

**Synthesis Report - A compilation of inputs by the
Major Groups and other Stakeholders for the SDG Summit**

Introduction

1. On 24 and 25 September 2019, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was convened at summit level under the auspices of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG Summit). The SDG Summit resulted in the adoption of the political declaration A/HLPF/2019/L.1 entitled '*Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*'. In order to make the consultations on both the organization of the activities of the Forum and on the political declaration as inclusive as possible, and to profit from the knowledge, expertise and experience of a broad range of stakeholders, an online platform for collection of inputs for stakeholders was created to share their comments, reflections and suggestions on the format of the SDG Summit and its outcomes.

2. A total of 132 inputs were received from Major Groups and other Stakeholders. Inputs were received from all five regions of the world, including Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and the Middle East. Stakeholders from 46 countries submitted comments. The following countries were represented in the inputs: Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Cameroon, Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, United States of America, Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Japan, Thailand, Australia, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Ireland, Netherlands, Finland, Italy, Serbia, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt.

3. The messages revolved around nine thematic areas: consequences of economic growth, meaningful participation of civil society, gender equality, climate change, interlinkages between the SDGs, financing the SDGs, data, partnerships and HLPF review.

Key messages

4. The main issues addressed included the following:

- Accelerated implementation is the only solution to achieve Sustainable Development Goals globally. The implementation process must represent the particularities of each national context and widely involve all interested parties.
- The success for sustainable development lies in the deep cooperation and inclusion of civil society, with the maximum representation of the various interest groups. In particular, a meaningful engagement of those left behind is the key to an equitable progress of the whole society.
- Sustainable society relies on the sustainability of environment. Climate change is one of the major obstacles in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. There is an urgent need to adopt climate prospective as the guiding light towards sustainability.
- Allocate more financial resources for development programs equally with societies and in all national territories it is the fulcrum to accelerate the step towards the fulfillment of the objectives planned for 2030. Member States and the private sector are called to differentiate financing plans by creating new models of international partnership.

- Data collection and monitoring must be strengthened. On the one hand, data disaggregation is essential to reliably assess progress and identify gaps. Furthermore, new sources of data collection must be examined at the decision-making level. In this context, civil society organizations are fundamental to amplify the spectrum of data supply.

Gaps and Challenges

5. The main issues addressed included the following:

- While progress has been made toward several goals and targets, it has been slow or reversed in others, and the world is not on track to meet the SDGs by 2030 or to ensure that no one is left behind. Overall, there is concern that progress toward the SDGs is too slow and that we are facing setbacks in some areas.
- The participation of civil society on consultative and implementation stages towards the achievement of SDGs has been very limited, and in various occasions there are evidence of shrinking space for local organizations to direct the progress of the SDGs.
- The most vulnerable groups, including women, children, refugees, internally displaced people and persons with disabilities, continue to be at risk of being left behind.
- Further work is needed to gather relevant data that can illuminate the issues around inequalities and begin to identify and address its causes. More engagement and confrontation with the relevant sources from society must be included in the national data collection processes.

6. The inputs from Major Groups and other Stakeholders showed that, despite some progress, many gaps and challenges impede the realization of the 2030 Agenda. Overall, it is highlighted that progress in realizing the SDGs is too slow. Promises to reach the furthest behind have not been fulfilled and there is a lack of urgency to achieve the 2030 Agenda. As such, marginalized groups are being left behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

7. Major Groups and other Stakeholders believe that climate change remains a pressing issue which is not being adequately addressed. The global economic growth model has put pressure on the human and environmental systems, leaving no time to combat climate change and further exacerbating inequality and poverty.

8. Another challenge faced since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda is a lack of high quality, timely and disaggregated data for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. As such, progress cannot be measured, and many groups remain invisible to policy makers.

9. There is a widespread concern among civil society for the shrinking space of their participation. At the national level, governments fail to engage civil society organizations in the VNR process. At the global level, civil society is experiencing time and space constraints in engaging at the HLPF.

