

## **NGO Major Group Meetings**

**14 April 2021**

1. Introductions- approximately 50 participants joined the call, names were read out
2. Update on HLPF review
  - The HLPF review has now progressed to include 2 drafts and a number of opportunities to share ideas through the MGoS Advocacy Task Group. Oli has been following the meetings
  - Informals have been open to MGoS and the co-facilitators, Ambassadors of Austria & Senegal also hosted a special session to gather further inputs- engagement with co-facilitators has been very open
  - Main messages on the importance of civil society participation have been taken on board by co-facilitators.
  - The review covers the current cycle of HLPF until 2023, so a new review will likely start in 2022.
  - It is expected that this review sets the basis for any next steps.
  - While the review proposes continued clustering of Goals it is noted that SDG 16 will be reviewed every year alongside SDG 17
  - Many member states are choosing to only review the thematic goals in the HLPF as part of their VNRs
  - Russia and the G77 plus China at some of the hearings has highlighted that they want to move to MGoS only being included on a 'non-objection basis'
  - Russia also disputed the right for MGoS to join the informal meetings
  - The co-facilitators do not agree with these two points
  - Rob notes that governments can be reminded that when they switched from CSD to the current structure that civil society did not want to have our role reduced, and many governments supported the continued participation of civil society in informal meetings.
  - Cyril notes there are plenty of examples of civil society participation in informal meetings in other UN settings.
  - Recommendation in the draft- Guaranteeing Civil Society engagement as established in Resolution 67/290
  - The EU and US representatives have been highlighting the importance of CS engagement and the importance of SDG 16
  - Many governments agree that informals should maintain CS engagement
  - The two co-facilitators have suggested that they combine the HLPF review and the ECOSOC review- interlocking resolutions
  - There is a new draft with proposed Resolution with 2 separate parts (A & B) to cover ECOSOC and HLPF separately, this will be discussed on Monday
3. Update on MD drafting

- Initial outline from the co-facilitators is ready and zero-draft is expected to be ready this week
  - Inputs from the MG were included
  - Informal discussions last week- there was not much disagreement
  - Mexico had a lot of input
  - Sessions are open for one representatives from each major group
4. EGM opportunity
- Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) will be held in the period 17-21 May
  - MGoS can collectively provide nominations
  - A form will be shared shortly if someone wants to put their name forward, these names will be shared with the nomination committee, they will select from across all the Major Groups & other Stakeholders (MGoS)
  - Opportunity for up to 6 names from across all MGoS to be nominated for each meeting on each of the goals under review: on the following SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17
  - There likely will be opportunity for input to representatives once nominations have been made
5. NGO MG Position Paper drafting
- Creating a section for each of the SDGs as well as the executive summary
  - First draft of almost all the SDGs are finished- will be shared next week
  - Whole paper will be done by the end of May
  - Drafting teams have each created a draft of each section and will share with major group- then will take comments and include them
6. VNR preparation
- Process is under way to identify focal points and country contacts in VNR countries across all MGoS.
  - Identifying people who are willing to act as focal points to shepherd the process.
  - The idea is that the focal points gather together views from country contacts/national partners to create a joint statement for each country to be presented at the HLPF.
  - Focal points for regions or groups of countries are very helpful.
  - If there are people on the call who are willing to act as one of these volunteers, please get in touch.
  - Rosie, [Yvonne](#) and Faisal volunteer to help with this.
  - Raymond notes that Uganda has a national NGO coalition on SDGs and would be interested in participating. Uganda is not under review this year, but Raymond is interested in what happens after VNRs, as last year was Uganda's review.
  - Rosie mentions webinars for enabling participation in the VNRs. Oli notes that these could be most helpful if done regionally.

- If interested to join Friday, let Oli know. Carmen asks if VNRs will be online or in person. Oli says the HLPF will be hybrid, but that civil society should not plan to fly into New York, all side events will be online.

#### 7. HLPF Side Events

- There will be a side event for each major group and a collective one as well
- HLPF Side event application form is here:  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2021#other>
- UNDESA has historically given priority to events hosted by member states
- MGoS can put on parallel events online regardless
- Some friendly governments may be willing to support proposals and may participate in side events
- If anyone is aware of member states that may be interested- please share
- C4UNWN is interested in holding regional meetings- CS will be able to put input on governance
- Waiting on SG office for a digital consultation where CS will be able to put in more input

#### 8. Task Teams:

- Form to volunteer for task teams: <https://forms.gle/58ga47q1kvgpW45b9>

#### 9. Update from clusters

- Margo LaZaro- Urban Cluster- clusters are working on their own position papers
  - Interconnecting with UN habitat
  - Wider global outreach can be done
- Animals Issues Cluster- position paper is being worked on and meeting is next Thursday
- Kristina M- Food cluster is working on position paper and there will be a pre-summit meeting before the Food Systems Summit

#### 10. Any other updates?

- Anti-corruption high level meeting will be held in June- hosted by member states
  - Main agenda- how to fight corruption within Member states and SDG 16
  - One month before HLPF
- The FfD Forum is currently underway, discussing debt relief, cancellation and liquidity for developing countries.
  - Strongest talks are coming from UN personnel
  - The measures up to now in the G20 debt suspension framework are not sufficient
  - Vaccine nationalism and lack of support to intellectual property issues with the vaccines
  - Financing is crucial to the delivery of the agenda

