



**ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**



***Resilient Societies, Resilient People: inclusion of civil society in the
2030 Agenda***

Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th July at the United Nations Church Center

777 United Nations Plaza (1st Av & 44th St), New York, NY 10017, United States

Objectives of the meeting:

- a) To draw together diverse civil society voices
- b) To share expertise from national & regional partners
- c) To develop shared skills through Working Groups
- d) To discuss and agree on key recommendations on HLPF reforms to make it more effective
- e) To discuss and agree on key recommendations for improved engagement of civil society with the HLPF

Notes of meeting are below and presentations can be found on the Action for Sustainable Development website: www.action4sd.org/tools-resources

Day 1: Saturday July 14th 2018

Joint session with Major Groups & other Stakeholders

9:00-9:30	Arrival & Registration
9:30-9:35	Welcome and Introduction- <i>Moderator Beckie Malay, PRRM/GCAP</i> Beckie welcomed all participants and provided a background on Action for Sustainable Development as a platform to enable engagement from national, regional and thematic CSO coalitions in global processes for sustainable development.
9:35-10:00	<p>Keynote speaker: <i>Mary Robinson President, Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice- Inter-generational approaches to climate justice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The injustice of climate change is starkly apparent• We can turn the tide of world climate change and inequality- as Desmond Tutu once said, ‘I am a prisoner of hope’• Voices of all people - particularly the voice of marginalized- must be taken into account in decision-making on climate change and inequality.• Climate actions must be developed together with the affected groups• Climate justice provision in SDG 13: need to promote clearer mechanism for accountability, linking UNFCCC with HLPF <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intergenerational aspects of climate change to be reckoned with• Need a different mindset for all decision makers• Young people are demonstrating their willingness to address the overarching challenges• Needs of future generations should be heard in present day decision making- Intergenerational equity is essential• We need to be custodians of the planet and the global environmental system• We are working with members states and UN system; and aim to work with CSOs too; to develop ‘Global Guardians for Future Generations’• Ensure the present generations are safeguarding their rights along with protecting the future of the next generations. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Sparks of hope” – in Johannesburg , we will take action on Mandela Day, in the culmination of #WalkTogether on 18 July, celebrate 100 Sparks of Hope from civic activism from around the world.• Civil society can help to link the needs of current generation and next by highlighting that we are not yet on the right course

10:00-11:00

Panel 1: Whose agenda is it anyway? Addressing cross-cutting issues of implementation

Stefano Prato, Civil society FfD Group- financing the 2030 Agenda

- Economic transformation: do we need the trillions, do we want the trillions?
- We do not need trillions of dollars, the SDGs challenge is not a financial challenge but a policy challenge.
- Need to fundamentally alter our production model and should call for incentives that change economic models
- We need transformation on the way we produce, consume and process food- corporate food systems should be replaced by low cost, community based food production system
- I want to inspire you all to become tax justice activists! There needs to be an approach that addresses the underlying systemic obstacles to financial justice, for example overhauling the global monetary financial system to seriously tackle tax havens and tax avoidance, we need this wider transformation

Emilia Reyes, Women's Major Group- are governments serious about leaving no one behind?

- I do not like the term 'Leave No One Behind', I come from an activist background where we look at the macroeconomic view.
- For example unpaid work: if you paid all the work women do in the home, it would be a huge figure. Women are subsidizing the entire economy.
- At the same time huge wealth is moving from global South to global North through illicit financial flows; in total these flows are approximately 8 Trillion Dollars. While only 1 Billion Dollars go from North to South in ODA commitments, approx. 10 Billion Dollars go from South to North in illicit finance.
- It's not important to know who is left behind, but who is way ahead and stealing the major proportion of global wealth, 1% of population hold 70% of global resources
- To ensure real accountability, we need to bring closer links from the human rights frameworks to the SDGs

Mandeep Tiwana, CIVICUS- is civic space challenged in VNR countries?

