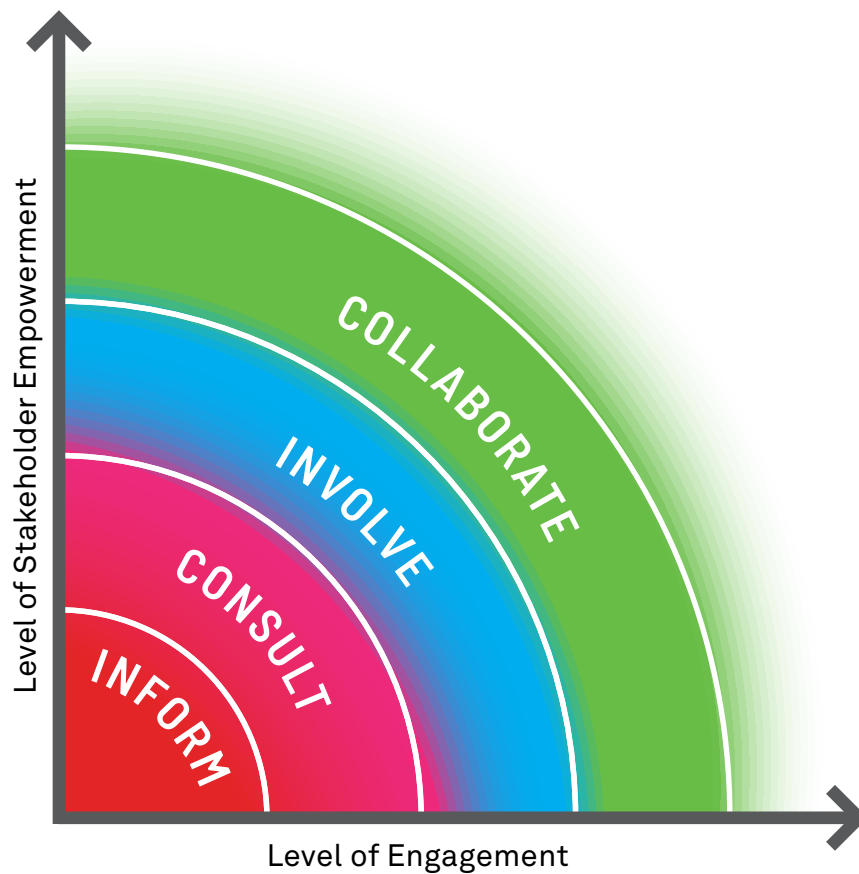
ENGAGEMENT IS PROACTIVE WHEN WE:

- Build engagement planning into implementation
- Communicate the scope of engagement to stakeholders
- Provide the information they need in an accessible and timely manner
- Consult stakeholders on the way they would like to participate
- Respond to questions and concerns promptly

3.2

LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Broadly speaking, four levels of stakeholder engagement proposed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) can be a useful framework for categorizing a range of approaches for engaging stakeholder groups in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. These four levels include 1) **inform**, 2) **consult**, 3) **involve**, and 4) **collaborate**. A fifth level of engagement “**empower**” is also proposed by IAP2 and would demand further adaptation. The diagram below provides a brief description of each level.



Source: UNITAR

A more detailed description is provided in the enclosed Table 1, adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum.

TABLE 1-4. FOUR LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT - WHEN TO USE⁶

INFORM		
LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	MAY BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:	MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:
This is a one-way communication, where governments inform stakeholders of their plans for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. There are no expectations of a two-way dialogue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process is beginning, and there is deeper participation to come. - Stakeholders have a low level of understanding of the 2030 Agenda (for example an introductory session to communicate the details of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholders want more active involvement - Decisions have meaningful impact on stakeholders - Stakeholders are already well informed about the 2030 Agenda.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The Republic of Korea has also encouraged raising public awareness and creating multi-stakeholder ownership of the SDGs through the inclusion of content addressing Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the SDGs in textbooks for primary and secondary school students. The Korea Foundation for Advancement of Science and Creativity, in association with the Ministry of Education, has supported 40 teams of Teachers' Research Associations of Education for Sustainable Development, in which teachers and students voluntarily form groups to study sustainable development. The government is also carrying out national campaigns for the SDGs and has expanded funds for sending more youth to the project sites of international development cooperation. The Government of the Republic of Korea is also making additional efforts to strengthen its communications with multiple stakeholders. ([2016 Korea National Voluntary Review](#))

⁶ Source: Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum www.iap2.org (2007)

BELGIUM

In Belgium, close collaboration with civil society exists as part of a comprehensive strategy, which includes raising public awareness of the SDGs. This includes the SDG Voices campaign, through which eight organizations (inter alia civil society organizations, private sector, local authorities) are promoting the SDGs as role models through various activities, or the SDG Charter for International Development, demonstrating the commitment of the Belgian private sector, civil society and public sector to deepen knowledge of and partnership on the sustainable development agenda within their international activities. ([Pathways to Sustainable Development, Belgian National Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda \(2017\)](#))

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

In the United Arab Emirates, the UAE SDG Pioneers connects organizations that have taken early action to advance the SDGs and in doing so, have set an example for the business community in pursuing sustainable practices. Organizations can apply to be UAE SDG Pioneers under one of the five themes of the 2030 Agenda: people, peace, prosperity, planet and partnerships. ([UAE and the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development Excellence in Implementation 2017](#)).

ESWATINI

In Eswatini, the Sustainable Development Goals were interpreted into the local language, targets and indicators were reviewed and localised by the technical team in 2017. Sensitization on the SDGs was a very lengthy process conducted at national, regional and constituency levels. To ensure inclusiveness, a cross-section of stakeholders was strategically invited. These included chiefs/traditional leaders, youth, women, men, various cultural regiments, the business community, academia, people living with disabilities, religious groups, regional development teams, Non-Governmental Organisations, local governments, government ministries, and bilateral and multilateral organisations ([Eswatini Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

CONSULT

LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	MAY BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:	MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:
<p>This is where governments present plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and receive feedback from stakeholders. The aim is to benefit from the experience and knowledge of stakeholders. Decision making authority remains entirely with the government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear plans exist, and there are a limited range of options for change. - Governments want to improve their existing plans and are able to use the feedback to do so. - Stakeholders can understand and relate to the plans and options. - Governments are committed to providing feedback to stakeholders on how their input influenced the outcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans have been finalized, and feedback cannot be incorporated. - Clear plans do not already exist, and you are seeking a wide range of opinions. - Stakeholders need to be mobilized and empowered for long-term engagement.

NORWAY

Norway regards participatory, inclusive and representative decision-making as fundamental for a well-functioning society. Participation is vital for ensuring the national ownership necessary for effective and transparent follow-up of the SDGs. The indigenous peoples' assembly, the Sámediggi (Sami Parliament), has been involved in dialogues with line ministries and formal consultation mechanisms. Dialogue and partnerships with stakeholders including civil society, the business sector and academia is an enduring feature of the Norwegian political and democratic system in all relevant policy areas. The preparation of the HLPF review in 2016 contributed to greater coherence and ownership of the follow-up process within the Government. Political representatives and officials involved in preparing the review organised and participated in informal consultations with stakeholders from the business sector, civil society and the Sámediggi. The Government will continue to benefit from consultations with stakeholders in the SDG follow-up process. ([Norway Voluntary National Review 2016](#))

SIERRA LEONE

Substantial inputs to the SDGs process in Sierra Leone have been made by representatives of the Central Government, Trade Unions, the Private Sector, CSOs, NGOs, universities, and the philanthropies at the national level. Intense debates involving panel and group discussions were organized. Discussions began in October 2015 with an engagement with a cross-section of CSOs and NGOs summoned by the then Minister of Finance and Economic Development. This initial engagement emphasized the continued challenges the world was facing, as the MDGs were coming to an end, and the opportunities the SDGs presented to address these challenges, especially those affecting fragile states like Sierra Leone. It underscored the central role and responsibilities of CSOs in the implementation of the SDGs in Sierra Leone and the rest of the world. Results of the consultation include a summary of critical areas that CSOs pointed out during the meeting requiring special attention in the implementation of the new SDGs and a summary of agreed actions going forward. These discussions were also centered on the key topics and themes that would guide efforts to achieve the targets set in the 2030 Agenda, such as the principle of leaving no one behind; ensuring balance between the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development; and delivering the SDGs to their full potential. ([Advanced draft report on adaptation of the goals in Sierra Leone \(VNR, 2016\)](#))

KENYA

Kenya has established a national stakeholder platform to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda consisting of two levels: a level that is dedicated to overall strategic guidance on the 2030 Agenda, coupled with a second one for technical or thematic coordination, in which stakeholders are represented. The Ministry of Devolution and Planning is mandated to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. The SDGs Coordinating Department has been established within the Ministry, supported by an Inter-Agency Technical Committee (IATC), comprised of officers from key government ministries, departments, agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector. For ownership and ease of follow-up, entry points for the private sector, CSOs, sub-national governments, youth and persons with disabilities are typically their umbrella bodies, such as the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), SDGs Kenya Forum, the Council of Governors (CoG), National Youth Council, and the Association of Persons Living with Disabilities. ([2017 VNR Synthesis report](#)).

SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka, the elaboration of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) was done through a multi-stakeholder engagement process, including Government, private sector, academia, development partners and CSOs including Volunteer Involving Organizations (VIOs). A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was developed in line with the Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). The SEP included several multi-stakeholder consultative workshops to generate inputs for the preparation of the VNR. An online platform has been developed to engage all stakeholders in the SDG implementation. ([Sri Lanka Voluntary National Review 2018](#))

URUGUAY

In Uruguay, the government joined forces together with “Empresas por el Desarrollo Sostenible”, a private sector organization, to seek inputs from 100 companies on their actions towards achieving the 6 SDGs under in-depth review at the 2018 HLPF. Some of the results of the survey were included in the VNR report. ([Uruguay Voluntary National Review 2018](#))

GHANA

In Ghana, to ensure a coordinated approach to private sector engagement on the SDGs, the President of Ghana hosted a Breakfast Meeting with selected Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in June 2018. The meeting aimed to: provide a forum for reflection and dialogue on the SDGs and define collective actions for accelerating their implementation; identify ways of scaling up investments necessary to achieve the SDGs; and collectively agree on financing “quick wins” to help advance efforts towards achieving the SDGs. The meeting brought together CEOs from various industries including oil and gas, mining, manufacturing, banking, consumer services and telecommunications. All the participants pledged their commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to make the SDGs an integral part of their organisation’s vision and mission. The group meets quarterly with the President to discuss pertinent issues on the SDGs ([Ghana Voluntary National Review 2019](#))

INVOLVE

LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	MAY BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:	MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:
<p>This is where stakeholders are meaningfully engaged with governments in generating plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and carrying out actions based on decisions emerging from this input. Participation falls short of sharing formal decision-making authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governments need the expertise and contacts of stakeholders in order to effectively implement decisions. - Governments are committed to incorporating inputs received into their decisions, and to providing feedback to stakeholders. - Stakeholders have an active desire and demonstrate the capacity to be engaged in the 2030 Agenda implementation and review processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governments do not have the resources or the time to meaningfully engage stakeholders in implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. - Governments do not have the political space to meaningfully incorporate inputs from stakeholders. - Stakeholders do not show willingness to be actively engaged in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda.

PHILIPPINES

Philippines CSOs were able to participate in the process of developing the national SDG indicators in two workshops held with all government agencies. The results of the workshops conducted from 2013 to 2015 served as inputs to the Philippine Position on the Zero Draft of the Outcome Document for the UN Summit. Following the adoption of the global SDG indicators at the 47th session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016, the Philippine Statistics Authority and the National Economic and Development Authority steered discussions with stakeholders in April and May 2016 to generate an initial list of national SDG indicators in time for the 2016 High-Level Political Forum. The process considered the following imperatives: a) the overarching principle of data disaggregation to cover specific population groups and other disaggregation elements; which promotes accountability and facilitates tracking of responsibilities b) national ownership of the 2030 Agenda, which is promoted by data production by national statistical systems; and c) specific means of operationalizing data disaggregation. ([Philippines Voluntary National Review 2016](#)[VNR 2016 Philippines](#))

GERMANY

When seeking to implement proposed measures, especially before amendments to legislation, the German Government engages in a dialogue with stakeholders and other relevant parties. This creates an opportunity to explain the proposed measures and enables stakeholders to articulate their ideas, criticisms and suggestions for improvements. Furthermore, it often improves the quality of government actions and increases public acceptance of decisions. Throughout the process of updating the National Sustainable Development Strategy, citizens have been involved both via the Internet and through hearings which allow various interest groups to present their points of view. For many years, the German Government has also organized a dialogue forum held three or four times a year in order to facilitate a regular exchange of ideas and information on the international sustainability agenda between the government and representatives of NGOs, churches, local authorities, the scientific and academic community and the private sector. Youth delegates for sustainable development bring the views of future generations into the national debate and also accompany government delegations to relevant negotiations and to the HLPF. In addition to these youth delegates, the German delegation to the HLPF also includes representatives of the private sector, trade unions and environmental and development associations.

The *Charter for the Future* is a further attempt to involve civil society actors, especially in the dialogue to promote global sustainable development. Since 2014, discussions have been held with the involvement of over 100 organisations and initiatives and members of the public on how to create opportunities for the future for everyone worldwide and establish what responsibility Germans can assume in this respect. In an open online dialogue and numerous special events, proposals were advanced which were subsequently compiled in the form of a Charter along with recommendations. A nationwide tour brought these issues to a wide audience. The Charter, which was submitted to the Chancellor, generated impetus to make the new National Sustainable Development Strategy more international in its outlook and is helping to implement the 2030 Agenda by initiating multi-stakeholder partnerships. A large number of sector-specific dialogue forums are also in place. The German Government uses these regularly and on a case-by-case basis to engage with concerned civil society groups. ([Germany Voluntary National Review, 2016](#))

MEXICO

Mexico's National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the highest decision-making body for SDG coordination, as it connects the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government with local governments, the private sector, civil society and academia. Chaired by the president, it has an executive secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister. The body is responsible for generating and following up on the data and indicators needed to monitor the implementation of the SDGs. It includes multi-sectoral inter-institutional working groups specializing in the 17 SDGs as grouped into four thematic axes, with key stakeholders being represented in each group. ([Mexico Voluntary National Review 2018](#))

JAMAICA

High levels of stakeholder engagement and involvement have become the core features of Jamaica's new paradigm for people-centred national development planning in the 21st century. As noted by Jamaica's Planning Institute staff, "true stakeholder engagement is not event or activity specific – it is an ongoing process built on a development philosophy of participation, inclusion, equity and good governance". Between January and May 2018, Jamaica has conducted some 42 consultations engaging approximately 2 000 persons in preparation of its 2018 VNR report, as well as 50 prioritization sessions with over 800 stakeholders through thematic Working Groups of Vision 2030 Jamaica as part of the work on the country's 4th Medium-Term Framework 2018–2021. A wide range of various stakeholders have been engaged, including children and women, people with disabilities, etc. It is a combination of evidence-based and stakeholder-driven approaches that guided Jamaica's prioritization process. Such empowerment is also aligned with the core aspiration of the new philosophy to move from lower to higher levels of capital. Key to ensuring the long-term commitment and sustainability of development efforts in a country with an established two-party system is the bipartisan support secured for long-term Vision 2030 Jamaica, the MTF, and commitment for the SDGs. This support spans both political parties and transcends beyond electoral cycles. Another good practice is a local governance mechanism for sustainable development planning and localization of the SDGs through Local Sustainable Development Plans (LSDPs). Five of the fourteen Municipal Corporations have developed LSDPs and preparation of the remaining LSDPs will commence by 2019. According to the national government, it is a key driver of the successful implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. The country has well anchored local development planning mechanisms at the parish and community levels providing an enabling environment for local ownership and grassroots outreach and participation.

SAINT LUCIA

In April 2018, the Government of Saint Lucia embarked on an inclusive and strategic process to develop the country's Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2019-2022. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet produced outputs which formed the basis of the work programme of consultative economic and social Labs. The Labs, which functioned as idea incubators, facilitated interactive discussions between participants from 134 organizations representing the full spectrum of relevant stakeholders, from the public and private sectors, and civil society, and was conducted over the course of a month. They engaged in an iterative process of issue prioritization and the development of solutions based and actionable implementation programmes, with associated goals and targets around six Key Results Areas (KRAs). ([Saint Lucia Voluntary National Review 2019](#))

GUATEMALA

In their VNR report, Guatemala noted the importance of consulting with children and youth and included a specific section under each goal dedicated to children and youth's perception and views about SDG-related challenges. In this context, Guatemala used U-report, a social messaging tool promoted by UNICEF. The first survey covered the theme of the SDGs in general, while the other six surveys integrated questions related to each of the SDGs under review. ([Guatemala Voluntary National Review 2017](#))

AUSTRALIA

In Australia, the government partnered with the national Global Compact Network to set up an online and ongoing platform to centralize and showcase action being taken across government, businesses, civil society and academia to advance the SDGs in the Australian context. Organizations that are undertaking concrete initiatives to help Australia deliver on the Sustainable Development goals are invited to submit case studies to the platform's database. ([Australia's Reporting Platform](#))

VANUATU

The Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC), situated within the Prime Minister's Office, served as the secretariat to the NSDP core team with the responsibility of coordinating analysis and drafting of the new national plan. A key requirement of the drafting team was to ensure the new plan was grounded in the voice of people, and that the priorities identified during consultations were inclusive of all people, including children, youth, and women, marginalised and excluded groups (COM Decision 60 of 2014). In 2014 a five-day public Forum on the National Sustainable Development Plan was held at the Chief's Nakamal in Port Vila. Representatives from civil society were invited to present and share their economic, social, environmental, and cultural priorities for the next 15 years. The forum was open to the public and also aired live on Radio Vanuatu and Television blong Vanuatu. Participation was on average 75-100 people a day throughout the five-day event and was able to obtain a plethora of feedback to be considered by the Core Group. A feedback matrix was produced from the public forum and was used during subsequent drafting stages of the NSDP. ([Vanuatu Voluntary National Review 2019](#))

NEPAL

Nepal's Integrated Evaluation Action Plan for 2016-2020 is the apex of the country's efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities for development planning as a key source of evidence for progress reviews and policy adjustments/formulation for national development and SDGs. It is expected to strengthen civic and parliamentary oversight and help increase the number of quality and independent evaluations with reports available in open access, provide pertinent evidence through gender and equity-focused evaluations and use of other scientific methods for impact evaluation, as well as strengthen national evaluation capacities, i.e., those of evaluation commissioners, users and evaluators themselves as well as their networks and organizations (VOPEs) through capacity building and knowledge, idea sharing with other VOPEs, Parliamentarian's Forum, Universities, UN, etc. These efforts are an innovative example of how a more enabling environment can be nurtured for regular and meaningful engagement with stakeholders to get their inputs and feedback. They are conducive to increased transparency around SDG implementation and reviews, the examination of progress beyond national averages, more robust evidence and analysis for national reports and broader accountability. Some of the challenges encountered by Nepal to effectively engage multiple stakeholders include different levels of ownership, difficulties in resource mobilization and the retention of the original understanding with staff turnover in stakeholder organizations which may be mitigated through continuous review, facilitation and encouragement.