- April 22- Escazu Agreement comes into force- important that this not seen as only a government process- represents a step forward for land rights, should be CS led- Side event planned by Carmen Capriles, more info to be shared

## **10 March 2021**

### 1. Welcome & Intros / Roll call of participants – Victoria

There was a round of introductions

### 2. HLPF review update – Oli

- The review of the HLPF modalities has been long delayed.
- Senegal and Austria are co-chairs of the process
- Oli gave an overview of the inputs submitted by the NGO MG.
- Very important in bringing in national voices
- Full draft will be shared when it is available, a revision is being developed now.
- Russia and China(?) are advocating for a non-objection basis. Co-chairs seem to agree with the views of civil society.
- Rosario suggests acknowledging the MGoS mechanism, because Member States are not always understanding that there is an official platform for stakeholders to participate.
- Rosario also notes that the oral interventions are very short, especially for VNRs. We need more time.
  - Oli mentions that shadow reports or written inputs can be useful to amplify the space as well.
- Oli clarifies that the review will affect the next two years of HLPFs and the processes used for them. This is separate from the Ministerial Declaration, which is the outcome document for just this year.
- Claudio does not think that more time will be given, but that written reports and inputs could be more useful.
- Deirdre says that more attention should be paid to targets and challenges at national level, and more structure to bring this in at the HLPF.
- Ege asks if there is an analysis or review for the NGO MG's process/work. Oli says A4SD has done some analysis of this that could be shared.
- Rob's main concern is about how little time there is for the HLPF. Suggests that NGO MG as the umbrella MG should have some additional time compared to the other groups. Notes that under CSD there were two full weeks to discuss topics in July and one week in February. Some of these were review and others were action oriented. The difference between CSD and HLPF are night and day.

### 3. Position paper & Ministerial Declaration (Advocacy) update – Jessica

Jessica gave an update on the process for drafting the NGO MG position paper.

All members are encouraged to feed in and join the working group here:

Key milestones:

2nd April- Initial Exec Summary

28 May- Full paper

[Full deadlines](#)

#### Ministerial Declaration

This year co-facilitators have opened the process for inputs earlier than before, there is an opportunity to feed in initial thinking on the Ministerial Declaration before it is drafted by Friday 12th here: <https://forms.gle/6iJN2msfGcbFFj9x5>

Dierdre offered a contact with co-facilitators which could be useful for sharing the messages from the NGO MG on the Ministerial Declaration.

#### 4. VNR update – Oli

The call for CSO coalitions working on VNRs is open, there will be an opportunity for national coalitions to come together to provide written inputs to the VNR statements

This year A4SD is also widening out the People's Scorecard approach (supported by the Governments of Switzerland and Denmark) to gather independent scoring of progress on each Goal in VNR countries by civil society

All NGO MG members are encouraged to share the opportunity widely to gather views of national CSOs and coalitions for inputs from VNR countries.

Please add suggestions of national partners here:

#### 5. Website update – Jessica

The initial homepage of the new site was shown to attendees. The site is still under construction.

#### 6. Regional updates

Rosario shared the update on plans and link for the UN ECLAC regional forum on 15-17 March, there will be a civil society forum on 15 March

LAC ECLAC Forum <https://eventos.cepal.org/event/54/registrations/> Register until March 14th  
Foro de Sociedad Civil: Civil Society Forum

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeY-CaSQdNfB3NxdTNKVLrCmUibwdr\\_bLNKiABCfDRZpl6R0Q/viewform?gxids=7628](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeY-CaSQdNfB3NxdTNKVLrCmUibwdr_bLNKiABCfDRZpl6R0Q/viewform?gxids=7628)

Kofi Kankam shared an update on UN ARFSD (Africa Forum) which was hosted on 1-5 March with the Africa Regional Major Groups and other Stakeholders meeting on 26-27 Feb  
The regional Major Groups meeting was open and engaging, there were a number of sessions with member states and all constituencies represented

UNECE- Deirdre shared an update on the UNECE Regional Coordination Mechanism. The civil society days were hosted over past 2 days (8-9 March) and also showed a strong engagement of wide range of partners.

There was a session on engagement of civil society with member states reporting on the VNR and also featuring a wide range of UN agencies, including UNDP, OHCHR, UN Women, UNEP and UNFPA

UNESCAP- Full details are here: <https://www.unescap.org/apfsd/8>

UNESCWA- Full details are here:

<https://www.unescwa.org/event/arab-forum-sustainable-development-2021>

## 7. Clusters updates

Commons Cluster

Need to collect and input to the website

Join: [Commons.Cluster.UNO@gmail.com](mailto:Commons.Cluster.UNO@gmail.com)

Shared views at UNEA recently

Urban Cluster

Started own position paper

Wide base of interest from all global regions

[margolazaro@gmail.com](mailto:margolazaro@gmail.com)

Animal Issues Thematic Cluster, Meeting 11 March at 10:30 NY time. Focused on raising awareness for how animal welfare contributes to the SDGs, and linkages between human, environmental and animal wellbeing. Can contact [jessica.bridgers@wfa.org](mailto:jessica.bridgers@wfa.org) for more information

8. Planning ahead – survey for volunteers to join task teams and prepare for the HLPF  
Please add your name here: