

Critical milestones towards a coherent, efficient, and inclusive follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level

COVER NOTE:

1. In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted a new framework to guide development efforts between 2015 and 2030, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development”.
2. The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets¹. The SDGs address, in an integrated manner, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, their interrelations, aspects related to peaceful societies and effective institutions, as well as means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity development etc.).
3. Heads of State and Government also committed to engage in systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The follow-up and review will be based on regular, voluntary and inclusive country-led reviews of progress at the national level feeding into reviews at the regional and global levels.
4. At the global level, the United Nations high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) will have the central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes. It is to work coherently with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant organs and forums, in accordance with existing mandates, building on their work in order to boost implementation.
5. The HLPF will meet (i) every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the and (ii) every year under the auspices of ECOSOC.
6. The follow-up and review processes at all levels will track progress in implementing the universal goals and targets, including the means of implementation, in all countries, in a manner which respects their universal, integrated and interrelated nature and the three dimensions of sustainable development. These processes will be guided by a number of other principles defined in the 2030 Agenda². For example, they will be voluntary and country-led, support the identification of solutions and best practices, help to mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, as well as be open,

¹ [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/L.85&Lang=E]

² Agenda 2030 para 74

inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people.

7. The dedicated follow-up and review for the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development—and the means of implementation of the SDGs is integrated with the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda. The HLPF will build, inter alia, on the outcome of the annual ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development as well as on the summary of the annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation launched by the 2030 Agenda as part of a Technology Facilitation Mechanism. The HLPF will also take into account the biennial ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum. A General Assembly Dialogue on Financing for Development will be held back-to-back with the HLPF meeting, when it meets under the auspices of the General Assembly.
8. The 2030 Agenda stipulates that the HLPF will conduct:
 - i. Regular reviews of country-level implementation, “including developed and developing countries as well as relevant UN entities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector”;
 - i. Thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, building on the work of the functional commissions of ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies and forums.
9. The follow-up and review by the HLPF will be informed by an annual SDG progress report and a Global Sustainable Development Report, which shall strengthen the science-policy interface and serve as an evidence-based instrument to support policymakers³.

Mandate for the report by the Secretary-General on global follow-up and review

10. The 2030 Agenda requested “the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to prepare a report, for consideration at the seventieth session of the General Assembly in preparation for the 2016 meeting of the HLPF which outlines critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level. The report should:
 11. include a proposal on the organizational arrangements for State-led reviews at the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC, including recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines,
 - (i) clarify institutional responsibilities,
 - (ii) provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and
 - (iv) [provide guidance] on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF⁴.”

³ 2030 Agenda, extracts of para 83

⁴2030 Agenda states that this report should “include a proposal on the organizational arrangements for state-led reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) under the auspices of ECOSOC, including recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines. It should clarify institutional

12. The present questionnaire aims to collect views of Member States on milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda at the global level, so as to inform the analysis and proposals to be contained in the report of the Secretary-General.
13. It takes existing mandates as a starting point and aims to determine how these can be operationalized or further clarified or elaborated on if needed.
14. The Secretariat kindly invites all Member States to provide responses to the following questions and submit them to the Division for Sustainable Development of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (axster@un.org, copied to zubcevic@un.org and powellj1@un.org) **no later than 15 November 2015**.

responsibilities and provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF” (Paragraph 90, Transforming our world” the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

Questionnaire:

For each item below, please feel free to provide an answer in any format that is convenient to you. If possible, please provide a brief explanation for your responses. You may consider using the elements in italics to frame your answers. Please feel free to leave blanks for questions you feel unprepared to answer.

I. Institutional responsibilities for follow-up and review:

1. How can the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the HLPF work coherently in follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda? What should be the role of the General Assembly in follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda? Do you see a need to adjust the working methods and agenda of the General Assembly, its plenary, second, third committees in particular and their relation to ECOSOC to respond to the 2030 Agenda and ensure coherence, complementarity and efficiency? If so, how?

Firstly, there is a need for a stock take on the impact of the work and existing mandates of these bodies on 2030 agenda:

GA ECOSOC and the HLPF can work coherently by assessing how we can take advantage of their separate yet interlinked mandates to contribute effectively to the 2030 agenda. (if this already exists this should help inform any discussion or decisions on coherence, complementarity and efficiency). This assessment and its results would be more effective if informed by such a stocktake or mapping by the secretariat for example, where it will specific mandates/agenda/resolutions/forums/reports and so forth of each body that has a direct or indirect impact/link on the implementation or follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda. It could also help identify possibilities of reducing duplication or improving complementarity or division of labour rather than relying simply on the annual 8 days HLPF meetings.