COLLABORATE

LEVELS OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	MAY BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:	MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE WHEN:
<p>This is where governments and stakeholders decide together on the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. It is long-term, complex and demanding, requiring resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is important that stakeholders feel ownership of the process of implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. - There is an identifiable extra benefit to all parties from acting together. - There is enough time and resources to make the collaboration meaningful. - Governments and stakeholders demonstrate the political will, desire and commitment to develop a meaningful partnership around implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. - Governments recognize the need for stakeholders' advice and innovation to create the best solutions and are committed to shared decision-making processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time and resources are limited. - Commitment is low – for example if government holds all the power (finance, resources) and plans to use the collaboration to impose solutions. - Stakeholders don't have a long-term interest in carrying out identified solutions, they only want to be part of the decision-making processes.

While it may be premature to categorize certain approaches towards national stakeholder engagement strategies under the Collaborate level, there are **multiple examples of collaborative governance in different areas** that can help illustrate this level of engagement, such as the growing use of participatory budgeting.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING (PB) IN RECIFE, BRAZIL

Recife is a progressive coastal city and state capital with a population of 1.2 million persons. In the events preceding the 1988 constitution, expectations and demands for practical change were high. In many parts of the country, progressive governments were elected at the municipal level but found themselves without the financial resources needed to meet these demands. Faithful to election platforms of openness, the incoming administrations decided to discuss priorities directly with local residents and initiated the process currently known as **participatory budgeting**.

The steps the community devised for participatory budgeting include the following:

- **INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS:** to explain how the PB works and encourage participation.
- **REGISTERING DEMANDS FOR THE REGIONAL PB PROCESS:** groups of a minimum of 10 citizens submit up to two territory-based demands that need to be in different areas of public concern (e.g., education and paving, housing and sewage, economic development and health, etc.).
- **REGIONAL AND THEMATIC PLENARY SESSIONS:** take place at the micro-regional level and once the top 10 demands for each micro-region are known, the electronic ballot voting begins. This is followed by thematic sessions where delegates meet to draw up the six most important priority issues for each thematic area, which are then presented for discussion and voting at the plenary sessions.
- **THE DELEGATE FORUMS:** once the voting is over, the Thematic and Regional PB forums are initiated. These forums are made up of all elected delegates and will meet once a month.
- **THE CITY PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING COUNCIL:** This council is the keystone of the whole PB structure. It is composed of two representatives from each micro-regional and thematic PB forum as well as one representative from each of the advisory municipal co-management councils for public policy issues mandated by the constitution. The council is responsible for discussing and developing the budget matrix proposal that will incorporate the different priorities presented throughout the PB process.
- **VOTING THE BUDGET MATRIX PROPOSAL:** the budget matrix proposal gradually takes shape in the different meetings and plenary sessions. Once ready, the budget matrix proposal is voted on by the PB Council.
- **CONVINCING OF THE MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES:** Between five and seven PB councillors are selected to present the proposal to the municipal legislative council and to convince the legislators that the proposal represents the will of the people.
- **DELIBERATION ON THE INVESTMENT PLAN:** Once the general budget matrix has been approved and the demands have been ranked in each micro-region, the regional forums begin discussing the details of the specific projects as well as reallocation issues. When the project is presented to the community, local residents are allowed to participate in an open discussion of the project and to suggest what they consider to be necessary changes. During this meeting, a monitoring commission is elected to follow-up on the implementation of each project or activity.

*Sources: City of Recife, Brazil, Participatory Budgeting, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011b
Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Reference Guide to UN Country Teams,
UNDG, 2016*

3.3

APPROACHES, METHODS AND TOOLS FOR STRENGTHENING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR THE SDGS



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All stakeholder engagement processes are not the same. They have different purposes, scopes of responsibility and reach, and levels of engagement that are expected from the stakeholders involved. It is important to choose the appropriate level of stakeholder engagement for the specific stage of the implementation and review processes for the 2030 Agenda.

Table 2 below presents key elements of commonly seen approaches to strengthening stakeholder engagement in the context of the 2030 Agenda. All described approaches are grouped under 4 categories using the adapted IAP2 framework.

TABLE 2. DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT AND RELATED APPROACHES FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

INFORM		
PURPOSE	To provide balanced, objective, accurate and consistent information to assist stakeholders to understand the follow up and review processes adopted for implementing the 2030 Agenda in a given country.	
COMMITMENT	Government will regularly inform stakeholders about SDG prioritization, implementation plans, selected indicators and data collection.	
APPROACH & KEY ELEMENTS	APPROACH	KEY ELEMENTS
	1.1. Providing regular information to stakeholders about the implementation plans and the review process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rather than promoting active participation of stakeholders, a Government simply wants stakeholders to understand what they are doing / planning. - Government shares information with stakeholders via email lists, conference calls, town hall meetings, newsletters, bulletins, websites, radio programmes and media channels.
TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact sheets - Open houses - Newsletters, bulletins, circulars - Websites - Webinars - Radio - Newspapers and official media 	

CONSULT

PURPOSE	To obtain feedback from stakeholders about the 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up and review, SDG prioritization, selected indicators, data collection and stakeholder engagement plans.	
COMMITMENT	Government will regularly inform stakeholders about the 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up and review processes, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback on how stakeholder input influenced the outcome.	
APPROACH & KEY ELEMENTS	APPROACH	KEY ELEMENTS
	2.1. Consultations with specific groups around specific proposals (Parliament, indigenous people, human rights institutions and other stakeholders).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government has a clear idea of a policy direction or an implementation plan which it wants to ‘test’ with specific groups. - Meaningful efforts are made to engage with marginalized communities, in collaboration with stakeholders. - Online and offline consultations are undertaken, with offline particularly useful with marginalised groups.
	2.2. Online public consultations or surveys on specific proposals for SDG implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government has clear idea of a policy direction or an implementation plan which it wants to ‘test’ with a broad public. - Web tools may be used.
	2.3. Townhall meeting to discuss specific proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government has clear idea of a policy direction or an implementation plan which it wants to ‘test’ with a broad public, going into a higher level of detail. - Meaningful efforts are made to engage with marginalized communities, in collaboration with stakeholders.
	2.4. Considering existing research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government has either commissioned relevant research or uses relevant research as an input into its policies.
TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus groups - Surveys - Internal and/or public meetings - Webinars - Social Media chats - Web-based platforms for discussion and inputs - Radio 	

INVOLVE

PURPOSE	To work directly with stakeholders throughout the implementation, follow up and review processes adopted for the 2030 Agenda to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered, and that their expertise is used effectively	
COMMITMENT	Government will meaningfully include stakeholders in the implementation, follow up and review processes for the 2030 Agenda to ensure that their concerns and needs are consistently understood and considered, and that their expertise is used effectively.	
APPROACH & KEY ELEMENTS	APPROACH	KEY ELEMENTS
	3.1. National consultations on SDG implementation, where new proposals are welcomed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government may have an idea of a preferred policy direction or implementation plan but remains open to incorporating totally new suggestions. - Online and offline consultations may be used. - Web tools and questionnaires may be used. - Deliberative polling may be used to generate specific data.
	3.2. Parallel stakeholder reviews, which are treated as meaningful inputs into the review process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognizes the value of well-organised national stakeholders who are able to produce meaningful and detailed parallel reviews, respecting the timeline for the government's review process. - Governments take onboard findings of the parallel review.
	3.3. National consultations or dialogues during the review process, where new proposals are welcomed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognizes the need for meaningful and large-scale discussions with stakeholders. - Meaningful efforts are made to engage with marginalized communities, in collaboration with stakeholders. - Funds are made available to support participation. - Documents are translated into different languages.
	3.4. Inclusion of a stakeholder representative on the national delegation to the HLPF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparent selection process is put in place. - Funding is made available to support. - Representatives are permitted to attend delegation meetings.
	3.5 Include stakeholders in the formulation of national level SDG indicators and the collection of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government has a specific body to translate global SDG indicators to the national level. - Government recognises the contribution that stakeholders can make to data collection.
	3.6 Work with stakeholders as service delivery partners for the 2030 Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognises and values stakeholders', especially civil society organizations' extensive experience in working with vulnerable sectors of society. - Government contracts stakeholders to deliver specific projects as part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliberative polling - Solicitation of recommendations and proposals - Workshops - Forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of data - Webinars - Social media chats - Web-based platforms for discussion and inputs

