

IGN 5th Session on post-2015 (New York, May 18th)

Follow-up, Monitoring and Review

Statement by Italy

Distinguished co-Facilitators,

We align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the EU and its member-states.

Let us begin by thanking you for your discussion paper which greatly helps us in orienting the discussion on the universal follow-up, monitoring and review pillar of the post-2015.

Allow us to offer a few general remarks in our national capacity. We might come back, tomorrow, with more detailed comments.

Co-Facilitators,

we are of the opinion that what is going to be the fourth pillar of the document that our Leaders will adopt in September is as innovative and essential as the other parts of the new post-2015 framework. It is indeed **THE** element that, beyond accountability, is supposed to ensure **permanent stimulus and encouragement** for the application of the agenda over the next 15 years.

The concept of monitoring is not new in the UN experience, but perhaps it was somewhat missing in the MDGs context, at least in the terms of the clear global vision contained in your paper and of the ambitions foreseen in previous resolutions and other documents on the subject. The monitoring framework is the base for promoting a collaborative environment and to offer incentives to assess progress and achievements at all levels.

Italy sees the monitoring, follow-up and review function of the post-2015 framework accomplishing another important function. The MDGs experience has taught us that at the present pace of change, situations at local, national, regional, global level can fast evolve. Continuous monitoring will allow us to achieve a **constant fine-tuning** and **the progressive adaptation** at all levels of the policies, actions, efforts needed to ensure realization of the SDGs.

All of the above is first and foremost valid at **national and local levels**. Various forms and modalities of follow-up monitoring and review could be put in place according to local ownership and practices, but it will be essential to ensure an inclusive and participatory approach which is key to realize the “contract”, underlying the relationship between people and their governments, that the Secretary General included in his report, “The road to Dignity by 2030” (and that many Delegations referred to today). Local and national are the levels where the participation, involvement and contribution of parliaments, civil society and other stakeholders will probably be more determinant.

At the **regional level**, where common development challenges are best known and international dialogue is easier and more effective, monitoring and reviewing the agenda should result in effective cooperation for helping implementing the new framework and address cross-border challenges and opportunities. Regional review mechanisms already exists in all continents and we coincide in singling out the African Peer Review within NEPAD as a very successful model. But we do think that there is enormous potential also for re-evaluating the role the UN Regional Economic Commissions can play, not only in coordinating these activities, but also in providing the kind of technical assistance needed for the follow-up and monitoring, in the statistical sector, for instance.

Co-Facilitators,

The importance of ensuring periodic review of the implementation of the SDGs at **the global level** cannot be stressed enough.

The institution designed, and specifically created, to review global progress is the High Level Political Forum for the political guidance it is supposed to provide in the implementation of the new agenda.

For the time being the HLPF is a very appealing “box”, but its content has not been fully organized yet. We believe there are **a few general principles** that should underly its future activities.

First. The activity of the HLPF should not be used to rate the performance of countries; rather the contrary, the Forum should help to promote the exchange of best-practices or identify gaps and difficulties and to foster mutual learning to the benefit of the universal application of the new Agenda.

Second. National presentations will be an important feature of the Forum. Their character should be voluntary and based on balanced regional representation in order to provide a global picture of progress towards sustainable development.

Third. Follow-up, Monitoring and Review of all MoIs should be led back to the key oversight role of the HLPF. We see no use in fragmenting (very likely with some unnecessary duplications) the implementation of post-2015 Agenda.

Fourth. In the global monitoring function, we should make full use also of mechanisms and processes that already exist in relation to certain targets or sectors.

Fifth. Monitoring the implementation of the agenda will provide useful insights also on what the Membership needs the UN System for Development to provide. We believe that the HLPF should be associated with the UN Fit for Purpose reflection, whatever form this reflection will take in the future.

Co-Facilitators,

we are ready to engage in the consideration of the details on how the HLPF should work, but we should not forget the overarching principle of “learning by doing”: even after September it might be necessary to do some fine-tuning, once the Forum will eventually have an agenda to monitor. In this regard, we would like to support what the distinguished representative of South Korea proposed earlier on limiting ourselves to general principles and modalities of the monitoring framework for the September outcome document.

Last, but not the least, the quality of monitoring will depend largely on the **quality of data** - and the related capacity to analyze them - and on its availability. On the first issue, we need to scale up activities to strengthen statistical capacities starting with countries where it is most needed. On the second, Italy is ready to contribute to the debate that the Report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on Data Revolution will hopefully generate.