10. A number of inputs highlighted that financing the implementation of the SDGs remains a challenge especially for developing countries and countries vulnerable to climate change.

11. Finally, many stakeholders noted a disconnect between the 2030 Agenda and existing human rights mechanisms. Holistic approaches to implement the SDGs are still needed.

Discussion on SDG Summit

12. The main issues addressed included the following:

- In preparation of the Summit, a meaningful incorporation of the outcomes related to the sustainable development issues from other international fora should be included in the discussions of the SDG Summit, including regional strategies and public – private consultations.
- The focus of the discussion undertaken during the SDG Summit should relate the analysis of the nation-based results in the implementation of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, including their limits, gaps and progress. The Summit should provide for a constructive dialogue fundamental to exchange experiences both between countries and with civil society, to which a substantial space must be attributed. The main topics of discussion should include gender equality, climate change, interlinkages between the SDGs, financing the SDGs, data, partnerships.
- The Summit should contribute to reconfirm the commitment of states to continue with a planned and accelerated actions towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, focusing attention on the principle of leaving no one behind and building a new international model of cooperation and share of burden between countries.
- At a national and international level, a new model of economic development should be put into practice, able to properly reflect the needs of contemporary society, providing for the limitation of environment degradation, restoring gender equality and setting up opportunity for the most disadvantaged groups.

13. The majority of the inputs suggested that the Summit should be considered holistically, taking into consideration other ongoing international processes and agreements, particularly those related to human rights and climate change. Moreover, most of the proposals indicated that the Summit should pursue a bottom-up approach that builds on previous national and regional forums and the outcomes of those forums.

14. The best way to reflect the principles of ‘leaving no one behind’ and ‘reaching the furthest away first’ is to bring the voices of those who are left behind to the Summit itself. Ensuring the meaningful participation of those who are routinely left behind allows for the sharing of experiences and challenges faced by these groups on the ground. As such, speakers from grassroots NGOs, developing countries and marginalized groups should be funded by the UN to participate at the Summit and given adequate time and space to share their experiences.

15. Envisioning the ideal SDG Summit from civil society prospective reveals that the SDG Summit should provide an honest, clear and critical evaluation of progress made towards achieving the SDGs, including the gaps and challenges that exist. Particular focus should be placed on progress that Member States have made in reaching the furthest behind first. Lessons learned and best practices should be shared.

16. The active and meaningful participation of various civil society actors from marginalized groups is highly expected, including older persons, children and youth, and women. Stakeholders expect to share experiences, best practices, lessons learned and challenges in implementing and monitoring the SDGs in order to accurately represent the reality faced on the ground. In addition to being able to participate in person, stakeholders stress the importance of and desire for virtual participation.

17. Member States should recognize the urgent need to take climate action. Progress has been slow towards reversing climate change. Climate change mitigation should be at the heart of the Summit's discussions to strengthen the commitment of Member States to their existing obligations.

18. On the other hand, Major Groups and other Stakeholders indicated repeatedly that interlinkages and the interrelatedness of the SDGs must be considered. Moreover, synergies between the 2030 Agenda and other UN processes should be strengthened. Siloed approaches should be abandoned and replaced with synergistic approaches.

19. To this end, financial resources must be mobilized to achieve the SDGs and to leave no one behind. Financing the SDGs remains a major challenge in all countries. Member States should commit to the continued expansion of resources at both the domestic and international levels.

20. Closing the data gap must be considered a priority. Development activities are dependent on data. As such, Member States must commit to continuously improving the collection and use of data disaggregated by age, sex and gender identity and expression. In addition, Member States should aim to integrate unofficial data from other stakeholders.

21. Great insistence was placed by the representatives from civil society on a more ambitious HLPF. The review of the HLPF must benefit from lessons learned. Member States should commit to reform the follow-up and review mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda.