COLLABORATE

PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To partner with stakeholders on decision making regarding the 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up and review. - To ensure that stakeholders are equipped to actively contribute to developing and guiding processes for the 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up and review 	
COMMITMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government will seek and incorporate stakeholder recommendations when formulating the 2030 Agenda implementation and follow-up and review processes to the maximum extent possible. - Government will implement joint decisions with sufficient support for ongoing stakeholder roles. 	
APPROACH & KEY ELEMENTS	APPROACH	KEY ELEMENTS
	<p>4.1. National SDG Coordination Committees / National Commissions on Sustainable Development with long term, meaningful participation of stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognizes the need for meaningful and long-term engagement of stakeholders at the coordination level. - Funds may be made available to support the engagement of stakeholders in such committees. - Envisaged measures are discussed within these Committees ensuring a dialogue with the relevant stakeholders. - Committees may try to find innovative ways of ensuring participation of marginalised groups in the overall process.
	<p>4.2. Government supported multi-stakeholder alliances / thematic working groups around specific SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognizes the need for meaningful and long-term engagement of stakeholders at the level of specific SDGs. - Funds may be made available to support the functioning of these alliances / working groups, and the participation of stakeholders.
	<p>4.3. Engaging stakeholders in national development strategy process which aligns with the SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognizes the need for meaningful and long-term engagement of stakeholders in policy planning processes. - Documents and information are provided well in advance, translated where necessary.
	<p>4.4. Town hall meetings (as, for example, using the 21st Century Town Meeting methodology)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governments have strong levels of commitment to a participatory approach and work with large numbers of people in a deliberative democratic process around specific SDGs.
	<p>4.5 Engaging CSOs to collectively decide appropriate interventions in different parts of the country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government recognises and values stakeholders, especially civil society's extensive experience in working with vulnerable sectors of society.
TOOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guiding or advisory bodies - Working groups - Joint planning and shared projects - Standing or ad-hoc committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitated consensus building and decision-making forums - Training and capacity building to support joint action

MAPPING NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS



Although “*major groups and other stakeholders*” is the main framework utilized at the global level, reviewing these constituencies and groups might be a potential starting point for mapping stakeholders for engagement at national level, which should be further adjusted to national and local realities:

A list of the nine **Major Group** constituencies, as identified in Agenda 21, as well as other relevant stakeholders, as referred in the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 21 and Rio+20, can be found in chapter 2.

Additionally, at national and sub-national level, a specific mapping is necessary in order to address specificities, identify most vulnerable groups and ensure that no one is left behind.

It will be important to map MGoS from the whole country, not just from the capital. The ‘*Leave no-one behind*’ principle implies reaching out beyond the well-known stakeholders with offices in the capital. It also implies targeting people and **groups most commonly left behind:**

PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY

SOCIALLY EXCLUDED MINORITIES (ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, LINGUISTIC)

LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBTI) PERSONS

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

While recognizing that mapping of stakeholders should be a nationally-led exercise, this section provides some contact details from major groups and other stakeholders at the global level.

MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER (GLOBAL LEVEL)

While the Major Groups do not necessarily organise their constituency at the national level, they may be able to support in identifying members of their constituencies active on the 2030 Agenda all over the world.

Contacts of global organizing partners and focal points of major groups and other stakeholders can be found here:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/about>

OTHER NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS⁷

A broader mapping of stakeholders is recommended, especially focusing on those that might be left behind. The list below, although not comprehensive, provides details of major global networks represented in hundreds of countries. This might be useful for outreach and in tailoring approaches at national level.



EDUCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC ENTITIES

- [The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative](#), or HESI, is a partnership between United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), UNESCO, United Nations Environment, UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, United Nations University (UNU), UN-HABITAT UNCTAD and UNITAR to support, share, and highlight the work of higher education institutions towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda. More than 300 universities are engaged in the global initiative.
- The [Sustainable Development Solutions Network](#) is a global network of universities, research centers, and other knowledge institutions. Members are organized around National or Regional SDSNs to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, promote Solution Initiatives, and strengthen education for sustainable development.
- [Southern Voice on Post-MDG International Development Goals](#) (Southern Voice) is a network of more than 50 think tanks from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Check here for [their national level partners](#).
- The [Think Tank Initiative](#) is dedicated to strengthening the capacity of independent policy research institutions in the developing world. Its members include 43 think tanks in 20 countries across Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Check out their [members' list](#).

⁷ Links revised in August 2019.

FAITH GROUPS

The global [Religions for Peace](#) network comprises a World Council of senior religious leaders from all regions of the world; more than seventy national and four regional inter-religious bodies and the Global Women of Faith Network and Global Youth Network. Check out [where they work](#).



FOUNDATIONS AND PRIVATE PHILANTHROPIC ORGANISATIONS

- [SDG Philanthropy Platform](#) is a collaboration between philanthropy and the greater international development community. The goal is to enable partnerships on global development as the world transitions from the MDGs to the SDGs. A list of philanthropic foundations involved can be found [here](#).
- The OECD's [Global Network of Foundations Working for Development \(netFWD\)](#) has a mission to optimise and accelerate the impact of philanthropy for development through the sharing of experiences, lesson learned, policy influencing and the development of innovative partnerships. Check out [their members and associates](#).

OLDER PERSONS

- The Stakeholder Group on Ageing (SGA) was formed in 2013 by the major global and national networks of ageing to advance the voices and interests of older persons in the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Its [website](#) contains contact details of relevant organisations in different countries.
- [HelpAge International](#) is a global network of organisations working with and for older people. See [where they work](#).
- [The International Federation on Ageing](#) is an international membership-based organisation, working to ensure that the rights and choices of older people are both protected and respected. Check out their [members' list](#).
- The International Longevity Centre Global Alliance is a consortium aiming to help societies to address longevity and population ageing in positive and productive ways. They have members in almost 20 countries. Check out their [members' list](#).
- The [International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse](#) is a global coalition, with members all over the world, dedicated to the global prevention of the abuse of older people. Check out their [national level representatives](#).





MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- The [Migration and Development Civil Society Network](#) brings together many organisations working on related issues and has members at the national level. Check out [their regional networks](#), from where you can find national members.
- The [Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants](#), is a network of individuals and organisations in 32 countries (mainly Europe) working to ensure social justice and human rights for undocumented migrants. Check out their [member's page](#).

PARLIAMENTS

Information on Parliament's role in the implementation of the SDGs can be found [here](#).



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- The [International Disability Alliance](#) is an alliance of eight global and six regional organisations of persons with disabilities, advocating for a more inclusive global environment for persons with disabilities and their organisations. They are invested in ensuring that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are inclusive. Check their [members' page](#).
- The [International Disability and Development Consortium](#) is a global consortium of disability and development NGOs, mainstream development NGOs and disabled people's organisations, supporting disability and development work in more than 100 countries.
- [Disabled Peoples International](#) is committed to the protection of the rights of people with disabilities and the promotion of their full and equal participation in society. It is represented through active membership of national organizations of disabled people in over 130 countries. Check out their [members' page](#).

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



- The [International Forum for Volunteering in Development \(Forum\)](#) is a global network of organisations involved in international volunteering, which promotes the value of volunteering for development through policy engagement, mutual learning and by sharing innovative and good practices. Check out [their members](#).
- The [Volunteer Groups Alliance](#) aims to support a more systematic integration of volunteerism as an enabling factor for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Check out their [members' list](#), or contact them to find the relevant groups in your country.
- The [International Association for Volunteer Effort](#) is a global network of leaders of volunteering, NGOs, businesses and volunteer centres that share a belief in the power of volunteers to make a significant strategic contribution to resolving the world's most pressing problems.



OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ACTIVE IN AREAS RELATED TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The term ‘*Other Stakeholders*’ includes those “*active in areas related to sustainable development*”. The networks below do not represent one constituency group – they have members working on numerous issues, all related to sustainable development, all over the world, and are thus important stakeholders in this process. Given their wide membership, they are also excellent resources for stakeholder mapping.

- [Climate Action Network International \(CAN\)](#) is a worldwide network of over 1300 NGOs in over 120 countries working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. Check out [their members](#).
- [Global Call to Action Against Poverty \(GCAP\)](#) is a global civil society movement calling for an end to poverty and inequality, with national coalitions in over 100 countries and regional coordination in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Caribbean and Europe. Check out [their members](#).
- [Forus](#), previously known as the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (IFP/FIP), is a network of national NGO platforms and regional coalitions from 5 continents contributing to development, peace, democracy, sustainability and justice. Check out [their members](#).
- [Social Watch](#) is an international network of citizens’ organizations in the struggle to eradicate poverty and the causes of poverty, to end all forms of discrimination and racism, to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and the realization of human rights. Check out [their members](#).
- The [Global Partnership on Sustainable Development Data](#) is a partnership of governments, international organizations, companies, civil society groups, and statistics and data communities who represent all sectors of society and all regions of the world. The Partnership can provide contacts, practical tools and advice on bringing together stakeholders to solve data problems. Check out [their member list](#).
- [Together 2030](#) is a global civil society initiative that promotes national implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2030. Check out [the list of 691 organizations](#) from more than 100 countries that are members of Together 2030.
- The [CSO FfD Group \(CSOs for Financing for Development Group\)](#) is an open civil society platform with the single criterion for membership being representation of a public-benefit civil society organization. It is an open virtual list containing more than 800 organizations (with more than 950 individual members).

