

CSO engagement in Agenda 2030

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Review

- The presentation reviews some of the roles, needs and emerging practices of CSOs in advancing SDG implementation, especially related to the Voluntary National review Process
- 2016-(22 countries,
- 2017-43 countries
- 2018-47 countries

- These reports profiled progress each country has made around implementing the SDGs.
- The [synthesis of the VNRs developed by United Nations Economic and Social Council](#) underscored the need for cooperation and inclusion to implement the SDGs, in particular **“with civil society, local authorities, indigenous peoples, local communities, academia and all other relevant actors.”** (Para 25)
- it stresses the importance of early and informed collaboration and cooperation at the national level by governments during the planning and implementation phase, “to ensure that the voices of stakeholders are adequately heard in the intergovernmental processes, for example through multi-stakeholder dialogues, hearings or through gathering inputs.” (Para 27) With a few exceptions, **a common complaint among many of the civil society groups attending the HLPF was that very few governments have done this to date.**

So Far.....

 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



So far....

- 2016
 - Ensuring that no one is left behind
- 2015
 - Strengthening integration, implementation and review - the HLPF after 2015
- 2014
 - Achieving the MDGs and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the SDGs
- 2013
 - Building the future we want: from Rio+20 to the post-2015 development agenda

2017

- 2017
 - Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world
 - SDG sdg1
 - SDG sdg2
 - SDG sdg3
 - SDG sdg5
 - SDG sdg9
 - SDG sdg14
 - SDG sdg17

2018

- 2018
 - Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societiesSDG sdg6
 - SDG sdg7
 - SDG sdg11
 - SDG sdg12
 - SDG sdg15
 - SDG sdg17

2019

- 2019
 - Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality
 - [SDG sdg4](#)
 - [SDG sdg8](#)
 - [SDG sdg10](#)
 - [SDG sdg13](#)
 - [SDG sdg16](#)
 - [SDG sdg17](#)

What is VNR ?

- What is VNR? - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>
- As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79). These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the high-level political forum (HLPF), meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC. As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders.
- The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This online review platform is dedicated to compiling information from countries participating in the voluntary national reviews of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Status Report in Asia on VNR

- Philippines, S. Korea and China presented their VNR report in 2016
- From Asia 10 countries, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand and Iran presented their VNR in 2017
- ADA made [10 countries VNR/Voluntary report status](#) for these countries , which analyses the level of engagement of the CSOs in he VNR process.
- Later, in 2018, ADA along with Asia Democracy Network (AND) and other partners organised Busan Democracy Forum in Busan, South Korea on January 22-23, and one of the important highlight of the session was [CSOs engagement analysis in Asia](#)

VNR- 2018

- Total 47 Countries reported in 2018
 - Sri Lanka, Bhutan in South Asia
 - Vietnam, Lao PDR and Singapore in SE Asia
- 5 Countries [SDG-VNR- Excerpts-2018.docx](#) – Draft

CSO's Engagement level – Experience so far

- Three types of Engagement with the government:
 - Highly engaged and collaborative- Nepal, Bhutan
 - Moderate Engagement- Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, etc
 - Occasional Engagement: India, Philippines, Thailand,

Summing up

- A common critique of the HLPF by civil society is that it is a very state-led and state-centered process, The role played by civil society and other key stakeholders in the HLPF is currently a very limited one, despite the clear commitment of the Agenda 2030 to a multi-stakeholder approach to monitoring and implementation.

Most national delegations attending the HLPF do not include CSO representatives. Where they do involve CSO representatives, these individuals are allowed approximately two minutes to comment publicly on the VNRs produced by governments. The growing number of high-quality, CSO Shadow Reports produced in parallel to the VNRs are given no official status of any kind as part of the HLPF, and cannot be uploaded on the UN website.

Summing up

- There is a need to generate Citizen's level data every year- for monitoring and review
 - These initiatives can complement sometimes stand-alone national-level SDG tracking processes.
- **Strengthening the alignment of CSO programming at the national level with the SDGs, and building in the integration of different (but related) goals and targets across their respective programming.**
- **Providing additional data to track progress on SDG implementation.** CSO-run, citizen-based monitoring programs collect data on progress around SDGs.
 - In many cases, this may complement official data being collected. Many organizations noted that they can adjust their current data collection and processing methods to be more aligned to the SDG indicators reported to HLPF at the national level. This will become crucially important when the country develops its VNR, allowing for data beyond that collected from national statistics to be included.
- **Creating/Strengthening networks to reach citizens and share tools and experiences.** Most CSOs have a large constituency and membership covering the whole country and/or specific regions. Creating a strong national network (of networks) can help achieve all of the above listed tasks, but also can help raise awareness and educate citizens. CSOs' large collective reach within the country

Summing up

- Although all levels of the HLPF cycle are equally important, particular attention should be paid to the VNR process in order to ensure that it becomes a national and locally- owned process. With this objective in mind, governments should be required to present draft VNRs for debate and approval by national parliaments and by the official multi-stakeholder Sustainable Development Forum before it is submitted at a global level to the HLPF.

At the regional level, civil society should be properly resourced to organize itself across national and sub- regional boundaries. Multi-annual funding should be provided to resource permanent secretariats for the new Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanisms (RCEMs) being established in each region. Resources should also be provided under Goal 17 of the Agenda 2030 to engage in CSO capacity development at a regional level. Regional exchange and learning hubs should be established involving diverse stakeholders to promote more effective Agenda 2030 monitoring and implementation across each region.

At a global level the HLPF should create a “ civil society forum” similar to the existing “ Business Forum” where CSOs can come together to debate issues and agree positions linked to the monitoring and implementation of the Agenda 2030. CSO Shadow Reports linked to VNRs should be given a formal status by the UN and a dedicated website linked directly to the UN website should be provided where these parallel reports can be uploaded.

On a positive note

- UN ESCAP agrees to put Asia's CSO report on its help desk
- Good example for showcasing