- There is often a contradiction between the development and human rights agendas
- This year 2018, only 9 of 48 countries taking part in VNR are considered to have 'open' civic space according to the CIVICUS

	<p>Monitor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 17 speaks about participation of CSOs but this is not followed through in a meaningful way • We are witnessing erosion of democracy in democratic countries; so imagine the situation in authoritarian countries! • Pushing the approach of private capital solutions to public challenges undermines social justice • We need to challenge the mis-information about civil society that CSOs push foreign agendas etc spread by different vested interest groups • We must generate and show evidence to demonstrate our own accountability • Start identifying civil society champions in academia and other sectors • We need to stand together in various groups of CSOs – to protect the civic space, fundamentally democracy and civil society space are interlinked
11:00-11:30	Tea/coffee
11:30 - 13:00	<p><i>Panel 2: National perspectives on the VNR process and improving inclusivity- Moderator- Rilli Lappalainen Kehys/IFP</i></p> <p><i>Constance Hybsier, Special Advisor to the UN Assistant Secretary General;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN reforms: The UN Development System is being reformed and should enable a clearer focus on SDG delivery • Some SDGs we do not cover at all currently; some we do very well • Resident Coordinator in a country will now provide key coordination across the various UN agencies, this will also be linked to Civil Society Advisory Committee in the country. Previously this post was within the UNDP. • We have up to 18 UN agencies in many countries. • UN development assistance framework – will provide more support from the global level to the country level • Working on stronger linkages with regional commissions • Should also be more support at country level, including on VNR process to consider SDG gaps and trade offs <p><i>Filomena Ruggiero, Futuro en comun, Spain- Ppt attached</i> <i>Alvaro Andrade, Grupo Faro, Ecuador- Ppt attached</i> <i>Thongdam Phongphichith, LCCO, Lao PDR- Ppt attached</i></p>

	<p><i>Sophie Neuhaus, Swiss National Youth Council, Switzerland</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a working group on SDGs, formed by the CSO youth groups, as part of the wider Swiss CSO grouping: Platform Agenda 2030 • There was wide consultation with civil society in Switzerland on the VNR process but there are still gaps, for example limited engagement with organisations working on gender equality or disability • Key aspects of the parallel report and inputs from civil society into the official VNR were not included in the final report • I will present the VNR in the official delegation alongside the Swiss Environment Minister at HLPF • Civil society platform prepared its own parallel report • We recommend learning and linking to the UPR process to strengthen the VNRs <p>Q&A: What can we learn from these national processes for the future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to input into next update of VNR guidelines and reform for 2019 • Opportunity to link VNR with UPR • Need to bring together broader coalitions of civil society at national level • Stronger role for CSOs to develop a ‘whole of society’ approach in dialogue with government? • Need greater comparability in VNRs • Shadow reports should be complementary to government reports?
13:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	<p><i>Discussion with Major Groups & other Stakeholders: How can we work together to improve the implementation and review process at national, regional and global level?</i></p> <p><i>Moderator: Shamina de Gonzaga</i></p> <p><i>Alyson Neel, UN Foundation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is limited time for engagement in the VNRs • Member states seem keen to have longer time to discuss the reports themselves • Need to ensure Leave No One Behind is featured in all reports • Time to see member states including specific challenges to be overcome

Idriss Alzouma Maiga, President of the African Disability Forum

- Even within CSOs there is often omission of persons with disabilities
- Children with disability face challenges in access to schools; teachers are also not trained to deal with such children
- We are analyzing the official VNR report and CSO shadow reports on how well persons with disability issues are included and discussed

Frances Zainoeddin, Stakeholder Group on Aging

- Role of NGOs is crucial to the UN, we often know better who are the people who left behind as we start where government fails
- There are many countries where NGO representatives are persecuted
- Unfortunately the HLPF seems 'toothless' so far
- HLPF needs clearer ways to stimulate real debate- just being in the meeting does not mean participation
- The Major Group and other Stakeholder reports are submitted to HLPF but are not discussed
- Speaking time in the meetings is very limited
- The Ministerial Declaration does not provide political leadership on how to realise the goals in time
- We need to improve our methods of working and collaboration as well between the different levels of engagement

Q&A- next steps?