- **Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD)** is a global civil society platform aiming at engaging with the 2030 Agenda. They focus on innovative solutions, monitoring and accountability, policy and advocacy and public mobilization. A4SD also led the “Leave No One Behind Partnership” which conducted 30 national dialogues with civil society partners around the world to help engage the most marginalised and excluded communities in the Sustainable Development Goals.

GROUPS MOST COMMONLY LEFT BEHIND

In committing to the realization of the 2030 Agenda, Member States recognized that the dignity of all individuals is fundamental, and that goals and targets should be met for all nations, all people, and all segments of society. States endeavored to first reach those who are furthest behind. However, this is easier said than done, and requires a precise understanding of target populations at the national level.

However, the disaggregated data needed to address all vulnerable groups is not always available. While the 2030 Agenda and the SDG Indicators⁸ are ambitious and express a commitment to data disaggregation, at the national level many National Statistics Offices lack the capacity to gather such detailed data. Thus, currently, data for many of the 2030 Agenda’s indicators in many countries cannot yet shed light on the particular situations of migrants, refugees, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities and indigenous peoples.

The nature of these vulnerable groups is that they are often less organised, and it is harder to identify and reach out to them. As such, it is essential for governments to make concerted efforts to find these groups, by

Working with National Offices of Statistics to identify the relevant groups in a given country;

Assessing the challenges which may block their engagement in the implementation and review processes and come up with relevant solutions;

Working with other government departments to identify relevant organisations representing the interests of these groups;

Reaching out to the organisations and groups who are likely to have contacts with the relevant groups (please, refer to the list provided above).

⁸ More information on SDG Indicators can be found here: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/>.

A small number of **traditionally vulnerable groups** have global networks (see below) which may help in identifying relevant groups in a given country. However, identifying such groups at the national level requires an in-depth knowledge of the country and local actors to ensure that they are not left behind.

PEOPLE EXPERIENCING POVERTY

In Europe, the European Anti-Poverty Network consists of national, regional and local networks, active in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, aimed at the participation and empowerment of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion. Check out [their members' list](#).

SOCIALLY EXCLUDED MINORITIES (ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, LINGUISTIC)

You can find links to organisations working with Roma communities in European countries [here](#), those working with Dalits in South East Asia [here](#). You can find details of minorities in your country by consulting the [Minority Rights International's global database](#).

LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBTI)

The [International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association](#) is a worldwide federation of 1,500-member organisations from 150 countries campaigning for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex rights. Check out [their regional offices](#), where you will be able to find national level contacts.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements are a type of group action. They are large, sometimes informal groupings of individuals or organizations which focus on specific political or social issues. In other words, they carry out, resist, or undo a social change. A good example of a large social movement is [La Via Campesina](#), an international movement which brings together millions of peasants, small and medium-size farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world. Check out [their members' list](#).

WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR

[Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing \(WIEGO\)](#) is a global network focused on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. Check out [their list of institutional members](#).

SETTING UP A STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

A stakeholder engagement plan can be used, among other things, to frame the strategic purpose of consultations; set up a process to identify stakeholders to be consulted; means; techniques and methods for consultation (face-to-face workshops, online platforms, focus groups, written comments); and how the consultation process will be documented.

Consideration could be given throughout the process as to how to support reporting by relevant stakeholders and how those contributions will be reflected in public policies for the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda at national and sub-national levels.

Awareness raising efforts encompass a range of activities such as simplifying and translating the SDGs into local languages and including the SDGs in school and university teaching programmes.

Some questions that could be considered include the following:

WHAT MECHANISMS AND PLATFORMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR STAKEHOLDERS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW UP OF THE SDGS?

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE? ARE THERE UMBRELLA BODIES THAT CAN BE CONSULTED OR IS THERE A NEED TO CREATE TARGETED CONSULTATION PROCESSES IN SITUATIONS WHERE NO MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BODIES OR FORA EXIST?

WHAT IS THE DESIRED MIX OF IN-PERSON OR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS?

HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN DEVELOPING ITS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE 2030 AGENDA?

WHAT PARTNERSHIPS, INCLUDING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS?

Below you will find a detailed outline describing the different components for a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. **Annex 1** presents some templates that can be adjusted to national realities and objectives.

1. SETTING UP A VISION FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Setting up a vision will support in clarifying the objectives that are aimed to be achieved through stakeholder engagement in the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda. The following questions can support in defining the vision:

- What is the priority in engaging stakeholders in the implementation and review process? Reacting to external pressures? Developing strategic insights? Gaining legitimacy? Building ownership? Leaving no-one behind? Seeking new ideas?
- What principles will the stakeholder engagement strategy be based on? These principles should guide activities and set the standards to building consistent, open and respectful working relationships with stakeholders.

2. JUSTIFICATION FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: WHO STANDS TO GAIN WHAT?

Clarify the expected benefits from stakeholder engagement by answering the following questions:

- What does the government stand to gain from this engagement?
- What do stakeholders stand to gain from this engagement?
- How will the engagement of stakeholders strengthen the implementation and follow up of the Agenda 2030 in your country?

3. WHO SHOULD BE ENGAGED?

Organizing a stakeholder mapping should be part of the strategy. Check **Annex 2** for a suggested template.

4. HOW SHOULD THEY BE ENGAGED?

Define the different forms and avenues for engagement considering the identified priorities and objectives. Check Chapter 3 for suggested approaches. The questions below may be helpful for outreach planning:

- What is the most efficient outreach method for these groups? Letters? Phone calls? Emails? Open invitation to a meeting?
- What resources are available for undertaking outreach? (Human, financial)

5. WHAT CHALLENGES ARE ENVISAGED AND HOW MIGHT THESE BE OVERCOME?

Stakeholder engagement will bring its own challenges in each country, depending on the context. It is important that those challenges are listed and strategies to address them considered as part of the stakeholder strategy planning.

6. WHAT ARE THE PLANNED OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES?

After defining the overall approach, it is important to have clear expected outcomes, outputs and activities for the stakeholder engagement strategy in support to the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda.

7. WHAT RESOURCES ARE NEEDED?

The human and financial resources required for the implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy will vary depending on the level of engagement envisaged, the number of stakeholders to be included, the number of meetings planned, and the number of languages into which documents will need to be translated. Annex I presents a draft budget template.

8. TIMELINE

A clear timeline is critical for a meaningful stakeholder engagement process. This needs to be broadly shared with stakeholders to allow for proper planning and management of expectations. You can find a template timeline on Annex II.

9. REGISTERING THE PROCESS

It is important to register the process undertaken to engage stakeholders in the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda implementation, including Voluntary National Reviews to support peer learning and support knowledge management.

10. EVALUATING THE PROCESS

An evaluation of the process will allow for a review of approaches, identification of gaps and challenges and agreement on next steps. This can also contribute to trust building and peer learning.

3.6

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL REVIEWS OF PROGRESS ON THE SDGS

Most of the potential challenges can be grouped into four categories, namely:

1. STAKEHOLDERS ARE HARD TO REACH

CHALLENGE

It is often **difficult to reach the most marginalized groups.**

Most Major Groups are not organised at the national level

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Reach out through national networks, including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Mayor's and Business Associations.

- Reach out via global / regional networks.

- Identify the specific barrier and find a tailored solution –find ways to engage people in their neighborhoods, or languages

- Assign a member of staff with specific responsibility for stakeholder engagement

- Consult with national networks for additional references.

- Reach out directly to organizing partners of Major Groups and other stakeholders (see link on **Chapter 3**).

- Check the other suggested networks in **Chapter 3**.

Who should participate?

Capture of participatory processes by elites is a recognized problem which government representatives should look out for. Voices of the poorest are often ignored, due to a focus on NGOs rather than individuals.

- Work with UN Country Teams to identify the relevant groups
- Use stakeholder mapping tools to identify who really needs to participate (Check Annex 3)
- Set quotas for participation of different stakeholders, ensure regional and thematic representation

Reluctance to engage from specific stakeholder groups. This may stem from a history of exclusion, a distrust of government and authority, a distrust of global processes, or simply a lack of time to engage because of the need to earn money to put food on the table (especially true of those experiencing poverty).

- Present a coherent engagement plan, with clear intent, timelines and support. If stakeholders see that there is a feasible plan for engagement they will be more willing to participate.
- Assign a member of staff with specific responsibility for stakeholder engagement
- Take the time to explain the importance of the 2030 Agenda at the national level, and the impact that it may have on specific stakeholders. If groups understand the impact that it may have on their communities, they will be more willing to participate

A **lack of identity papers** may prevent people experiencing poverty from participating.