Secondly, GA role in follow up and review as stated in para 87 of Follow up and Review section of 2030 Agenda states - "will provide high-level political guidance on the Agenda and its implementation, identify progress and emerging challenges and mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation and its committees work."

However, we believe with an across the board stocktake as mentioned earlier, you can then identify clearly which part of the committee or plenary work for the GA can have a direct impact in the implementation of the 2030 agenda or its follow up and review, and which part of the GA work within its mandate does not relate. Same also should be done with ECOSOC in relation to the 2030 Agenda and then a comparison between ECOSOC and GA before any adjustment if necessary

to their working methods and agenda. We must bear in mind that the works of GA particularly, for example the 2nd and 3rd Committees while very much linked to the 2030 Agenda, also has parts that are not directly linked to it. The assessment cannot be carried out in a piecemeal fashion for example by looking at just one committee of the GA plenary.

2. Given its Charter and other mandates, how can ECOSOC help ensure that global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda is coherent?

Same as response to question 1. Stocktake of current mandate and new mandates from 2030 agenda for ECOSOC can help identify where gaps or strengths are for ECOSOC to play an effective role to promote coherence.

3. How can the HLPF most effectively make linkages with the follow-up and review arrangements of United Nations conferences and processes on (1) least developed countries (LDCs), (2) small island developing States (SIDS), and (3) and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)⁵?

Samoa as a SIDS will focus on suggestions for SIDS outcome document, SAMOA pathway.

- a) *SIDS and Follow up and Review of the SAMOA Pathway must be a fixed item on the HLPF annual agenda*

For SIDS, the HLPF must be a CSD plus. The follow up of our previous documents the BPOA and MSI rested solely with the CSD. Now that this has been replaced, it is crucial that the HLPF address SIDS priorities elaborated in the SAMOA Pathway, and ensure that the follow up to their document is an important component of the overall follow up of the 2030 agenda. This can be addressed through, inter alia, the devotion of the necessary time annually in the HLPF agenda to SIDS. At a minimum, as was agreed in CSD, there was a dedicated day for SIDS issues.

- b) *SAMOA Pathway and the thematic Reviews*

The 2030 agenda's thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, must always include a SIDS component/section of the report/discussion for each goal. The SAMOA Pathway lists SIDS priorities which all match the SDGs and its targets. Therefore any thematic review will directly link to the SAMOA pathway, and thus when any of the goals are discussed or reviewed in the HLPF, it can at the same time include follow up and review progress on what was called for on the same theme, in the SAMOA Pathway. A few examples of some of the SIDS priorities related directly to SDGs are sustainable energy, climate change, biodiversity, oceans and seas, food security and nutrition, gender equality and women's empowerment, water and

⁵ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 82

sanitation and many more. This call of highlighting SIDS speaks also to the work the ECOSOC functional commissions would also carry out while some targets do not specify particularly SIDS, the SAMOA pathway does speak to these SDGs from SIDS perspective.

c) SAMOA pathway in FFD and GOAL 17 follow up

Another effective link with follow up of SAMOA pathway with the work HLPF will be ensuring the follow up of the “MOI including partnerships” section of the SAMOA pathway is closely linked to the follow up of FFD and Goal 17. SAMOA Pathway follow up, should be a fixed agenda item/section/part of the Annual ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum, and High Level held every 4 years. Samoa pathway also has technology as a priority for SIDS and calls for certain action on this as an MOI and thus this section could also be considered in the two day multistakeholder discussions in the Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

d) SAMOA pathway and partnerships

One of the key asks of the SAMOA pathway is the launching of a SIDS partnership framework. This framework will be launched this session, one of the key components is an Annual SIDS multistakeholder partnership dialogue. This dialogue must be recognised as one of the key inputs into the follow up and review process of 2030 agenda as it relates to SIDS and the different thematic areas the partnerships will impact. HLPF is mandated to provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. I am sure that the HLPF can be a space within the ECOSOC System where partnerships for SIDS can be monitored and lessons learned can be shared. The ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and platforms, such as the HLPF, the Development Cooperation Forum or the annual Partnership Forum should provide space for the SIDS partnership framework to feed into. It is also important to ensure that there is a good representation of SIDS on these ECOSOC platforms. Furthermore this space can be extended to include the synergies created between some of these platforms such as DCF and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

e) *SAMOA Pathway and the SDG Progress report and the Global Sustainable development report*

There should be a dedicated section in these two reports on the follow up to the SAMOA pathway in relation to these progress reports and the analysis they provide.

4. Should the General Assembly provide some guidance to ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums on how they should best reflect their contribution to the review of SDGs, and to the HLPF generally, in their work programmes and sessions? And what would it be?

The guidance would only be necessary if their current mandates are not clear in relation to the link of the functional commissions work to the 2030 agenda or SDGs as they are to support with the thematic reviews. This could be explored in the consultations by the President of ECOSOC on the scope and methodology of the Global Sustainable Development Report

5. How can the HLPF best build on the outcome of ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development and the summary by the Co-Chairs of the multi-stakeholder forum on Science, Technology and Innovation?

~~5-6.~~ [Through seeking reports from these forums and ensuring integration into Global SD report](#)

II. Overarching annual theme of the HLPF vs thematic reviews of progress of the SDGs to be carried out by the HLPF:

[The 2030 Agenda decided the thematic reviews of the HLPF will be supported by the reviews conducted by the functional commissions of ECOSOC⁶ and "other intergovernmental bodies and forums"⁷. These various bodies and forums are mandated to "reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages among them". They "will engage all relevant stakeholders and, where possible, feed into, and be aligned with, the cycle of the HLPF"⁸. The HLPF, when meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC, "shall have a thematic focus reflecting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in line with the thematic focus of the activities of the Council and consistent with the post-2015 development agenda"⁹. The thematic focus of the HLPF should allow the HLPF to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The GA decided that ECOSOC will base its annual programme of work on a main theme and defined the characteristics of this annual theme.¹⁰]

~~6-7.~~ Should the HLPF thematic reviews of the progress on the SDGs (i) focus on clusters of closely related SDGs or (ii) examine progress in all SDGs based upon on a transversal theme such as gender, health or education or (iii) address four SDGs every year, taken in a numerical order, along with SDG17? If option (ii) is preferred, when and how should the transversal theme be decided upon?

For Samoa we would not prefer option ii given the difficulty we see in determining a transversal theme. This may lead to process longer than negotiating the 2030 agenda itself just to decide the theme or lead to decision where most States in particular SIDS like Samoa have no say in how these themes are selected.

The solution is to ensure that whatever formula to be used, it does not prioritise one SDG or group of SDGs over another. It must be practical also and decided based on

⁶ For example, the Commission on Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Population and Development etc. . . .

⁷ Examples would include the World Health Assembly, International Labour Conference etc.

⁸ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 85

⁹ General Assembly resolution 67/290, op 7c

¹⁰ General Assembly resolution 68/1, paras 7-9

ensuring that the formula allows for a smarter way of effectively reviewing progress of each SDG, but most importantly a formula suitably linked to each SDG implementation. We also emphasise again the thematic reviews must also be balanced with the need for space in HLPF for review of outcome of other relevant UN Conferences including the SAMOA pathway for SIDS.

7.8. What kind of inputs should functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums provide to the HLPF (e.g. negotiated outcomes, summary of discussions and analysis or other)? And how should the inputs of various platforms be presented to the HLPF so as to best support its review and political leadership, guidance and recommendations?

The input should depend on what role or impact of this input is to the implementation or follow up of the Agenda. Some may be analysis and more technical, some could be summary of discussion that highlight gaps so it could feed into discussion, some could be launching partnerships. [Regional commissions will play a big role in monitoring and review including for SAMOA Pathway – what needs to be reinforced is the inclusion of subregional contributions.](#)

8.9. What would be good overarching annual themes for the HLPF to address (when it meets under the auspices of ECOSOC) and how can they be aligned to that the theme of ECOSOC? Please give several examples?

Does this theme affect the thematic reviews? IF this is the case we go back to our response on question 6. From experience as SIDS with CSD, while we were assigned a day in CSD, the themes we had no say in the setting thus they were no always relevant. We have therefore strong reservations on themes that may end up harming the process by suggesting prioritization of one theme or goal over another, or also lead to exclusion.

9.10. How long in advance should HLPF themes be known? For example, (i) should there be a programme of work for the four years in between two meetings of the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly or for a longer time period or (ii) should themes be determined every year and if so how could other intergovernmental platforms and other relevant actors contribute to the HLPF review?

10.11. Should the multi-stakeholder forum on Science, Technology and Innovation address the same theme as the HLPF?

11.12. How should the United Nations Statistical Commission best contribute to the work of HLPF?

With the work they have done to determine the global indicators, their key role is to monitor the implementation and achievement of these indicators, and work along the same lines they did also for the MDGs. It would also be useful for them to connect with regional statistical commissions or relevant statistical authority at regional level- there has always been the contention that national statistics are not being used for global statistics

13. What arrangements would be needed to allow the HLPF to identify and consider new and emerging issues?

12.14. The regularity of country reporting which should be integral part of regional reports and feeding into the HLPF for global reporting. Country reports to highlight challenges and emerging issues and good practices to address them including innovative partnerships

13.15. How can platforms and processes outside the UN system, including those run by other international or regional organizations and by non-state actors, contribute to thematic reviews at the HLPF?

