

# **Major Groups and Other Stakeholders High Level Political Forum Coordination Mechanism *Terms of Reference***

*As revised and approved by the Coordination Mechanism*

*1 March 2018*

1. Recalling Section C, paragraphs 42 to 55 of the Rio+20 outcome document “*The Future We Want*,” explicitly involving major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) in all matters relating to the UN and Sustainable Development;
2. Further recalling paragraph 84 of the Rio+20 outcome document “*The Future We Want*,” which incorporates all practices from the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) into the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF);
3. And finally recalling UN General Assembly Resolution 67/290 which established the HLPF, particularly referencing paragraphs 8c, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, and 24 which all mandate MGoS to be actively involved in all activities pertaining to the HLPF at all levels;
4. We MGoS, have therefore decided to establish a coordination mechanism for the HLPF.

## **I. Title**

1. The group shall be called the “MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM.”

## **II. Membership**

1. Membership of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM is open to all representatives of the nine Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders active in sustainable development.

## **III. Objectives of the Mechanism**

1. Ensure broad, open, transparent and inclusive participation in the HLPF.
2. Ensure that the rights of access and inclusive participation of MGoS in the HLPF are protected and upheld as mandated by 67/290<sup>1</sup> and potentially expanded.
3. 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.
4. Convene an annual forum for MGoS at which an annual review of engagement activities is presented, including recommendations for future action.

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<sup>1</sup> 67/290, op. cit., paragraph 8c, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 24

#### IV. Methods of Work

1. Meetings of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM will be held on a regular basis as needed. Remote participation will be possible for those unable to attend in person.
2. DESA/DSD will provide technical facilitation for meetings of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM, as well as maintain the official records of meetings, the list of participants, engagement, and results.
3. DESA/DSD is also expected to share and to bring to the attention of the President of ECOSOC and/or President of the General Assembly relevant information about the work of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM.

#### V. The Steering Group

1. A STEERING GROUP will be established by the organizing partners of the nine major groups and focal points of the other stakeholders, or their designated representatives,<sup>2</sup> as identified and outlined in the mentioned resolutions.
2. The STEERING GROUP will be responsible for facilitating the participation of MGoS at HLPF related activities.
3. The STEERING GROUP will facilitate the work of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM to prepare for processes related to the mandate of the HLPF, and in line with A/RES/67/290.<sup>3</sup>
4. The STEERING GROUP will be comprised of one principal and one alternate representative of each major group and other stakeholder, defined as follows:

**a. Major Groups as Identified in Agenda 21:**

- i. Women;
- ii. Children and Youth;
- iii. Indigenous Peoples;
- iv. NGOs;
- v. Local Authorities;
- vi. Workers and Trade Unions;
- vii. Business and Industry;
- viii. Scientific and Technological Community;
- ix. Farmers.

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<sup>2</sup> Major groups identified in Agenda 21, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Check Para 16. Encourages the major groups identified in Agenda 21 and others stakeholders, such as private philanthropic organizations, educational and academic entities, persons with disabilities, volunteer groups and other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development, to autonomously establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms for participation in the high-level political forum 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.

- b. Stakeholders as Mentioned in HLPF Res 67/290:**
  - i. Private philanthropic organizations/Foundations;
  - ii. Educational and academic entities;
  - iii. Persons with disabilities;
  - iv. Volunteer groups.
- c. Stakeholders Mentioned in Rio+20 Outcome - “The Future We Want:”**
  - i. Older persons;
  - ii. Local communities;
  - iii. Migrants.
- d. “Other Relevant Stakeholders Active in Sustainable Development”:** Admittance and number of seats under this category will be subject to a joint decision of the existing STEERING GROUP, including demonstrable governance requirements placed on existing members, particularly as outlined in section V.6 below.
  - i. Rights-holder groups other than those already included in the previous categories<sup>4</sup>
  - ii. Regional mechanisms that are constituted to facilitate inclusive engagement into the Regional Sustainable Development Fora and recognized by the respective Regional Economic Commissions.<sup>5</sup>
  - iii. Thematic mechanisms that formally interface with UN processes related to particular SDGs under review in that year (up to the 2019 cycle).<sup>6</sup>
  - iv. Global public interest networks of significant scope with a track record of active engagement in the HLPF coordination mechanism, and that are constituted for explicit purpose of implementing the 2030 Agenda and whose mandate therefore directly refers to the HLPF. This category should be limited to two spots. Whenever more than two networks demonstrate interest and fulfil all membership requirements, the qualified networks will be requested to coordinate a rotational scheme in their official representation at the STEERING GROUP. Information about the agreed rotational scheme should be provided in writing to the Co-Chairs with names, contacts and a clear timeline for the rotation.
- e. Stakeholder mechanisms for frameworks/processes, not already included in the above listings and that have a mandate formally linked to the HLPF.** This category seeks to give voice and include representatives of the organized major groups and other

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<sup>4</sup> *Provided these groups are legitimate and inclusive platforms that are already constituted or being constituted with the explicit objective to facilitate the inclusive participation into UN processes (i.e. LGBTQI, fisherfolk and other small-scale food producers);*

<sup>5</sup> *e.g. ESCAP Regional Coordination Engagement Mechanism and the currently being established ECE RCEM;*

<sup>6</sup> *Eg- instance the Civil Society Mechanism of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that plays a key role for the thematic review of SDG2 (among others). These mechanisms could engage in the Steering Group in the year when the respective SDGs of reference are being reviewed;*

stakeholders from other UN processes and agendas that are also expected to report through the HLPF, as per the provisions of the their respective follow up and review modalities . Participation in the Steering Group would require a submission of a letter from the stakeholder mechanism and/or the respective secretariat confirming the nomination of focal point and alternate, who have been through the necessary internal consultation and decision-making process. Besides, it is required that the focal point and alternate are from different organizations and constituency. Admittance under this category will be subject to a joint decision of the existing STEERING GROUP, including demonstrable governance requirements placed on existing members, particularly as outline in V.6 below. Examples, but are not limited to, are:

- i. Financing for Development CSO Group (AAAA, paragraph 132)
- ii. 10 Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (Future We Want, paragraph 226);
- iii. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR, paragraph 49).

