



INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF  
NATIONAL NGO PLATFORMS

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# CHECKLIST

## IS YOUR NGO READY TO MONITOR AND IMPLEMENT THE SDGS?



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## INTRODUCTION

This checklist is aimed at NGOs who are engaging with the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs. Its purpose is to try to help NGOs to be more effective through being more systematic in the way that they approach areas such as capacity development, cross-sectoral collaboration, public awareness raising, engaging with governments and many others.

### The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (otherwise known as the SDGs) is a very ambitious and comprehensive global agenda, which replaces the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). See links to overviews of MDG and SDGs:

(i) <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

(ii) <https://advocacy.thp.org/2014/08/08/mdgs-to-sdgs>

The Agenda 2030 is a universal agenda. This means that all UN member states, developed and developing, have committed to implementing its goals and targets within their own territories, and in their external actions

where possible. While governments have a primary duty to ensure the implementation of the SDGs, other stakeholders are envisaged as a major means of implementation. See IFP position paper on the SDGs: <http://ifp-fip.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/IFP-SDGs-implementation-key-building-blocks.pdf>

Civil society is one of the key stakeholders that will form part of this “multi-stakeholder” approach to SDG implementation. Many CSOs are struggling to know how best they can engage with this new agenda, and influence their government’s implementation. The purpose of this checklist is to try to guide CSOs in how to approach this task. The checklist aims to be useful to any civil society organisation interested in engaging with the SDGs. CSOs are very diverse in terms of their capacities, skills, needs and access to resources. This checklist tries to cover a lot of issues, so that it will be useful to as many CSOs as possible. Please feel free to skip certain sections of the checklist if you feel that your organisation is already fully engaged with the issue.

### This checklist is composed of ten different sections:

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## 1. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Capacity development will be essential to fully equip the civil society sector to become a key player in the ongoing monitoring and successful implementation of this ambitious universal agenda. The international community should support and fully resource a coordinated approach to the capacity development of CSOs.

### (i) Key Question:

- Does your organization currently have the capacity to fully engage with Agenda 2030 monitoring and implementation?

### (ii) Possible Actions:

- Carry out a survey of your organisation and its members to try to identify what their main capacity development needs are linked to SDG monitoring and implementation. This should examine:
  - their ability to politically engage with state actors and other stakeholders
  - their capacities to raise public awareness of the SDGs including through campaigning & use of social media
  - their ability to engage with data gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation linked to SDG monitoring and reviewing activities
  - their ability and willingness to bring about changes in their own organizational behavior and practices to become a better role model for sustainable development
  - their ability to identify, develop and maintain partnerships as part of future SDG related multi-stakeholder partnerships
- Research online tools/resources and other opportunities that already exist for capacity development of CSOs linked to SDG implementation and monitoring (such as that provided by UN agencies, global CSO networks such as Action for Sustainable Development, Together 2030, the IFP etc, and by regional or national CSO networks such as ADA, PIANGO, MESA, CONCORD, REPAOC, REPONGAC, SDG Watch Europe etc).
- Identify opportunities to apply for funding to engage in capacity development linked to SDG monitoring and implementation for your organisation and your members (e.g. UN funding at regional or global level, EU funding including through the EU Delegation in your country, etc)

- Ensure that your organisation joins national, regional (CONCORD, ADA, PIANGO, MESA, REPAOC, REPONGAC) and global CSO networks (IFP, Action for Sustainable Development, Together 2030) which can provide information and capacity development linked to SDG monitoring and implementation.
- Work with CSOs and other partner organisations to jointly design capacity development training opportunities and resources linked to SDG monitoring and implementation. Organise exchange/learning sessions between members that have expertise.

### (iii) Useful Resources

- International Forum of National NGO Platforms <http://ifp-fip.org/en>
- Joint IFP/Dochas Survey on Capacity Development needs of members linked to Agenda 2030: <https://dochas.typeform.com/to/mXYmZW>
- Action for Sustainable Development: <https://action4sd.org>
- Together 2030: <http://www.together2030.org/>

## 2. ENGAGING IN CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION, NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

CSOs are now coming together more often to create strong coordinating mechanisms linked to SDG monitoring and implementation. Building stronger civil society partnerships ensures a strong case for their inclusion in multi-stakeholder discussions on the SDGs. Genuine coordination and self-organising by national civil society can help to push SDG implementation to become a national priority, and increases public and wider civil society awareness of the SDGs.

The comprehensive and inter-related nature of the SDG agenda also means that many civil society organisations must come “out of their policy silos” and work closely with other sectors and stakeholders at local, national, regional and global levels if the SDGs are to be monitored and implemented effectively.