Through links they have established with other ECOSOC platforms including partnership links

III. HLPF National Reviews of implementation:

Preparation and conduct of national reviews:

16. How often would countries be expected to participate in regular state-led reviews in order to allow for a meaningful exchange of experiences and feedback at the HLPF? Should there be a minimum number of reviews within 15 years to be presented at the HLPF?

14.17. In Samoa's case review process to be aligned to national development strategy review every two years. Mid term review should be presented to HLPF including those of other platforms

18. How can the HLPF discussions on the reviews be best prepared in order to facilitate a sharing of experiences and the provision of political leadership, guidance and recommendations at the HLPF? How would countries like to be supported in preparing the review process at global level?

15.19. HLPF to solicit country commitments to Global review process. Support to countries can be delivered at subregional level utilizing focal organizations who can facilitate TA as and when requested and organize subregional workshops to consider progress levels and report preparation.

Voluntary common reporting guidelines:

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~~16.~~20. In order to help elaborate voluntary common reporting guidelines for State-led reviews at the HLPF, kindly indicate what issues you would want the HLPF to address systematically when it examines national implementation reviews?

[The basis of prioritisation/localisation](#)
[Implementation/financing framework](#)
[Policy coherence](#)
[Fit for purpose indicators](#)

21. How can the guidelines leave enough flexibility to Member States while ensuring sufficient comparability between HLPF reviews to facilitate cross-country comparisons and to help track global progress? Could guidelines identify a core set of issues, in addition to the status of all SDGs and Targets, which all countries would be encouraged to address in their reviews and, in addition, a number of issues which countries might consider addressing if feasible?

~~17.~~22. [Identify which targets are best assessed using global data and which one are best done at country level](#)

Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:

~~18.~~23. How should the country reviews be featured and discussed at the formal HLPF meeting?

[A session be dedicated to country reviews which should also be structured to fit constraints of time etc](#)

~~19.~~24. How can national reviews give adequate attention to the means of implementation? How can they help to mobilize new support and partnerships?

[By having a focus on MOI and highlighting good practice examples](#)

25. What kind of outcome should result from the HLPF national reviews of implementation, and how could there be a follow-up to these reviews?

~~20.~~ [Shared information knowledge and experiences, follow up can be done at subregional level with reporting one year after the reviews and feeding the subregional reports for regional reports](#)

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IV. Regional reviews and processes

~~21.~~26. How should the outcome of regional review processes be considered at HLPF?

They should also feed into the reports and Forums in ECOSOC or GA where applicable and present highlights or ~~gaps~~ gaps for discussions where relevant during HLPF. The peer review ~~where~~ where successful deserves some space to highlight any success in the HLPF from these regional reviews. Regional partnerships should feed into global partnership platforms also for example SIDS ~~w~~ill have regional partnership dialogues where applicable as part of its SIDS partnership framework.

V. Inclusion of UN system and other stakeholders in global follow-up and review

~~22.27.~~ 22.27. How can the HLPF support the participation by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the follow-up and review processes conducted at the global level including the thematic and country reviews? What are possible options to seek their contributions to the reviews at the HLPF, (building on the modalities for the participation of major groups defined by General Assembly resolution 67/290 and the practices of the General Assembly open working group on SDGs)?

Each major group and other relevant stakeholders are involved in a different way/SDG and at a different level of the ~~of~~ of 2030 agenda. Perhaps a survey or views from them and how they see themselves engaging effectively in the review process, to help member States make a more informed decision on how they could engage effectively. They can also look at doing independent reviews of progress through goals they are involved in and work in partnership with the different “friends of Water” and so forth to bring in these independent assessments, using the different expertise. There is also possible contributions through the reports such as the SDG progress report and Global SD report.

23. The 2030 Agenda calls on major groups and other stakeholders to report on their contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda. How can such reviews be prepared and conducted at the HLPF? How can these actors be encouraged to engage in such reviews?¹¹

A standardised reporting template that allows them to report on their work related to implementation of the agenda and analysis of these reports can help feed into discussion on some of the success stories and short comings as highlighted by the major groups. They could also contribute to reports/discussions on thematic reviews where applicable and also in the partnerships dialogues.

24. How should UN system contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda be

¹¹ Agenda 2030 states in para 89 that “the high-level political forum will support participation in follow-up and review processes by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in line with resolution 67/290. We call on those actors to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Agenda.”

reviewed?

Perhaps to start with an assessment and make available a clear road map as to who does what in terms of the agenda.

25. What steps can the UN system, including the Secretariat take to best support follow-up and review in a coherent and effective manner?

They should also look at standardised reporting or template to allow for comparison on how the UN System is engaging in terms of implementation and follow up and review, with purposes of identifying where there is duplication and ensuring that there is smarter distribution of labour to and effective use of their mandates to implement this agenda.

VI. Other views and ideas

26. Please add any other points you would like to raise.