5. The composition of the STEERING GROUP will, as much as possible, ensure regional and gender balance among its members.
6. All members of the STEERING GROUP must have clear governance structures, consultative processes, and meaningful accountability mechanisms towards their membership as per DESA and additional jointly agreed requirements, including how these organising partners and/or focal points are elected, selected, or appointed, as well as provide some type of governance reporting.
7. Members of the STEERING GROUP may produce joint statements and take joint advocacy action in order to facilitate the participation of MGoS at the HLPF.
8. The STEERING GROUP will meet on a regular basis as needed. Remote participation will be possible for those unable to attend in person.
9. The STEERING GROUP will have a rotating co-chair system. The CO-CHAIRS should be composed of 2 representatives: 1 from a major group and 1 from a stakeholder group, rotated on a yearly basis, with the term of the representative from the major group starting 1 February and ending 31 January of the following year and the term of the representative from a stakeholder group starting 1 August and ending 31 July of the following year. The incoming CO-CHAIRS will be elected by members of the STEERING GROUP a month before the respective terms of office. The CO-CHAIRS will be responsible for, among other tasks:
  - a. Proposing meeting agendas, including for the annual review meeting of the full membership of the Coordination Mechanism;
  - b. Reviewing agreements;
  - c. Proposing and following up on actions;
  - d. Preparing notes of the meetings or appointing others to do so;
  - e. Sharing information;
  - f. Facilitating the participation and contribution of all members of the STEERING GROUP.The CO-CHAIRS will be eligible for re-election for an additional term of one year.

10. If a CO-CHAIR cannot complete his/her term of office, the STEERING GROUP will convene to elect a replacement for the remainder of the term of office. If the remainder of the term of office is less than six months, the replacement CO-CHAIR will be eligible for a one-year term of office without election.
11. Each STEERING GROUP member has one vote. The STEERING GROUP aims to make decisions based on consensus; however, if consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be conducted. The simple majority of the votes prevails. STEERING GROUP members must attend at least *two-thirds* of the meetings during a six months period in order to be able to exercise their vote and they must demonstrate engagement. The CO-CHAIRS are expected to keep records of member participation.
12. The STEERING GROUP, or upon suggestion of any member of the Coordination Mechanism submitted to it, may create subcommittees for specific collective tasks, and thematic groups for coordination of substantive ongoing thematic areas with members of the broader COORDINATION MECHANISM. These subcommittees will carry out their work and report back directly to the STEERING GROUP. Subcommittees will operate under the auspices of the STEERING GROUP, which will transmit results and recommendations, once approved, to the COORDINATION MECHANISM. Subcommittees can be disbanded by the STEERING GROUP, as and when appropriate.
13. Minutes of all meetings of the STEERING GROUP will be publicly available.
14. The list of the members of the STEERING GROUP (representatives and alternates) will be publicly available.

## **VI. Objectives of the Steering Group**

1. Facilitate multi-stakeholder inputs into the HLPF programme through DESA/DSD and at meetings with the President of ECOSOC.
2. Propose draft programmes for Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) and other related events that address themes relevant to MGoS and their work in the context of sustainable development.
3. Propose draft guidelines and templates for stakeholder role in national and regional reviews of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
4. Identify key representatives to be funded and/or non-funded speakers, panelists, and moderators at all stakeholder engagement opportunities in the context of the HLPF. An open and transparent call for speaker nominations will be facilitated by DESA/DSD. The STEERING GROUP shall review nominations and select these speakers, panelists, and moderators. Specific criteria for selection will be set by the STEERING GROUP accordingly. Selection processes shall not preclude, unbalance, or compromise the engagement of MGoS, especially those with lower financial capacity. The final selection of speakers and participants will be based upon a balanced approach towards constituency, region, gender, and age, as well as expertise.
5. The STEERING GROUP will act to facilitate the integration of broad and diverse perspectives at the HLPF, setting clear, transparent, and inclusive criteria for engagement.
6. Facilitate dialogue and, whenever possible, identify consensus on core issues regarding the participation of MGoS in the HLPF.

7. Mobilize actions and concrete outputs that will strengthen the overall credibility, visibility, and influence of MGoS in the HLPF.
8. Facilitate the production of position papers on the theme of HLPF meetings as needed.
9. Develop and promote communication and outreach strategies that supports public awareness and increased understanding of the HLPF.
10. Organize meetings of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM and propose the agenda.
11. Maintain the mailing list of the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM.
12. Consider issues related to fundraising, including administration of a trust fund that may be established.

## **VII. Amendments**

These Terms of Reference may be amended, as and when necessary, by the STEERING GROUP for approval by the MGoS HLPF COORDINATION MECHANISM.

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