



Event Summary

Major Groups and other Stakeholders' briefing days

**Organised by UNDESA, Stakeholder Forum and CIVICUS
and in-kind support of The World We Want**

This report reflects a synthesis of the discussions at the briefing days. This has not been consulted with, or endorsed by the Major Groups and other Stakeholders' constituencies.

With the financial support of the European Commission, and logistical support of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), Stakeholder Forum and CIVICUS convened two briefing days (September 20 and 22) at the opening of the 68th United Nations (UN) General Assembly to inform Major Groups and other Stakeholders about engagement in the post-2015 development agenda and post-Rio+20 processes.

The first event, held on 20 September, was entitled 'The post-Rio+20 processes: Opportunities for sustainable development governance', which assessed progress on the Rio+20 outcomes and entry points for stakeholders in the follow-up processes. In particular, the more than 300 participants reviewed lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), proposed new models of stakeholder engagement for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and were briefed on how the high-level week of the 68th General Assembly would advance sustainable development processes emanating from Rio+20.

The second event, held on 22 September, was entitled 'The Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda' and focused on the current state of the SDGs process, what happens next, including the planning of the stakeholder intersessional events and morning meetings with the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs, and advocacy planning for the February-September drafting process of the OWG's SDGs report. In addition, the event explored linkages between the post-MDGs and SDGs processes, and their ultimate need for convergence, together with the likely implications this will have for Major Groups and other stakeholders.

The overarching message from the briefing days is that Major Groups and other stakeholders need to be more engaged in the delivery of UN led processes on sustainable development. The keynote address by Ambassador John Ashe, President of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly reiterated this point by emphasising the need for stakeholders to be involved in the debate and the design of the post-2015 development agenda. Other key messages from the briefing days focused on the need for the contributions of Major Groups and other stakeholders to be formally considered in the decision-making processes of the OWG on SDGs and the HLPF. Additional talking points are provided below in the notes from each of the events' sessions:

Day 1

The post-Rio+20 processes: Opportunities for sustainable development governance

Welcome/opening remarks

Louise Kantrow, Business and Industry Major Group, event co-facilitator; Mwangi Waituru, Beyond 2015 co-chair, event co-facilitator; Farooq Ullah, Executive Director, Stakeholder Forum; Nikhil Seth, Director, UNDESA

- Role of stakeholders is to provide expert input to decision making processes and to hold governments accountable for their actions.
- The two phases of the post-2015 processes include the formulation phase and implementation phase. Now is the time to help influence the formulation phase on how one approaches sustainable development.

Session 1: Review of the Rio+20 commitments

Marion Barthelemey, UNDESA

- Rio+20 brought a renewed engagement, commitments and excitement to sustainable development processes.
- Reformed the UN architecture for the governance of sustainable development, examples include the transition from the CSD to the HLPF and universal membership of UNEP.

Nikhil Chandavarkar, UNDESA

- There are over 1400 voluntary commitments which amount to about US \$636 million.
- 59% of commitments come from Major Groups and civil society.
- Para 283 of the Rio+20 outcome document mandates that a registry of voluntary commitments be maintained.

Amy Cutter, Stakeholder Forum and John Romano, NRDC

- Created a document to be launched on 26 September 2013 on progress to date and accountability of voluntary commitments.
- 4 review areas include: target date, work plan, stakeholder engagements and transparency.
- Voluntary commitments embody spirit of Rio+20 and are key to the implementation of its vision.
- Comments: Voluntary commitments need be held to strict follow-up and accountability standards.

Session 2: Panel discussion: An overview of the opening of the 68th session of the General Assembly, including key processes (Post-Rio+20 and Post+2015) and their associated timescales

Jack Cornforth, Stakeholder Forum

- OWG will submit their formal report on September 2014 to the 69th UN General Assembly.
- September 2014- September 2015 will be a period where discussion on the integration of SDGs and post 2015 development goals will occur.

Debra Jones, Save the Children, Co-Chair Beyond 2015/GCAP UN Working Group

- High Level Panel of Eminent Persons report released in May 2013 puts sustainable development at core of post 2015 agenda.
- Estimated that more than a million people have participated in local, regional and global consultations, especially through the World We Want 2015 web platform.

David Le Blanc, UNDESA

- Overview of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (SDFC).
- Para 254 of Rio+20 outcome document links resource mobilization to implementation of SDGs.
- Goal is to have a report ready by September 2014 to coincide with the report of the OWG. An outreach and communication strategy is being developed and will be discussed at the second meeting of the Committee in December 2-6.

Ambassador Eduardo Gálvez of the Permanent Mission of Chile; member of SDFC

- There needs to be a domestic enabling environment for effective international SD financing.
- Awareness and integration of multiple conference outcomes need to be synthesized for a coherent financing strategy.