- This is a wider political issue, but this specific process could waive the requirement to have such papers

2. ENGAGEMENT IS RESOURCE INTENSIVE

CHALLENGE

Meaningful engagement and participation are expensive and time consuming. Many stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, do not have the financial or human capacity to engage.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Make it easier for stakeholders to engage, by ensuring different levels of engagement. If the engagement process involves local authorities, certain stakeholders could be engaged at this level.
- Depending on their previous levels of engagement, stakeholders may need capacity building and awareness raising around the 2030 Agenda in order to effectively participate.
- Online engagement options could be provided, to enable participation of those who don't have time to attend physical meetings.

- Funds should be allocated for travel and accommodation, to facilitate the inclusion of stakeholders.
- Setting up meetings or consultations outside of working hours might facilitate for the participation of stakeholders.

The **linguistic needs** of different communities (especially socially excluded minorities) often necessitate translation of documents and interpretation during meetings.

- Allocate funds to translation and interpretation
- Work with a member of the relevant stakeholder group who is able to interpret and translate for his / her community

Using **diverse and conflicting input** from stakeholders

- Think about what issues are relevant in advance of the meeting, and how to manage and respond to any ad hoc issues that are raised.
- Allow participants to vote on different proposals to ascertain levels of consensus

Engaging stakeholders from outside the capital, especially where transport or access is poor, is difficult and expensive.

- Recognise the need to do so and allocate resources accordingly
- Organise local level participation

3. ENSURING MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF STAKEHOLDERS IS DIFFICULT, AND REQUIRES SPECIFIC SKILLS

CHALLENGE

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

The **purpose** of stakeholder engagement is **unclear**, and thus the activities are unclear.

- Define the purpose of the engagement well in advance, and ensure that all stakeholders understand it.
- Involve stakeholders in the definition of the purpose of the engagement in the review process.

Expectations of deeper, more meaningful participation than is possible / envisaged. When stakeholders' expectations are not met, anger, frustration or cynicism may result.

- Manage expectations from the beginning – provide clarity on the levels of engagement, the role of participants at different stages of the process and how their input will be used.

Tokenistic, *pro forma* participation can actually have negative effects, disempowering people and being seen as an extractive listening exercise rather than a process of meaningful participation.

Lack of skills to meaningfully engage stakeholders and facilitate the relevant meetings.

Lack of time – external deadlines don't permit the level of engagement and consultation desired.

People experiencing poverty and socially excluded groups may have **low literacy rates**, even in their own language.

Those most excluded and discriminated against **may lack the training**, expertise and confidence to **effectively participate** in the review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Individuals and groups may get '**participation fatigue**' especially if they don't see the results of their inputs being used in a meaningful way.

- Manage expectations - be clear about the levels of engagement at different stages of the process
 - Use all four levels of engagement at different stages of the process
 - Ensure that decision makers commit in advance to integrating stakeholder input into decisions, and design mechanisms to do so
 - Provide feedback to stakeholders
-

- Recruit staff who have direct experience of working for or with the relevant stakeholder groups
 - During the planning stage, identify the skills available and the skills required at subsequent stages
 - Organise training for existing staff members
-

- Recognise the need to do so and allocate resources accordingly
 - Organise local level participation
-

- Do not rely on written documents only
 - Plan for discussions based on visual learning tools
 - Ensure an interpreter facilitates the discussion and record the issues
-

- To ensure strong discussions and innovative ideas, it may be necessary to bring in experienced facilitators
 - Depending on their previous levels of engagement, stakeholders **may** need capacity building around the 2030 Agenda in order to effectively participate
 - Share all relevant documents in advance
 - Undertake an outreach campaign utilizing multiple methods of engagement.
-

- Design and finance a long-term strategy
 - Engage stakeholders early to increase ownership
 - Provide regular feedback
-

It is **hard to know what stakeholders need** to enable them to participate, and what contributions they can make.

- Recognise the common challenges associated with participation
 - Carry out web-based research on the specific stakeholder
 - Send questionnaires to stakeholders in order to ascertain their needs and potential contributions
 - Host an introductory meeting to discuss stakeholder needs and potential contributions
-

4. MOBILISING HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR ENGAGEMENT OF MGoS IN THE REVIEW PROCESSES CAN BE CHALLENGING

CHALLENGE

Decision makers (Ministers, senior civil servants) **do not see the value of stakeholder engagement** in the review processes, including VNRs.

POTENTIAL SOLUTION

- Make the case for stakeholder engagement clearly and succinctly, highlighting the commitment to participation in the 2030 Agenda, and the potential benefits of stakeholder engagement.
 - Present decision makers with a clear idea of how stakeholder engagement could work in the context of your country's SDG implementation – highlight your stakeholder mapping and stakeholder engagement.
 - Ensure they are aware of examples of other countries which have successfully engaged MGoS in the 2030 Agenda, including VNRs.
 - Ensure that the relevant decision makers are exposed to stakeholders who are able to demonstrate the value they could bring to the follow up and review process.
-

DESIGNING A STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

National Voluntary Reviews are an intrinsic element of the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda implementation and, for this reason, should also follow the agreed principles of openness, inclusivity, participation and transparency for all people. VNRs are also an opportunity to report on how stakeholders are being engaged in the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda in a given country.

For countries participating in the Voluntary National Reviews which are presented at the HLPF, stakeholder engagement in the preparatory process is well-recognised as a must-have element agreed in the 2030 Agenda. A handbook, which is regularly updated, has been developed by UNDESA to support countries in their preparatory VNR⁹ processes.

A stakeholder engagement plan can be used, among other things, to frame the strategic purpose for consultations; set up a process to identify stakeholders to be consulted; means; techniques and methods for consultation (face-to-

face workshops, online platforms, focus groups, written comments); and how the consultation process will be documented.

Consideration could be given throughout the process as to how to support reporting by relevant stakeholders and how those contributions will be reflected in the final report, and how ongoing stakeholder involvement will be reflected in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Efforts could include reaching out to legislative bodies, the public, civil society and the private sector, and communicating entry points for stakeholder participation in VNR preparation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Additionally, efforts could be taken to identify representative voices from marginalized groups and to enable their meaningful engagement in the process. Awareness raising efforts encompass a range of activities such as simplifying and translating the SDGs into local languages and including the SDGs in school and university teaching programmes.

⁹ More information: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>

Some questions that could be considered include the following:

WHAT MECHANISMS AND PLATFORMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR STAKEHOLDERS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE VNR AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS?

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE? ARE THERE UMBRELLA BODIES THAT CAN BE CONSULTED OR IS THERE A NEED TO CREATE TARGETED CONSULTATION PROCESSES IN SITUATIONS WHERE NO MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BODIES OR FORA EXIST?

WHAT IS THE DESIRED MIX OF IN-PERSON OR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS?

HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN DEVELOPING ITS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE 2030 AGENDA?

WHAT PARTNERSHIPS, INCLUDING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS? CONSIDER EXAMPLES THAT COULD BE SHOWCASED AS GOOD PRACTICES.

Some key elements for a stakeholder engagement strategy, which should be adjusted to national contexts as appropriate are:

1. SETTING UP A VISION FOR ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN THE VNR PROCESS

2. SETTING UP A JUSTIFICATION FOR ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS - WHO STANDS TO GAIN AND WHAT?

3. DEFINING WHO SHOULD BE ENGAGED

4. DEFINING HOW STAKEHOLDER WILL BE ENGAGED.

5. SETTING UP SPECIFIC AND TAILORED OUTREACH STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

6. DEVISING CHALLENGES AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM.

7. DEFINE EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS.

8. DEFINE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS FOR THE VNR

9. PLAN AND MOBILIZE THE NECESSARY RESOURCES.

10. SET UP A CLEAR TIMELINE

11. REGISTERING THE PROCESS

MAURITIUS

Mauritius developed a Stakeholder Engagement Plan as well as an SDG Communications Strategy to ensure inclusiveness and a multi-stakeholder participation in the process. For this, Mauritius set out an SDG Questionnaire with specific questions and rigorous criteria to gather information. This constituted a solid basis for the development of each SDG chapter. Broad and wide national consultations and workshops as well as one-to-one dialogues were held from November 2018 to June 2019 involving both public and private stakeholders, Civil Society, NGOs, academia, human rights organisations in mainland Mauritius as well as Rodrigues and the Outer Islands ([Mauritius Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).





3.8

INNOVATIVE METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

A range of innovative methods and tools of engagement can be used in the context of national SDG reviews and VNRs. Below follows some practical information for those seeking ideas and input for developing strategies to better engage stakeholders.

CROWDSOURCING

Crowdsourcing seeks to harness collaboration for problem-solving, innovation and efficiency. It can be used to provide input from a variety of stakeholders around the globe and with its online accessibility it allows stakeholders to contribute despite time and distance. With its open format you can collect solutions/input and share the results freely, this is also helpful for collecting data on the stakeholders involved to ensure a regional and gender balance. What makes crowdsourcing unique is that it is not just consultation, where solutions are already framed, but an opportunity for deep participation with lowered barriers. The very nature of crowdsourcing is open and transparent which makes this method of engagement align perfectly with the spirit of the 2030 Agenda.