Comments on the Discussion Paper on Follow-up, Monitoring and Review of the Post-2015 Development Agenda – May 19th 2015

A. General Principles to inform a follow-up and review framework

1. *What other principles should be considered to guide the follow-up and review framework?*
2. *What incentives might encourage states to participate and engage actively in follow-up and review?*
3. *Could the Summit launch a comprehensive program of action on data as proposed by the Secretary-General in his synthesis report?*

- Aim at a solid, efficient, credible, relevant and effective framework to monitor, account and review for the post-2015 agenda. Such a framework should be based on meaningful participation, transparency and enhanced accountability. The framework should pursue a multi-layered approach where local, national, regional and global levels find their appropriate space as to allow solutions to be tailored and focused at the most appropriate level.

Ideally the MAR framework should:

- work on the basis of the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and be able to identify trade-offs and challenges in the implementation of SDGs in a trans-sectoral manner. Policy coherence is crucial for sustainable development and MAR should support continuous progress.
- be relevant and useful for policy makers and therefore comprise analytical assessment and key policy recommendations.
- be clear on how it will work in practice, how it will connect the different levels and also indicating timeframes and roles of different actors, including the private sector.
- Pay equal attention to financial and non-financial MoI.
- Be multi-stakeholders, including by strengthening the dialogue with business and work upon the use of sustainability reporting standards and format.
- Combat the silos approach by ensuring multi-sector approach.

- Robust and measurable indicators will be essential. We therefore welcome the ongoing work as decided at last session.

- It will be crucial to strengthen the use of existing data and ensure that higher quality data is collected in a coordinated manner, and to capitalize on new information technologies. In this regard, the Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for sustainable development have made a useful contribution.

- As emphasized by many, including in the OWG proposal, disaggregation of data by income, gender, age, and other factors will be essential to ensure that all relevant groups meet targets and that no one is left behind.

- We must recognize the need to look beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to broader measures of progress, including social, human and natural capital, to address a more comprehensive idea of sustainable livelihoods and well-being. This is a very ambitious transformative shift, as it will contribute to engage in a more permanent and effective way public and private financial actors.

B. National level

1. *Should member states consider developing national implementation strategies within a certain time after the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda?*
 2. *How often should countries be encouraged to undertake national level reviews (annually? biennially?)*
 3. *How can reviews engage members of the public, civil society, the UN system, private sector and other actors?*
 4. *Who should carry out national level reviews? What role could or should national institutions or coordination mechanisms, such as parliaments, councils for sustainable development or other institutions play?*
- National ownership is a crucial element of the future MAR framework. The Agenda Post-2015 does not happen in a vacuum and countries have already taken numerous national and international commitments in the areas touched upon by the SDGs. In this context, it would be important to find the national appropriate policy space for the Post-2015 Agenda, building on the existing national strategies but going forward, taking into consideration that the specific feature of the SDGs proposal is its integrated approach and its capacity to balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions.
 - The frequency of the national reporting will need to take into account specific national capacities, priorities and challenges. A flexible approach need to be explored as the reporting cycle burden upon countries need to be mapped and analyzed.
 - The elaboration of a core set of indicators to measure the Post-2015 Agenda can prove an important instrument for comparability.

D. Global Level

1. *How might global level reviews be more systematic and rigorous than past reviews, yet maintain flexibility? Should the aim be to have all member states submit reports to the HLPF within its four-year cycle?*
2. *Would the HLPF's review work build on possible regional and national reviews, bring together reports by States and other reports on the SDGs, and feed lessons learned back to the national level? Is sufficient time allocated to the HLPF to carry out its review mandate?*
3. *How might the Global Sustainable Development Report and other relevant reports feed into the HLPF?*
4. *What should the relationship be between the work of the HLPF and the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Indicators?*

5. *How should Means of Implementation commitments be reviewed?*
6. *What steps can be taken to support coherence and complementarity across the UN follow-up and review architecture?*
- An effective monitoring and accountability framework should be developed building on existing processes. In particular, the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) should play a key oversight role. Existing mechanisms and processes should be used in a coordinated manner as to avoid duplication and limit administrative burden.
 - In this context, the role of the Global Sustainable Development Report will be crucial in order to strengthen the science-policy interface. We see GSDR particularly relevant in the context of the HLPF under UNGA (every four years). To be effective such Report would need to:
 - Be policy-relevant; but also relevant for stakeholders (business, philanthropic organizations, development cooperation NGOs, etc...).
 - Use UN inter-agency cooperation systems such as the TST. GSDR need to be a collective work by the UN. It also needs to ensure participation of all stakeholders and to report on their contribution to implement the Post-2015 Agenda.
 - Be built on interdisciplinarity and with a focus on integration.
 - Liaise with the numerous important reports and outlooks: IPCC, GEO, Human Rights, Human Development Reports, World Energy Outlook etc..
 - Disaggregation of data, focusing on the most vulnerable, is very important. There is the need to make knowledge available in terms of impacts and drivers/pressures.