Jorge Laguna-Celis, Senior Advisor to the President of the UN General Assembly

- First role is to support member states, second role is to provide information and the third role is to increase coherence between principal organizations of the UN.
- Be ready to participate at multiple levels and help promote the idea that this is a historic opportunity to shape the SD agenda.

Session 3: Panel discussion: Overview transition from Commission on Sustainable Development to the High Level Political Forum

Irena Zubcevic, UNDESA

- 5 phases: Environmental Phase 1948-1972, Environment and Development Phase 1972-1987, Towards Sustainable Development Phase 1987-1992, Sustainable Development Phase 1992-2012, Sustainable Development Integration Phase 2012- Present .

Jeffery Huffines, CIVICUS

- Goal is to ensure enhanced participation of civil society in HLPF compared to the CSD by implementing the bold language on Major Groups and other stakeholders' engagement found in UN General Assembly resolution mandating HLPF.
- Recommended modalities for the HLPF will be developed by Major Groups and other stakeholders in cooperation with UN DESA by December/January.
- HLPF to convene annually with ministers through ECOSOC and every 4 years under the General Assembly.

Joop Theunissen, UNDESA

- L2 resolution at UN General Assembly aimed to strengthen ECOSOC and looks to integrate efforts with the HLPF.
- The use of ad-hoc processes to make decisions is helping UN make more inclusive and effective.

Chantal Line Carpentier for Barbara Adams, Global Policy Forum, author of DESA/DSD independent report

- Open the discussion on the coverage of stakeholders in the Major Groups with respect to the inclusion of additional groups as well as 18 other recommendations.
- Make the process more relevant for participation of social movements.
- UN needs to demonstrate that Major Groups' contributions are officially taken into consideration.

Susan Eckey, Minister Counselor, Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN

- HLPF should be a home for the SDG discussions and be eager to hear ideas from stakeholders.

Americo Beviglia Zampetti, Head of the Economic Section, Permanent Mission of the Delegation of the European Union to the UN

- The European Union's goal in negotiating bold language for Major Groups and other stakeholders engagement in the HLPF resolution was to have civil society incorporated into decision making processes.

Session 4: Panel discussion: Developing new modalities for enhanced stakeholder engagement for the HLPF

Dave Andrews, Food and Water Watch

- Within the Food and Agriculture Organization, civil society has a clear place within the organizational structure, and is widely recognized as a best practice model for stakeholder engagement in the UN system.

Jan-Gustav Strandenaes, Stakeholder Forum

- It is important to specify what enhanced and innovative stakeholder engagement could look like for the HLPF.
- Meeting timelines and having a commitment to engagement is needed for maintaining stakeholder participation.
- Need to develop joint advocacy strategy to lobby the HLPF for enhanced stakeholder engagement.

Session 4.1: Proposals for enhanced stakeholder engagement with the HLPF:

Chantal Line Carpentier UNDESA, on how to secure participation from the South

- Ensure that the modalities of a conference and processes include language on support for Major Groups and other stakeholders' participation.
- Make sure that Member States contributing to these conferences and processes indicate that a proportion of these funds can/should be allocated to Major Groups and other stakeholders' participation.
- Approach governments in the capital to include Major Groups and other stakeholders in delegations.

Next steps and closing remarks

Louise Kantrow, Business and Industry Major Group, event co-facilitator; Mwangi Waituru, Beyond 2015 co-chair, event co-facilitator; Paul Quintos, IBON International

- World public opinion can act as another superpower and has the potential to influence governmental and intergovernmental decisions.

Day 2 **The SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda**

Welcome/opening remarks

Saba Loftus, Children and Youth Major Group, event co-facilitator; Maruxa Cardama, Communities-Coalition for Sustainable Cities and Regions in the new UN Development Agenda, event co-facilitator; Farooq Ullah, Executive Director, Stakeholder Forum

- “None of us acting alone can achieve success” –Nelson Mandela
- We have to engage others; engagement on SDGs and post-2015 is not just people in this room- it is all of humanity.

Keynote address

John Ashe, President-elect of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly

For post-2015, we need to embed sustainability in the way we plan, live, do business and seek recreation. Sustainability must be integrated in government policies and programs and how the private sector interacts with the world.

Six high level events in 68th UN GA with certain themes that address the pressing issues we face going forward:

- What is the role of women, young and civil society in the new development agenda?
- How can we incorporate human rights and encourage the rule of law?
- How do we maximize the benefits of certain demographics? i.e. the south-south
- How can we strengthen new and existing partnerships for better development outcomes?
- How do we promote stable and peaceful society so that all can benefit without living in fear?
- How do we address the system challenges of water, sanitation and sustainable energy?

Much of the audience was pleased with the importance placed on civil society and human rights. Participants highlighted missing issues such as migration, rights of older peoples, peoples with disabilities, and other topics and groups are considered.

Questions:

- How are you planning to integrate intergenerational equity into the post 2015 agenda?
- How will access look like with the events to follow? How will the issue of climate change be addressed in other forums?

Responses:

- A representative from civil society will present to the GA and tell us what YOU would like to see in a post 2015 development agenda.
- Nothing has been set- we are still in the defining the stage and you (civil society) ought to have an important role to play. SG announced last December that he intends to convene a summit on climate at the start of the 69th session.

Session 1: Overview of SDGs process to date

Eleanor Blomstrom, Women's Environment and Development Organization

- The SDGs are anticipated to be a driver for implementation, not to divert focus from the MDGs but to make them stronger.
- The OWG on SDGs grew as 70 member states created clusters/triads to occupy the group's 30 seats.
- The SDGs are action orientated, global in nature, universal in nature, and precise.
- OWG submitted a progress report to the 68th General Assembly.

- There are four more sessions to be held until February 2014.
- The OWG will submit its final report to the 69th General Assembly in September 2014.

Rosa Lizarde, GCAP/Feminist Task Force

- First priority is access, second is engagement.
- Need to be vigilant about the role of private sector and business and possible shrinking civil society space.
- SDG process is more concrete in its path forward. Post 2015 process is more ambiguous and within that ambiguity there is opportunity for creative influence.
- The two paths will come together in September 2014.

Session 2: Entry points into the process on SDGs

Sascha Gabizon, Women's Major Group

- Morning sessions allow for discussions with the co-chairs in the form of speaking time and interventions for ALL stakeholders, not only traditional participants from the Major Groups.
- Each morning has a self-selected steering committee of civil society that help organise the morning sessions with the OWG.
- Major Groups and other stakeholders are in the process of creating a steering committee to plan two intersessionals with the OWG on SDGs to improve joint advocacy activities.

Ola Gorranson, UNDESA, www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org

- On the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform there are 26 thematic clusters that cover each of the OWG thematic areas, which allow for greater knowledge of the prominent issues and exchanges among Major Groups and other stakeholders and experts on these areas. Ultimately this facilitates the development of briefs and joint positions.
- Organisations can create a profile and upload their position papers and briefs and/or comments on others' briefs.
- Position papers from the clusters on the sustainable development knowledge sharing platform, SDGs E-Inventory, & World We Want will feed into the OWG.

Zach Hongola, World We Want, www.worldwewant2015.org

- Social media site where individuals/organizations can freely create a profile/proposal so that they can join relevant conversations.
- People can propose questions and build their advocacy processes to feed into the agenda.

Jack Cornforth, Stakeholder Forum, www.SDGseInventory.org

- The SDGs e-Inventory increases the likelihood of an eventual SDGs framework which fully integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- Analysis of submissions will be undertaken to identify trends, commonalities and knowledge gaps.

Priscilla Achakpa, Field Hearing Partner

- Conducting work in the field is necessary to understand the needs of those who we wish to support.

Ambassador Csaba Körösi, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN, and co-chair of the OWG on SDGs

- Focus on creating a strategic message with implementation in mind, be bold, ambitious and be provocative.
- Governments are built in silo structures but we must challenge ourselves to think in three dimensions of sustainable development.
- Human capital, social capital, natural capital, built capital, financial capital exists and a balance is needed.
- Not going to design a social revolution but instead we are trying to design a calculated evolution.

Session 3: Convergence of post-MDG and SDG processes

Moderator: Jeannet Lingan, Stakeholder Forum

Bernadette Fischler, CAFOD

- Five “I” barriers need to be addressed: Institutional areas - at all the levels of the UN and EU etc., Ideological - schools of thought, Intellectual – delivering all three dimensions of sustainable development, Inter-politics - The political process must take into account the intergovernmental process, Integration – bringing SDGs and post-2015 processes together.

Ming Hwee Chong, Baha’i International

- Maintain perspectives that: geopolitical map is much more complex today, in addition to the 3 dimensions of sustainable development we need to recognize human rights as an interrelated topic, and policy programs will have legitimacy if there is full and meaningful participation.

David Hallam, UK Government, Department for International Development (DFID)

- Need to deliver on the commitments made at Rio+20, which is to ensure the SDGs are integrated with the post-2015 agenda.
- There is a risk around producing a framework that is appealing but fails to be inspiring.

François Gave, France Permanent Mission to the UN

- We hope and expect that a convergent process will address the root/long term causes of poverty.
- Common but differentiated policies are necessary for effective governance.

Reflections and closing remarks

Klaus Rudischauser, Deputy Director-General for Policy and Thematic Coordination, European Commission

- There is a risk to favor short term interests over long term interests and to have a non-inclusive process.
- Need a comprehensive model of financing as a means of implementation.
- Should not pretend that climate change discussions are separate from development goals.

Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director, Greenpeace

- Need much higher levels of urgency and ambition and we must not rewrite the history.
- “If you do what you always did then you will get what you always got”- Albert Einstein
- “Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts” - Albert Einstein