22. Looking at the outcomes of the SDG Summit, it is highly expected that the Summit will renew and reaffirm the political will and urgency of Member States to achieve the SDGs. At the end of the Summit, key priorities for SDG achievement should be identified and a clear roadmap for accelerating progress should be determined. The Summit should result in accelerated action-oriented commitments and strengthened accountability of Member States in realizing the 2030 Agenda.

23. Civil society urges a call for accelerated efforts towards the inclusion and meaningful participation of civil society in implementing the SDGs, nonetheless there is concern for the shrinking space of civil society. Without civil society, the SDGs will not be met in time. All stakeholders, including those furthest left behind, must be active participants in the budgeting, policy making, implementation, acceleration and review processes of the 2030 Agenda. The 2030 Agenda will not be achieved without collaboration and coordination between all stakeholders.

24. Leaving no one behind requires tackling structural obstacles. Thus, many inputs specify that the growth must be equitable and sustainable. Those who are left behind are often structurally locked out of progress and this must be tackled appropriately. Finally, the role of women in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should also be strengthened. Meaningful participation of all women should be ensured at all levels and in all areas of sustainable development.

25. Primarily, at the Summit Major Groups and other Stakeholders want to see Member States renewing their commitment and political will to achieve the SDGs, leave no one behind and reach the furthest away first. Deliberate laws and policies should be put in place which prioritize and accelerate progress for those furthest behind.

26. It is noted that the western model of economic growth is no longer the most effective. To achieve sustainable development, alternative growth models should be explored. If the current model is maintained, growth will exceed planetary reserves. Profits should be reinvested into sustainable solutions.

27. At the national and local levels, civil society indicated that governments should commit to creating enabling conditions for the integrated and coherent implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Specifically, interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and human rights must be strengthened. All policies and resource allocation through financing for development must be linked to human rights norms and governments must be held accountable for performance against human rights monitoring.

28. In order to achieve the global goals, Major Groups and other Stakeholders urge that each country should allocate sufficient funds towards national SDG implementation. International public finance available for the implementation of the SDGs should be increased as well as Official development aid (ODA).

29. New and strengthened partnerships are needed to achieve the SDGs. Partnerships between governmental and non-governmental actors should be promoted. Emphasis should be placed on collaboration, sharing and commonalities between actors.

30. To leave no one behind, a multi-stakeholder approach must be adopted when implementing, monitoring and reviewing the SDGs. The inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, including children, youth, women, indigenous peoples, older persons, LGBTI persons, persons with disabilities and rural populations, is essential. Those furthest behind should be empowered and included in the decision-making processes which affect them.

Good practices

31. Some of the good practices included in the online platform on behalf of Major Groups and other Stakeholders are:

CSOs engagement and strategic partnership

32. Many organizations report that involving locally speaking strategic civil society organizations in the process of increasing community sensibilization on relevant issues, positively contributes to establish a close link with the local governmental authorities and helps to create a multi-stakeholder scenario for action. This contributes to explore ways to include powerful voices and organizations in advocacy and interventions.

33. A case study of collaboration between CSOs, IGOs and national delegations showcased practical examples that demonstrate the value of a human rights-based approach to achieving the SDGs and their related issues, with a central focus on the role of the right to water and sanitation in building resilience. Several countries have successfully integrated human right based approaches in their legislative and policy frameworks regulating access to water and sanitation and resilience building. By putting forward evidence-based examples of how national policies can be inclusive of both human rights and SDG implementation, FI aims to inspire Member States to consider the increased longer-term benefits to these approaches to their citizens, governments, and environments.

34. CSOs often report that they have neither been informed nor consulted by their governments on particular national issues. To address this gap, unions and civil society organizations from Pakistan attended a workshop to learn about the SDGs. As a result of enhanced awareness, a participant provided input into the development of the Punjab government's new labor policy to combat child labor in brick kilns and produce "clean" child-labor-free bricks. The revised policy, aligned with Indicator 8.7 under SDG 8, was adopted by the Punjab government in January 2019. Increased awareness, genuine inclusion, and political will yielded tangible progress.

