

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

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

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, 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

² Agenda 2030 para 74

³ 2030 Agenda, extracts of para 83

- 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.”
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**.

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 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?

All resolutions and mandates as well as operational guidelines should be in sync or compliment each other. Coordination of the secretariats supporting these bodies should be strengthened. The UNGA is the universal body to consider the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. There may be a need to consider a standalone agenda item that doesn't necessarily have to fall within the purview of the second committee (or third committee for that matter). The General Committee could have a role in this when considering the agenda of the GA at the beginning of a session. Consideration and any resolution following from the GA could also recommend themes for action by ECOSOC on 2030 Agenda.

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

Ensure that themes recommended by the UNGA are also the same ones they are considering with regard to 2030 Agenda follow-up.

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?

SIDS and Rio process linkages: Further to the call in the 2030 Agenda for effective linkages with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including on least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, the SAMOA Pathway also re-called that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under their auspices, will devote adequate time to the discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing small island developing States in order to enhance engagement and implement commitments (para. 123 SAMOA Pathway).

The SAMOA Pathway also called for the UN system to ensure that the issues of small island developing States are adequately addressed by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under their auspices.

Member States have been clear on the need to ‘devote adequate’ time to the discussions of SIDS sustainable development matters and to ensure that these matters are ‘adequately addressed’ by the UNGA, ECOSOC and HLPF.

The SIDS agenda is intrinsically linked to the Rio process. SIDS share a joint history with the Rio process. Given that the HLPF now involves both the ECOSOC and the UNGA, the linkages of SIDS issues in these processes is essential. HLPF, as was the case with the CSD, remain as the forum through which global review and follow-up of the SAMOA Pathway is to be conducted.

UNSG reports: At the legislative level, the annual traditional UNGA resolutions on Follow-up of the SAMOA Pathway and sustainable development of SIDS should compliment the one on HLPF and vice-versa. There could be two options for how the SG mandated reports can link the three processes:

- 1. The mandated UNGA report in preparation and support to the HLPF process could contain a substantive section on SIDS sustainable development agenda.*
- 2. Alternatively, the UNGA could mandate the SIDS SG’s report to be made published in two parts. The first part of the report to be submitted to the ECOSOC in preparation for the HLPF, and the second part, following the HLPF, could be submitted to the UNGA. The example of the SG’s report on ocean affairs and its consideration at the ICP and later the UNGA in the same year is one that could be followed.*

⁵ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 82

While Paragraph 76 states that the global review of the implementation of the Vienna programme of Action for LLDCs should be undertaken by the General Assembly, the governing bodies of organizations in the United Nations system, including ECOSOC are invited to mainstream the implementation of the VPoA into their programme of work, and to conduct sectoral and thematic reviews of the Programme, as appropriate.

At the informal stock-taking of the ECOSOC on LLDCs of 13 January 2015, ECOSOC was requested to highlight the Vienna Programme of Action and to consider incorporating the LLDCs Agenda in its programmatic cycle that includes the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

UNGA resolution 67/290 (OP11) already decided that meetings of the HLPF shall devote adequate time to the discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing the least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries.... It is therefore important to ensure that the HLPF both under the auspices of the General Assembly every four years and the ECOSOC every year should have dedicated sessions on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. Similarly, the annual SDG Progress Report and the Global Sustainable Development Report must have dedicated sections on the status of implementation of the Agenda 2030 in these groups of countries based on evidences, disintegrated data and statistics.

The HLPF, under the auspices of the UNGA and ECOSOC, should inform the annual review of the IPoA by ECOSOC and the General Assembly and the VPoA and the SAMOA Pathway by the Second Committee of the General Assembly. In the same vein, the reviews of the IPoA, VPoA, and SAMOA Pathway should inform the review of the Agenda 2030. This is how synergy and coherence could be established among various processes.

The Mid-term review of the implementation of the IPoA provides an important opportunity to build synergy and coherence between the IPoA and the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. Implementation of the IPoA can make a positive contribution to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and vice versa. The outcome of the MTR of the IPoA can elaborate the synergy and coherence between the two processes.

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?

This could be done through a UNGA resolution (see above 1)

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?

As important and crucial cross cutting means of implementation related matters, these could remain as an annual consideration on the agenda of the HLPF, regardless of changes in the focus in the themes.