- Need to mobilise citizens at national level
- Opportunity to reach out to friendly Member States
- Link national experiences from across A4SD- survey and national advocacy
- Feed into joint position on HLPF reform for 2019

Day 2: Sunday July 15th 2018

A4SD Forum

9:00 – 9:30	<p>Welcome and Recap of previous day</p> <p><i>Moderator: Salina Sanou, Acord Kenya</i></p>
9:30- 10:30	<p>A4SD two years on, reflecting and planning ahead as a community- presentation: <i>Oli Henman, A4SD & Magda Toma, IFP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlights from first 2 years - Presentation of key elements in the new Strategic Plan - Update on project delivery - Role of Facilitation Group and new elections <p>(see Ppt attached)</p> <p>Q & A on Strategic Plan</p> <p><u>Questions/comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we deliver on the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to Leave No One Behind? • Is there seed funding available for key tasks, such as translation, travel etc.? • The figures are impressive. I would like to know about the effectiveness. How do we measure our impact on governments? • The whole environmental dimension is lacking. There is more than climate change. It's also about planetary boundaries in the strategy but also about the membership – going beyond development and human rights organisations. • How do the Facilitation Group and Working Groups interact with each other? • Disaster risk reduction is missing. <p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4SD is an evolving platform. We are open. But we need members' involvement. We recognize the need to become more 'political', to be more challenging and ambitious. For that we need you as members to share your priorities. • The Facilitation Group meets regularly to oversee the platform. The coordination team also meets regularly to ensure delivery of the priorities, with particular links now with the Regional Coordinators and national partners. The Working Groups meet to ensure joint action, this is mainly online to plan ahead for key moments, such as the HLPF and Global Day of Action on 25 Sep. • We now have a strong membership base, many organizations and colleagues take interest. • We had to get the structure and processes right. Now we have to give more focus to content. In terms of showing impact, there are good examples in Kenya and India of strong decentralized networks. We must build together

- How to fund? We have the core support from the Swiss government, plus some more European countries are interested. We could also consider crowd funding of community activities?

Questions/comments:

1. As civil society it seems we have to be cautious, towards the government we might have to be soft in order to be heard. But what do we mean by best practice? Is inclusion of civil society in the VNR drafting committee enough? The VNRs should be a vision for the 2030 Agenda. Now they are often fragmented among the SDGs. We need to analyse the lessons and best practices.
2. The messages of civil society are often very diverse in the HLPF. Private sector is more disciplined. Of course diversity is our strength. But we need a few key messages that everyone can share.
3. We are so focused on the SDGs that we forget about the agenda of human rights. If we don't make the linkages we are lost in their agenda. That's the tricky side of the SDGs. We are fighting for rights. It's not a concession. We are here in a bureaucratic environment where we lose our points.
4. Suggestion to support more global activities, this would include engaging in more agendas and statements. It will give more flexibility.
5. The 2030 Agenda was developed with strong inputs from civil society. Also the connection with the human rights agenda is getting stronger. SDG 17 and capacity development is important. We should build a multi-stakeholder approach: there is recent experience in engaging in multi-stakeholder platforms in Brussels from SDG Watch Europe, how can we learn from that?
6. In Mali there is a civil society platform on the SDGs. They are successful to influence the government including for the VNR this year. Important to ensure language diversity in our meetings- including French!
7. Importance of moving towards shared messaging. We need to get stronger on the substance and the content. Next year is important as the thematic reviews include inequalities, education, decent work, climate change and justice. Suggestion to link up with the inequality campaign launched by GCAP. There are several Major Groups and other Stakeholders but nobody reads their positions. It's up to us to support members to engage and push for change.
8. It's movement building. The strength of the 2030 Agenda is the movement building.

Responses:

- We are very mindful of languages. We did webinars in French and Spanish along with English.
- We invite all members to engage- if you have something, this is the platform to share
- Best practices not only for government but also we promote CSO best practices- under the pillar of innovation, plus capacity building is included.
- We have been working on the relation between the 2030 Agenda, human rights and climate change. In Geneva at the Human Rights Council, with CIVICUS, we ran one of the first events on this and we also hosted a similar discussion at COP23 in Bonn.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are very interested to work with MGoS also on common positions. • We aim to work as complementary to the Major Groups and other Stakeholders – amplifying and spreading the message to a wider group of civil society organisations, we can ensure that people give inputs to the major group discussion – to be in the mailing list etc • The Major Group system is the formal engagement mechanism with the UN system; it provides an entry point for our inputs.
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/coffee
11:00- 12:30	<p>Working Groups session 1:</p> <p>Policy & Advocacy- <i>Anselmo Lee, ADA & Rilli Lapalainen Kehys/IFP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to prepare for 2019 and 2020! • Important to prepare national reports, 2019 includes a focus on SDG 16 monitoring report • Connection between UPR and SDGs – integrate UPR recommendations to VNR • Bring back systemic and governance issues – Goal 17 along with 16. • A4SD provides cross-cutting support and we can provide updated templates for national partners • We can also provide workshops to enable analysis of VNR in each region • Important to consider Peace as a cross-cutting theme in 2019? Goal 18 – UXO (Laos), South Korea-north Korea peace could be – goal 18 (Example) • Opportunity to develop a one week campaign 21-25 September: week of action for peace and sustainable development (21st is Day of Peace, 25th Day of SDGs) • Financing for civic actions – opportunity to approach KOIKA to support Action4SD <p>Suggestions from participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDGs must also address inequality • Uchita: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reforming the HLPF. HLPF is becoming meaningless. b. What are the strategies of intervention? What is the focus? c. The UN systems cannot hold the countries accountable d. Can Action4SD do a parallel people’s HLPF? e. Use the model of the Voluntary People’s Review for parallel VNRs every year? • Peace is not only local; its global! Syria, Lebanon, - conflicts – threatening international security, so these should be addressed and our agenda when we speak about peace and security. • We should also consider arms production and the arms trade: 1 trillion Dollars spent on militarization, while the losses due to violent conflicts is 12% of world GDP • You cannot expect anything from HLPF unless CSO is a partner rather than a stakeholder!