35. Bridge 47 is developing a minimum of 16 effective partnerships at European and national levels using global citizenship education as a tool to form partnerships. Through this work Bridge 47 partners have learned that to form a successful multi-stakeholder partnership for target 4.7 implementation, requires rigorous research and, importantly, investment in language challenging CSOs to change and adapt their language to interact with different partners and organizations.

Role of education

36. Proposed and widely promoted public awareness as an integral and essential part of a global education effort to strengthen attitudes, values and activities that are compatible with sustainable development.

37. Promote training as one of the most important ways of developing human resources focused on specific trades and aim to fill knowledge and skill gaps to help marginalized communities find employment and skills, participate in activities related to environment and development.

38. The modern ICTs are widely used to create new opportunities for more accessible educational programs. Civil society partnership networks are essential channels for exchanging ideas and deliver new educational opportunities.

39. Engaging grassroots organization was found as a key to nationalize and implement SDGs. Involvement of youth in SDGs-learning programs contributes to let them come up with ideas that they believe it can nationalize the SDGs in the country and have a direct impact on people lives. Additionally, engaging grassroots organization was found as a key to nationalize and implement SDGs.

40. Different organizations expressed their experience in using social media to educate people on the SDGs. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of a civic surveillance system that ensures a free and independent media able to broadcast reliable information on the implementation of development programs curbing the exploitation of these achievements to political purposes.

41. Realizing the need to monitor SDG 4 for informed policy making, ITA in collaboration with the relevant government departments and other stakeholders, has prepared a template for tracking the progress on SDG 4 indicator by indicator. This template provides a comprehensive way of monitoring not only the global indicators, but also the thematic ones as well. On the basis of this template, SDG 4 cards are going to be prepared at the national and provincial levels. Therefore, making it easier for all to understand and monitor the progress on SDG 4. The collected information is also to be used for the training of parliamentarians, judges and lawyers so that they may also be equipped with the proper understanding of SDG 4 and Right to Education. On inclusive education, ITA has adapted the mainstream ASER Pakistan Learning Assessment Tools into two disability-friendly formats: Braille and Pakistan Sign Language (<http://itacec.org/inclusion>). This has been done for the first time in Pakistan which means that the learning outcomes of children with disabilities can now also be assessed, thus paving the way for their inclusion in the mainstream schools.

Leaving no one behind

42. At the core of all action is the commitment to always create the specific conditions for the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society to feel empowered so they can speak up for themselves and participate in decision-making processes that directly affect them. The knowledge and experience gathered by people and communities should be considered as essential in both research and design of SDG programming and monitoring.

43. In Sweden, political leadership by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, resulted in the country becoming in 2014 the first country in the world to launch a feminist foreign policy; this aimed at systematically integrating a gender perspective into the foreign policy agenda by “strengthen[ing] all women’s and girls’ Rights, Representation and Resources, based on the Reality in which they live.”

44. In Colombia, mobilization by women-led civil society organizations resulted in a constitution with over 100 gender provisions, including on zero tolerance for sexual and gender-based violence. While continued action is needed to translate these commitments into reality, post-conflict reconstruction offers an opportunity to re-set the baseline away from segregated and gender-blind approaches and toward inclusive and equitable alternatives: this requires designing democratic systems for non-discriminatory participation, investing in reparations for harms suffered during the conflict, and prioritizing social protection floors that ensure economic, social and cultural rights, rather than austerity measures that undermine and re-institutionalize discrimination and violence.

45. MERU Women’s Garden Project (<https://meruwomen.org>) aims to create sustainable gardening techniques and tools for enabling women to become mentors and pioneers of agricultural sustainability within the community. In addition, girls are educated on their rights, empowering them to stand up to damaging cultural practices such as FGM.

46. In Lebanon, over the last 5 years Good Shepherd has facilitated women empowerment programs in Beirut working with Iraqi women refugees. Another successful program was with refugee children in Beqaa. Additionally, Good Shepherd set up an education program with 350 children.

