



**ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE
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HLPF 2016 V22

Follow up Questions for CSO engagement in Voluntary National Review at the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) after 2016 evaluation

This template aims to identify what mechanisms are in place for government engagement with the SDGs, civil society, local governments, and current initiatives from all actors in realizing the SDGs at a national and international level.

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One year later, what has happened?

- 1. Based on the report submitted last year, has there been progress in updating the national SDG implementation plans?**

Yes. Finland drafted its national implementation plan in a consultative process after the HLPF. The implementation was presented by the government to the parliament in February 2017.

- 2. Have the national and local governments begun the implementation that they have submitted?**

The next steps in preparing for the implementation that were presented at the HLPF have been followed since. In Finland's report the focus mainly on how Finland will set about preparing the institutional framework for implementation, not yet clear implementation activities, which were defined only after the HLPF.

- 3. Has there been and changes to local and national contexts that have provided obstacles or changes to the SDG plan from its original submission?**

The political ownership perhaps decreased somewhat after the 2016 HLPF. The plan was to engage with stakeholders (CSOs, private sector, municipalities, trade unions etc.) in defining the political priorities for the 2030 Agenda implementation in Finland. However, stakeholders were consulted mainly with regards to the monitoring and review framework and institutional setup, not really in relation to the political priorities of the implementation plan.

- 4. What kinds of SDG implementation mechanisms – national and international - are**



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being set up now?

The process to set up the national monitoring, accountability and review framework in Finland is almost finished. A set of 40 national sustainable development indicators should be adopted by the government in the coming weeks. The framework consists of annual stocktaking moments, a complementary indicator set to the global framework, annual reporting by the government to the parliament, an external evaluation every four years, and ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Some of the mechanisms that were decided in the implementation plan to be set up include:

- An impact assessment for sustainable development (pilot)
- Integration of 2030 Agenda into the government's forward looking "future" work (incl. future reports)
- Expert exchange scheme for sustainable development for government officials
- Sustainable development and 2030 Agenda to be included into government's training programme for civil servants
- Enhance horizontal coordination at different levels in government
- Enhance the role of research and anticipation in policy and decision making for sustainable development
- 2030 Agenda to be included in results-based management in different sectors (sustainable development to be included in the result targets and performance indicators)
- Comprehensive assessment of how Finland's external policies promote 2030 Agenda and achieving SDGs beyond Finland's borders
- Support EU in coherent action for sustainable development
- Expand the use of operational commitments for sustainable development
- Encourage cities and communities to set ambitious sustainable development goals.

5. Has civil society been more, less, or similarly included in government implementation plans than what it was during the draft process?

Yes, civil society has been more or less similarly included in government implementation and monitoring, accountability and review plans as it was during the drafting process.

6. Has a national platform been established? Have they created formal connections with government work on the SDGs?

There is no formal national CSO platform for the 2030 Agenda, but we have an informal working group involving CSOs from various sectors (social, environment, development, youth, sports, trade unions). The formal connections with government work have been arranged through the National Commission for Sustainable Development, of which some of the working group members are members of and thus facilitate the contacts.

7. What follow up, if any, did the HLPF provide for evaluation of the SDG implementation plans?

HLPF has not provided any relevant form for follow up after the VNR in 2016. The VNR exercise itself was very helpful for creating both political and stakeholder ownership for the process, but it



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was fully up to the government and other stakeholders to take that forward.

Feedback from HLPF was never reflected or referred to in preparing the national implementation plan or setting up the monitoring, accountability and review framework.

- 8. What more can the HLPF formal and informal processes do to ensure that voluntary countries are held liable to their SDG implementation plans?**