	<p>Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree we need to constantly coordinate with Major Groups • Different dimensions of inequality • Members take the lead on different themes • Peace is a useful aspect brought out by Anselmo • We can consider how the goals link together • We should ask ourselves: are we wasting time? Need to push for reforms of UN and HLPF • We need strategy on allies as we cannot do it alone – work with Parliamentarians? <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergenerational component in our positions? • As things are not moving forward and we should see what are the factors that hold things back • What happens after the HLPF? • Data generation and disaggregation – we should connect to UN statistical commission <p>Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We see HLPF is important and we need to work towards reform in 2019 – to ensure better monitoring and accountability • Will update the templates and support for national parallel reports • A4SD is a key coordination mechanism among the NGOs – but we cannot do everything alone!
12:30-13:00	Lunch
13:00- 14:30	<p>Working Groups session 2</p> <p>Monitoring & Accountability- <i>Sylvia Beales, Gray Panthers</i> (see Ppt in attached presentation)</p> <p>Q&A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data verification is only part of the monitoring – this is also difficult due to lack of data. • Often the government data provides a stage managed picture. There are challenges to the monitoring and review. • Citizen generated data – we need to understand what we mean by this • Complications around the generation of data. Private data – is it reliable? • We have tools like survey monkey available. We should use and compile the data ourselves. • Compare and interlink the data – gives a better picture • There are partnerships with some groups who are working on data • Global partnership on social accountability? Global Partnership on Sustainable Development Data?

	<p>Public Mobilisation: <i>Ingo Ritz, GCAP (See Ppt attached)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development will come when people demand it • Global Day of Action is 25 Sep but it need not be just a day- it can be a week, or be part of the regular mobilisation and advocacy work throughout the year. • We do this year’s mobilisation with the UN SDG Action Campaign • We are also in touch with climate action groups <p>Q&A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did the ‘Stand up’ campaign. Now, ten years on, let’s take stock if such work can bring about real change. • People without deep understanding of the SDGs are getting into the limelight by doing some actions. This may not be very helpful? • Messages should be really global ; actions can be local <p>Innovative Solutions: <i>Deirdre de Burca, IFP (See Ppt attached)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity for convergence of efforts on Capacity development in various areas <p>Q&A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to work closely with grassroots member organisations, so that they can receive support and participate in accountability activity • In capacity development, we could consider sessions on how to work with other stakeholders – eg. governments and even private sector • Opportunity to directly showcase local innovative actions and support local organisations through the website
14:30 – 15:00	<p>Joint calendar of key milestones, conclusions and next steps:</p> <p><i>Emele Duituturaga, PIANGO & Oli Henman, A4SD</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a clear invitation and demand to feed into the HLPF reform process over coming year. • We will kick this off by doing a survey in next month – linking with the Monitoring & Accountability WG • Country roadmaps and parallel reports should be stronger- we will support them through Policy & Advocacy WG • We will aim to focus on a global communications strategy with some key messages – we will support this through the Public Mobilisation WG • Key message – economic and financial justice, social justice? • Thinking of a campaign: Transform and Reforms – forget about review! • Full timetable will be shared on the website in coming weeks