### **(i) Key Questions:**

- Does your organisation work with other CSOs on SDG monitoring and implementation in your country?
- Has your organisation been part of any initiatives to establish a wider cross-sectoral civil society network in your country to work on the SDGs, that would include CSOs from different sectors?

### **(ii) Possible Actions:**

- Identify CSOs in your country from your own sector and other sectors that are working on SDG monitoring and implementation. Consider approaching several of them to discuss the possibility of jointly establishing a cross-sectoral civil society network aimed at monitoring and implementing the SDGs in your country.
- Reach out to trade unions and other civil society organisations that may not yet be involved and encourage them to join any emerging cross-sectoral SDG network.
- Carry out a survey of the capacities of the members of the cross-sectoral SDG network to work collaboratively together on SDG monitoring and implementation and identify shared capacity development needs.
- Carry out research into the opportunities available for capacity development linked to the formation of new cross-sectoral partnerships (e.g. the Partnering Initiative etc) and identify related funding opportunities (UN, EU, etc).

### **(iii) Useful Resources**

- European CSO cross-sectoral SDG coalition SDG Watch Europe <https://www.sdgwatcheurope.org/>
- Spanish CSO cross-sectoral SDG coalition Futuro En Comun established by Spanish platform Co-ordinadora- <https://coordinadoraongd.org/2016/01/unete-a-futuro-en-comun>
- Irish CSO cross-sectoral SDG coalition - Coalition 2030 <https://www.facebook.com/IrishCoalition2030>

## **3. ENGAGING MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS IN SDG MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The scope, ambition and integrated nature of the SDGs means that governments alone will not be able to implement them. While governments have the primary duty to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs, the involvement of multiple stakeholders will also be required. This will include civil society, trade unions, the private sector, academia, farmers, indigenous peoples and many other groups, each of whom will bring their distinctive perspectives and expertise to monitoring and implementing the SDGs. The collaboration that will be required between these different stakeholders will call for new and innovative partnerships to be established and maintained.

### **(i) Key Questions**

- Does a functioning, multi-stakeholder, sustainable development forum exist in your country which has been established by your government and which can play a role in monitoring and influencing national implementation of the SDGs?
- Are all relevant stakeholders and constituencies represented in this national SD forum (in particular civil society & marginalised groups)?
- Does this forum operate in an independent, open, transparent and accessible manner?
- Has your government made funding available to civil society and other stakeholders to support the development of new multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes at a national level? Has your organisation engaged in advocacy on this issue?
- Does your organisation have the skills and capacities to work closely with private sector or academic organisations in the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs?
- Would your organisation welcome capacity building in developing and maintaining effective partnerships with academia, private sector and other key sectors linked to SDG monitoring and implementation?

## (ii) Possible Actions

- Investigate whether a functioning, multi-stakeholder, Sustainable Development Forum exists in your country which could have a role in monitoring and influencing the implementation of the SDGs.
- If no, engage in outreach with prominent stakeholders from other sectors to encourage them to discuss the need, possible mandate and future functioning of such a forum. Together you can lobby the government to establish such a multi-stakeholder SD forum, and participate in the forum once it is established. For example, write a letter to your Prime Minister's office calling for the establishment of such a multi-stakeholder forum. Copy the letter to other government ministers and to any other relevant parties. Specify that the forum must operate in an independent, open, transparent and accessible manner, and must include representation of marginalised groups.
- Write to the government department that is leading on SDG implementation and ask that resources be provided to civil society and other stakeholders to develop multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes to enable the effective implementation of the SDGs in your country.

## (iii) Useful Resources

- Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform- & multi-stakeholder partnerships <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdinaction>
- The EU High Level Multi-stakeholder Platform on the SDGs <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/ec-high-level-multi-stakeholder-platform-on-sdgs-sets-priorities>
- UN Global Registry of Voluntary Commitments & Multi-Stakeholder Partnership <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships>

## 4. ENGAGING IN PUBLIC OUTREACH AND AWARENESS-RAISING ABOUT THE SDGS

The support and cooperation of the public will be essential if the SDGs are to be fully and effectively implemented, particularly at the national level. For this reason, public outreach and awareness-raising linked to this new sustainable development agenda will be essential. CSOs have an important role to play in such activities, and especially in outreach to vulnerable and marginalised groups.