The ECOSOC Forum on FfD will follow-up and review the Financing for Development outcomes and the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. The multi-stakeholder forum will undertake interaction, matchmaking and the establishment of networks between relevant stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to identify and examine technology needs and gaps, including on scientific cooperation, innovation and capacity building, and also in order to help facilitate development, transfer and dissemination of relevant technologies for the SDGs. The HLPF, at the summit level, can be dedicated to undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Agenda 2030, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and undertake norm setting and concrete decision making in fostering the implementation of these Agenda based on the outcomes of the ECOSOC Forum and multi-stakeholder forum.

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. 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

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

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?

The benefits and disadvantages of the a multi-year cluster approach may need to be considered, taking into consideration of the experience of the CSD. More importantly for SIDS, given the mandates to also consider the priorities identified in the SAMOA Pathway and the SDGs in an integrated manner, the need for a coherent approach on these two important processes for SIDS is something that OHRLLS will continue to advocate for, in light of its expanded mandate on mainstreaming and coherence of SIDS issues in the UN processes.

7. 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?

No comments.

8. 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?

Annual overarching themes should be broad enough to cover all three dimensions of sustainable development. These could be recommended by the UNGA to the ECOSOC.

9. 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?

Themes could be determined every year. This allows for flexibility with encourages relevancy allowing for themes to be discussed in context of current global affairs, as appropriate.

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

Yes.

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

Support development of indicators that can be tailored to fit national circumstances to measure implementation at the regional and national levels, yet promote credibility.

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

The PGA and PECOSOC could convene joint sessions, under their prerogative, to discuss and consider new and emerging issues, as they arise. Every year, the HLPF, under the auspices of the ECOSOC, should dedicated at least one session to discuss new and emerging issues and make specific recommendations on addressing them and building resilience against various types of crises.

13. 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?

SIDS regions are known for their regional cooperation mechanisms and institutions. These regional processes could consider have 2030 agenda as a standing agenda in their various forums. Their reporting on follow-up could also align with those at the regional levels and led by the UN Regional Commissions processes.

Any substantive outcome/document coming out from these processes should be made available in the HLPF website and serve as inputs for the HLPF.

III. HLPF National Reviews of implementation:

Preparation and conduct of national reviews:

14. 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?

The example of the Human Rights Council could be adopted allowing states to present a situation update on the implementation of the Agenda 2030 every three years to the HLPF. The need to align SAMOA Pathway's own review

processes with these is crucial to avoid duplication and alleviate review fatigue.

Consideration should be paid to different country-level reviews that take place to avoid over-burdening member states. In this case, VPoA review process should be taken into account when discussing other reviews.

A bottom-up approach could be pursued for the global review of the HLPF. A coordinated and coherent approach should be adopted at the national level to undertake national review of the implementation of the Agenda 2030, IPoA, VPoA and SAMOA Pathway as they relate to each country. Each country can establish its own national review mechanism. LDCs should receive concrete and substantive support from the UN Country Team in their national review exercise. It may be suggested that the national review be conducted annually led by the national government. The National report would feed into the regional and global reviews.

15. 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?

No

Voluntary common reporting guidelines:

16. 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?

No comments

17. 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?

No comments

Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:

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

No comments

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

National review by LDCs should provide a detailed account of the means of implementation mobilized domestically and externally. The national review should provide national experiences in mobilizing resources articulating the needs and gaps and specific requirements.

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

Each national review should result in a national reports. There should be suggested template for the national reviews. There should also be a clear-cut guidelines to the UN Country teams to assist the host least developed country in undertaking national reviews.

IV. Regional reviews and processes

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

Outcome of the regional reviews should be factored into the annual SDG report and Global Sustainable Development Report and should be issued as a background document for HLPF meetings under ECOSOC and GA.

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

22. 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)?

No comments

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

No Comments

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

No comments

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

OHRLLS has a specific mandate to enhance coherence of UN processes on SIDS issues. It has already begun work with UN system as well as SIDS on how this work can be carried forward.

While UN-OHRLLS supports its constituent groups principally through the implementation of the IPoA, VPoA and the SAMOA Pathways, the office can and does strive to bring coherence, and explore synergy between these programmes and other global programmes, including Agenda 2030.

One of the key mandates of the OHRLLS is to mobilize global support and resources in favour of LDCs for implementation of the IPoA. OHRLLS should support LDCs in mobilizing global support and resources in favour of LDCs. The annual review of the implementation of the programmes of action should ensure synergy and coherence between the follow-up of the programme of action and the agenda 2030 for sustainable development. The UN system should work as one in extending best possible support to the countries in realizing SDGs in a coordinated and coherent manner.

VI. Other views and ideas

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

No comments.

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.”