47. COC Netherlands and MICRO Rainbow have started a pilot in Guyana, Ghana and Myanmar to increase access to Micro Finance for LGBTI people, based on an earlier pilot by MICRO Rainbow that amounted in a best practice on how to work with Micro Financing institutions (MFI’s). The method: LGBTI should be supported in meeting the criteria of MFI and MFI’s should be lobbied to adjust their requirements to the realities of LGBTI communities. These lessons learned will be adapted to engaging with local governments that implement poverty reduction and socio-economic empowerment programs to make them inclusive of LGBTI people.

Tackling climate change

48. Best practices involve environmental health risk assessment management and regulation, with global catastrophic risk aversion. This management has to be human and Earth ethics based. Integrating environment economy and social equity can work but requires economics to be reformed by ethics (human and Earth).

49. In 2017, France adopted a “Corporate duty of vigilance law” obligating French companies to implement an effective “vigilance” or due diligence plan that directly and practically addresses environmental, health and security, and business-related human rights risks, including serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

50. As a water institute working with freshwater resources, SIWI strive to work cross-sectorally, linking different areas to water such as food/agriculture, energy, cities, human and environmental health. Their work on exploring water’s interconnections has allowed to approach the SDGs in an integrated way and as a result, identify cross-cutting solutions for national and local institutions to tackle the SDGs with efficiency and wider-ranging impact. Many SDGs and NDCs are dependent on smart and integrated water management. For example, climate change will increase the exposure to water scarcity, especially for disadvantaged groups such as rural households engaged in agricultural production in low income countries. Equitable access to water for agricultural production can make the difference between farming as a mere

means of survival and farming as a reliable source of livelihoods, contributing to not only SDG 6 but also SDG 10.

Explore other projects:

- Fundación Mujer Levántate and Fundación Madre Josefa
<http://mujerlevantate.cl>
- Good Shepherd International Foundation - Children not Miners 'Maisha'
www.maishafilm.com
- Good Shepherd International Foundation - Women and Girl Empowerment Programs
<https://www.fondazionebuonpastore.org/our-impact/>
- Mahila – A Women's Movement Rising
www.mahilafilm.com
- Good Shepherd Asia Pacific - Indonesia - Flores Women take a special Place in Indonesia Fashion Week
<http://www.goodshepherd-asiapacific.org.au/project/340>
- African Union - Africa Education Innovation Handbook 2018
https://www.dropbox.com/s/3d2hs3jwafz1yh6/Africa_Education_Innovations_Handbook_2018_final.pdf?dl=0
- SDG Action Campaign - Programa de Embajadores Perú Agenda 2030: Por el desarrollo sostenible y el mundo que queremos
<https://sdgactioncampaign.org/2017/03/16/programa-de-embajadores-peru-agenda-2030-por-el-desarrollo-sostenible-y-el-mundo-que-queremos/>
- The Millennials Movement - 2030 Agenda Ambassadors Program
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDDqsxBJ0BU>
- CEPAL Conferencias - Tercera Reunión del Foro de los Países de América Latina y el Caribe sobre Desarrollo Sostenible (2:30:40 minute)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVzRT4mRyLk&t=13348s>
- Unidad de Conferencias CEPAL - Foro: Juventudes de América Latina y el Caribe 2030 'Construyendo un presente distinto'
<http://conferencias.cepal.org/jovenesODS2019/>
- Together 2030 - Together 2030 partners launch new civil society handbook on engaging parliaments in support of the SDGs
<https://bit.ly/2VYEDQM>
- Together 2030 - From principles to practice – Together 2030 and Newcastle University launch 3rd perceptions survey report
<https://bit.ly/30RWyfr>
- Together 2030 - New Report reviews National Civil Society Coalitions working on the SDGs
<https://bit.ly/2HL5fAQ>
- Soroptimist International – Water and Women
<https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/campaigns/women-water-and-leadership-2017-2019/>