FINLAND

Finland is crowdsourcing society's commitments to Sustainable Development via its programme 'Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development'. Public sector, companies, NGOs, organisations and citizens are encouraged to select their specific objectives from a list and register their commitments on an open database provided by the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, who help monitor the impact. See [Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development / 2015](#) for details and [here](#) for a video about this example of crowdsourcing.

FACILITATED TOWNHALL MEETING

This method uses technology to overcome the common trade-offs between the quality of discussion and the size of the group. For this method, it is important to select a particular issue you are trying to gain clarity on. The participants are divided into groups of 10-12 people, where they have facilitated small-group discussions about a particular process for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Each facilitator uses a networked computer to instantly collate ideas and votes from the table. This information is sent to a central point where a team summarises comments from all tables into themes that can be presented back to the room for comment or votes. Each participant also has a keypad which allows them to vote individually on themes or questions. The results of these votes are presented in real time on large screens for instant feedback from participants. The computers and voting pads generate volumes of useful demographically-sortable data. This information is often quickly edited into a report which is printed and given to participants, decision-makers and journalists at the end of the event.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Engagement of stakeholders on how to leave no one behind. This allows for focused attention of a large group on finding solutions to the problem of reaching the most marginalised groups and ensuring they are included in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Different groups could discuss the principle of leave no one behind with relation to different SDGs. The meeting should be prefaced with sufficient background information in order to make the most of the meeting.

POP-UP DEMOCRACY

The idea of “pop-up democracy” is based on recent trends in urban social design towards temporary and small-scale installations to provide spaces for interaction and civic discourses in local communities. Pop Up democracy can help offset the “threshold problem” or the challenge of getting people to participate, which government institutions often face when opening up engagement processes. Rather than expecting people to attend meetings in areas and buildings that might be unfamiliar or too far away from where they live, Pop-Up democracy is an attempt to reach the furthest behind by bringing the stakeholder engagement method to the stakeholders.

SPACES FOR INTERACTION

An empty shop in the city centre, or an unused classroom in a village could be open for a few weeks to the public for a SDG review/ information session. In addition to consultation materials, SDG officers could be present to answer questions and record ideas.

FEEDBACK KIOSKS

Kiosks are electronically-operated touch screen devices which can be placed in any public space (bus terminals, train stations). They allow citizens to provide feedback and answer survey questions about SDG priorities in their neighborhoods. The information provided can then be analysed and shared with anyone who submitted a response. Kiosks can be used for single events, in order to capture public opinion or feedback on that single instance, or on a permanent basis to measure change in opinion over time. By nature, this form of feedback will be limited to simple yes/no or multiple-choice answers rather than in depth responses.

GETTING INPUTS

To get inputs on prioritizing SDGs, place a feedback kiosk in train station or bus station waiting rooms, providing a list of the SDGs with some background information. Citizens arrange the goals in their preferred order of priority for their community.

OTHER INNOVATIVE METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

- In the **PHILIPPINES**, the SDG Website [sdg.neda.gov.ph] aims to provide an online platform to engage different stakeholders on the SDGs and aims to serve as a tool for policy coordination while in Pakistan, the ‘SDG Pakistan Pulse’, a web-based data reporting portal, is being developed for online reporting needs against the targets set at the national and province levels. This centralized dashboard will offer tools for researchers, while improving transparency and informed policy- and decision-making. Likewise, Turkey had developed an online National SDG Best Practices Database, which will be active throughout the period covering the 2030 Agenda. In the first phase, 400 practices by public and private sectors, academia, NGOs and municipalities were collected. As the database is an on-line system, SDG efforts will be monitored and the activities contributing to the SDGs the most will be identified. (Philippines, Pakistan and Turkey Voluntary National Reviews 2019)
- In **ITALY**, in May 2017, the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS) gathered over 150 organisations in the economic and social field and launched the first Sustainable Development Festival, a large-scale awareness-raising campaign to foster cultural-political reflections on the issue across the country. The festival is expected to turn into an annual event and a point of reference for all SDG-linked initiatives. ([2017 VNR Synthesis report](#))
- In **NIGERIA**, the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals (OSSAP-SDGs) has entered into a partnership with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to train graduating youths to become SDGs champions in their local communities and areas of national service where they are deployed upon graduation. ([2017 VNR Synthesis report](#))

- To raise awareness about the SDGs throughout **BELARUS**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN organized an eight-day train journey which passed through seven prominent cities to promote the SDGs through guided tours, lectures, workshops, debates, movie screenings, concerts, dance performances, talk shows, flash mobs, culinary fests and activities for children and adults. Each Oblast's (Region) Executive Committee Chairman on the train's route signed a Declaration of Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. The train's passengers included representatives of 19 UN agencies, the Belarusian government, parliament, embassies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses, governors, students, journalists, celebrities, people living with HIV, refugees and people with disabilities.
- **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**: Central to effective advocacy for and engagement workshops on the SDGs was the use of the innovative SDG Consultation Tool. The SDG Consultation Tool instigates awareness, dialogue and teamwork problem solving centered on burning issues in society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tool is also a qualitative data gathering method that explores the positive and negative associations of citizens with both the past and present, their vision of the future, the way they see the future in terms of what values, actions and structures need to be in place and what threats and/or opportunities need to be addressed across the SDGs/targets. The ultimate aim of the tool is to identify solutions/ideas on how to address or accelerate achievement of the SDGs/targets within the local context. The tool also enables participants to priorities targets for each of the SDGs ([Bosnia and Herzegovina Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

REPRESENTATIVE DATA ON PEOPLES' PERCEPTION ON SDG

The [MyWorld Scientific survey](#) was created drawn from the [MyWorld 2030 survey](#), to offer a more in-depth picture on the status of the SDGs based on people's perception. My World Scientific contains an open question library of 90+ questions related to the 17 goals and allows to create a custom survey to gather data on the issues that are more relevant to the local context. The questions in the MY World Scientific library vary from 'garbage collection', 'electricity usage' to 'natural disasters'. There are no explicit mentions about the SDGs, but they are mapped against the goals for analysis.

For the past two years, UN SDG Action Campaign has partnered up with Paragon Partnerships to roll out representative surveys in a total of 14 countries who reported on SDG progress at High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2017 and 2018 to provide evidence on people's sentiments on SDGs in their countries.

Data can be accessed on line for researches conducted in [2017](#) (Argentina, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, The Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, and Thailand) and in [2018](#) (Romania, Lebanon and Sri Lanka).

The opportunity to collect representative data is opened to all countries interested in getting the pulse of their local constituencies to complement the official data coming from the indicators.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN PROMOTING AND MONITORING THE SDGS: MY WORLD 2030

MY World 2030 survey is an adaptable platform for citizen-generated data and engagement with the SDGs. The survey collects and aggregates live globally comparable and national data aiming at creating a dialogue between decision makers and citizens. The data is intended to triangulate the official information coming from the SDG's indicators, with peoples' perspective on how SDG progress is affecting their lives. The survey is available online and offline in 20 different languages. In less than three years, 375,000 opinions around the world have been collected.

Several countries are taking the lead in using My World to reach out to their people and integrate their views and perceptions when reporting on SDGs or even making decisions on internal planning.

To name a few: In 2018 the Government of **MALI**, coordinated the collection of over **30,000** responses by engaging local volunteers across the country. Results were included in the Voluntary National Report in 2018. In **MEXICO**, over **200,000** votes have been collected thanks to different actors including the local government of Mexico City, through the Youth Office, and My World Mexico, a youth lead-civil society organization, among others. The results were also included in the national voluntary report of Mexico in 2018, and the data collected at the city level has been used to support decision making on local planning. The Government of **COLOMBIA** has collected over **60,000** responses and, in **MOROCCO**, a civil society organization has internally mobilized to collect over **17,000** responses.

These and other experiences prove that what seems to be a simple survey is a powerful mobilization tool for SDGs and can help individuals to open a dialogue with decision makers and ultimately have a say and political impact.

NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESSES AND EXISTING REVIEW MECHANISMS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

3.9

“We commit to fully engage in conducting regular and inclusive reviews of progress at sub-national, national, regional and global levels. We will draw as far as possible on the existing network of follow-up and review institutions and mechanisms. National reports will allow assessments of progress and identify challenges at the regional and global level...”

TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD:
THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2015

As described in chapter 1, the 2030 Agenda specifies that “the outcome from national level processes will be the foundation for reviews at regional and global levels” and that follow-up and review processes at all levels “will build on existing platforms and processes, where these exist”.

Governments are expected to define the format and periodicity of national reviews and reports, with the 2030 Agenda noting that national and sub-national reviews should be “regular and inclusive” and “should draw on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities”, with parliaments and other institutions having roles to play.

Some countries have included a broad array of stakeholders in their multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms. In addition to representatives of civil society and the private sector, countries have included members such as the heads

of Trade Unions (Lesotho), the National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council (Ghana), youth representatives (Saint Lucia), and members of academia (Eswatini).

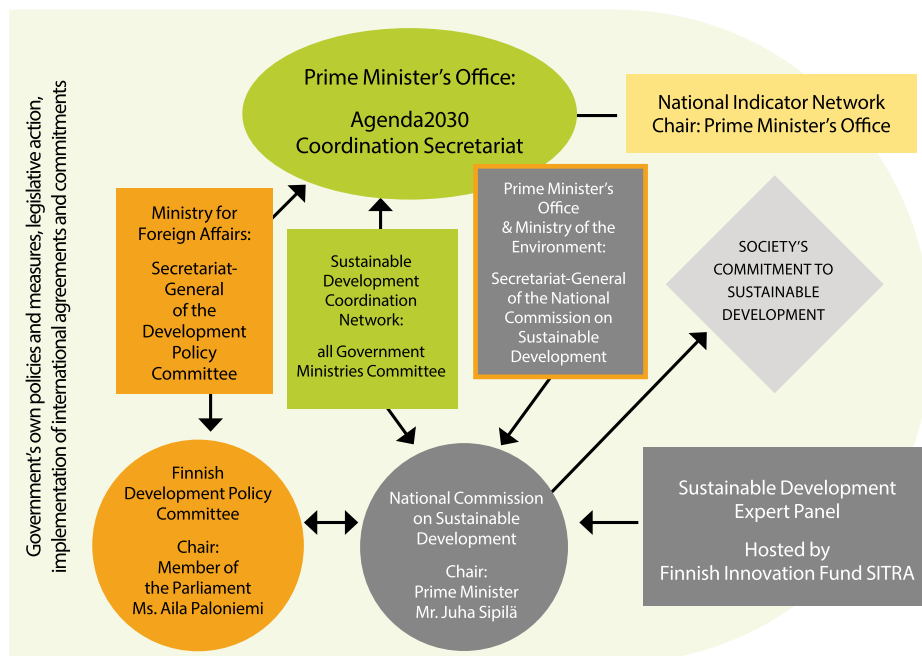
Many countries already have some type of **multi-stakeholder bodies** such as National Sustainable Development Councils, Economic and Social Councils and other similar institutions or other mixed types of councils that could serve as a logical starting point and form part of a **national platform for engagement and dialogue on implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda**. However, some form of adaptation is likely to be required in most cases to increase the relevance of these mechanisms as they work to implement the SDGs. Some of these mechanisms may need to be realigned, and others may require changes to their mandates or membership. Still others may need to define the division of responsibilities with other national consultative or advisory bodies.

In a number of countries, **coordinating government agencies** reached out to multi-stakeholder forums and other advisory bodies to build a national SDG system, including by coordinating monitoring and review arrangements around existing platforms, and fostering increased coherence between different entities (please see the example of Finland). In other cases, governments created new platforms (please see the example of Nigeria) or transformed existing mechanisms to focus on the SDGs. These coordination arrangements can provide useful avenues for participatory national review systems that would also need to draw on country-led evaluations and data systems. As a result, **national statistical and evaluation offices, parliaments, Voluntary Organizations of Professional Evaluators (VOPEs) as well as human rights institutions and CSOs producing evidence and contributing to the evaluation of policies** will need to be linked to national review systems.

FINLAND

In Finland, two key bodies – a National Sustainable Development Council and Development Policy Committee – ensure direct involvement and contribution of various stakeholders from within and outside of government in the national 2030 Agenda dialogue. While both existed before, they now form part of the 2030 Agenda architecture and agreed to work closer together to ensure better policy coherence. The National Sustainable Development Council brings together high-level political leadership and a broad range of civil society actors. The Development Policy Committee includes representatives of political parties, NGOs, business, research, agriculture and trade unions, as well as expert members from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other Ministries, and three members of parliament. ([Finland Voluntary National Review 2016](#))

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGENTA 2030 IN FINLAND - KEY BODIES AND MECHANISMS



The coordination mechanism for the implementation of Agenda2030, and key actors in Finland

NIGERIA

Nigeria has established a multi-layer and multi-cluster institutional framework for enhanced coordination and mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda. As part of this framework, the President has appointed a Senior Special Assistant to the President (SSAP) on SDGs whose office is responsible for ensuring horizontal and vertical coherence between development policies, plans and strategies. Similarly, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on the SDGs has been established with operational guidelines to guide the coordinated engagement with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Similar structures have been established at the sub-national (State) level. In addition, to enhance the legislative and oversight roles of Parliamentarians for the SDG implementation process, two select committees on SDGs have been established in the Senate and House of Representatives. ([Nigeria Voluntary National Review 2017 VNR - Summary Report](#))

CHAD

Chad created its national coordination mechanism for the implementation of SDGs by Ministerial Decree on 13 March 2018. The inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral structure under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Development Planning is composed of government representatives, members of parliament, civil society, the private sector, academic and research institutions, and the National Institute of Statistics, Economic and Demographic Studies ([Chad Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

INDONESIA

In Indonesia, Presidential Decree no. 59 Year 2017 serves as the legal basis for the establishment of a SDGs National Coordination Team, comprising the Steering Committee, Implementing Team, Technical Working Group, and Expert Team. Members of the Implementation Team, Technical Working Group and Sub-Working Group consist of representatives from the government, philanthropy and private sector, civil society organizations, academics and experts. The selection of non-government representatives in National Coordination Team is fully determined by the non-governmental coalition itself ([Indonesia Voluntary National Review 2019](#)).

For the preparation of national SDG reports, some key steps to be considered may include:

- **SETTING-UP MULTI-STAKEHOLDER STEERING COMMITTEE(S)/TASKFORCE(S);**
- **CONDUCTING CONSULTATIONS, FOCUS GROUPS, ETC.**
- **ENSURING PARTICIPATION BY AND**
- **ESTABLISHING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER REPORT REVIEW GROUP.**
- **INPUTS FROM MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS (SEE DETAILS IN CHAPTER 3), NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS AND PARLIAMENTS;**
- **ESTABLISHING AN OUTREACH PLAN TO DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ABOUT CONSULTATION PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Forms of Guiding Bodies: A guiding body is a group of stakeholders (ideally internal and external) tasked with providing solutions and suggestions for specific processes related to the implementation and/or follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. These working groups are essential for stakeholders to ensure that their inputs are not only meaningful, but most importantly valued and integrated into national plans. These groups can also become champions for engaging other stakeholders in the longer term and building national support for sustainable development.

SOME COMMON TYPES OF GUIDING BODY STRUCTURES	SITUATIONS WHERE THIS CAN BE USED
WORKING GROUP	To create implementation plans for the 2030 Agenda, to prioritize and publicize the SDGs, or to brainstorm creative recommendations for reaching the furthest behind.
ADVISORY BODY	To advise leadership on specific issues, i.e indicators and data collection, to convene technical experts to come up with solutions for technology transfer or partnerships.
TASKFORCE	To explore a specific issue or to implement a specific area of work such as a stakeholder mapping exercise. Tends to be timebound.
STEERING COMMITTEE	To help make decisions on key issues, to provide oversight over staff, or to convene key allies in pushing key changes. This can be helpful for addressing a particularly charged issue where stakeholder oversight can lend legitimacy to the process. For example, deciding which organization gets funding to implement a specific target.
IMPLEMENTATION TEAM	To explore a specific issue or to implement a specific area of work such as a stakeholder mapping exercise. Tends to be timebound.



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ANNEXES



ANNEX 1

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY BUDGET TEMPLATE

BUDGET LINE	ESTIMATED COST
Staff costs	
Sub total	
MEETING COSTS (COORDINATION COMMITTEES, MULTISTAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS, WORKING GROUPS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES ETC)	
Meeting room hire	
Stakeholder travel	
Stakeholder accommodation	
Per diems, if appropriate	
Sub total	
TRANSLATION FOR INCLUSIVITY	
Translation of documents	
Interpretation at key meetings	
Sub total	
CONSULTATIONS	
Online consultation (website, google hangouts, survey monkeys, crowdsourcing)	
Offline consultation (feedback kiosks, pop-up consultations, house-to-house surveys, national consultations)	
Specific consultations with specific groups	
Sub total	
OTHER	
Stakeholder participation in delegation to HLPF 2017 (travel & accommodation)	
Stakeholder parallel review process, if appropriate	
General support to stakeholders to facilitate meaningful participation in the VNR process, if appropriate	
Sub total	
TOTAL	



ANNEX 2

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND VNRS TIMELINE TEMPLATE



ANNEX 3

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING TEMPLATE

CONSTITUENCY	ORGANISATION	CONTACT PERSON Phone, email, website, address	IMPACT How much does Agenda 2030 implementation / review impact them? (Low / medium / high)	CAPACITY How much capacity do they currently have to participate in your stakeholder engagement programme (Low / medium / high)
Major Groups				
Business and Industry				
Children and Youth				
Farmers				
Indigenous Peoples				
Local Governments				
Non-Governmental Organizations				
Scientific and Technological Community				
Women				
Workers and Trade Unions				

CONSTITUENCY	ORGANISATION	CONTACT PERSON Phone, email, website, address	IMPACT How much does Agenda 2030 implementation / review impact them? (Low / medium / high)	CAPACITY How much capacity do they currently have to participate in your stakeholder engagement programme (Low / medium / high)
Other Stakeholders				
Academia and Think Tanks				
Faith groups				
Foundations				
Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT)				
Migrants				
Older persons				
Parliamentary Committees				
People experiencing poverty				
Persons with disabilities				
Social movements				
Socially excluded minorities				
Volunteer groups				
Workers in the informal sector				
Other				



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