### (i) Key Questions:

- Is Agenda 2030 available in your national and in your local languages?
- Has your government launched any campaigns in your country to raise public awareness of the SDGs?
- Has the media in your country (including social media) engaged with the SDGs or tried to raise public awareness of them?
- Has your government made any funding available to civil society and other stakeholders to engage in public awareness raising about the SDGs?
- Has this funding been made available in a transparent manner that is accessible to all potentially interested stakeholders?
- Have any SDG public awareness-raising events such as festivals, conferences, workshops, been organised in your country to date?
- Are there other actors in your country involved in awareness raising on the SDGs?
- Has your organisation developed its own SDG-related resources and materials to support any public awareness-raising it will engage in?
- Has your organisation allocated resources in its budget that would allow it to engage in public awareness-raising linked to the SDGs?
- If yes, which sections of the population would you target with these activities?
- Will your organisation ensure that marginalised groups will be targeted by its SDG awareness-raising?

## (ii) Possible Actions

- Write a letter to your Prime Minister and/or other relevant Ministers calling for public awareness-raising campaigns to be funded, targeting different sections of the population of your country and encouraging the use of social media. Ask that this funding is made available to interested stakeholders in a transparent and accessible manner.
- Point to positive examples of other countries/regions where such campaigns have been initiated or supported by government. Highlight the different kinds of activities that have been designed for public awareness-raising purposes about the SDGs including festivals, conferences, workshops, online seminars etc.
- Write a letter to the major print, TV and radio networks in your country drawing their attention to the SDG agenda, pointing out how important its implementation will be for your country. Ask them to do a number of features or programmes linked to the SDGs to raise public awareness about them. Offer to write an article or opinion piece on the SDGs for your print and online media.
- Carry out research into what kind of awareness-raising resources and material are available from other major organisations and networks already involved with the SDGs. These organisations could include relevant UN agencies (including UNDESA, UNEP, UNITAR, the UN ONE Foundation, UNESCO etc.), and civil society networks and platforms such as Action For Sustainable Development, Together 2030, the IFP, SDG Watch Europe, CONCORD, BOND, and many others.
- Start to develop resources and materials within your own organisation to support awareness-raising campaigns linked to the SDGs. Begin by engaging all of your staff members in capacity development workshops and seminars to raise their awareness of the SDGs, and then engage with others externally.
- Make sure that you make provision in your organisation's budget for staff capacity development and public awareness-raising initiatives linked to the SDGs.

- Make sure that the SDG public awareness-raising initiatives that your organisation develops are tailored for marginalised groups, and take the particular challenges these groups face into consideration in designing and delivering these initiatives.
- Collaborate with your members organisations and other CSOs that are already engaged in awareness-raising on the SDGs.

## (iii) Useful Resources:

- UNDG- Building Awareness on the Agenda 2030 <https://undg.org/2030-agenda/mainstreaming-2030-agenda/building-awareness-link>
- National Youth Council of Ireland Youth & SDGs Development Education presentation <http://www.youthdeved.ie/sdgs-youth>
- ESDN Communication and Awareness Raising in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs: Activities and Challenges [http://www.sd-network.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2017-April-Communication\\_and\\_Awareness\\_Raising\\_in\\_the\\_Implementation\\_of\\_the\\_2030\\_Agenda\\_and\\_the\\_SDGs.pdf](http://www.sd-network.eu/quarterly%20reports/report%20files/pdf/2017-April-Communication_and_Awareness_Raising_in_the_Implementation_of_the_2030_Agenda_and_the_SDGs.pdf)

## 5. CONSULTATION BY GOVERNMENTS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ON SDGS

Based on experience, a strong civil society with a good working relationship with government appears to increase the prospects of developing an effective national plan for SDG implementation, and subsequently adapting the plan to local contexts. National governments who have consulted CSOs on the drafting of VNR reports, and involved civil society in the process in an inclusive and participatory fashion, have produced much more detailed and tangible plans for implementation of the SDGs. Experience also indicates that where civil society has been weakened, due to a tense political environment or the lack of strong national coordination by CSOs, civil society is more likely to be left out of formal SDG processes.

### (i) Key Questions

- Does your organisation have a good working relationship with its government?
- Has civil society in your country been invited by government to participate in formal SDG processes?
- Has your government created an “enabling environment” for civil society in your country?

### (ii) Possible Actions

- Seek meetings with key government departments and office-holders responsible for SDG implementation and for preparing the VNR and lobby for the inclusion of civil society in all SDG-related processes.
- Target your Prime Minister’s office and advocate for a co-ordinated “whole of government” approach to SDG implementation.
- Lobby government and national parliamentarians about the need to develop an effective national implementation plan for the SDGs.
- If there is shrinking space for civil society in your country, consider joining an organisation like CIVICUS or IFP and learn how to advocate effectively for a more enabling environment for CSOs.

### (iii) Useful Examples: of CSO engagement with governments on SDGs

- **Czech Republic:** engages with interested CSOs through the Ministry of Social Development and MFA.
- **Chile:** dialogue with the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- **Nepal:** National Planning Commission was not very responsive to CSOs invitations to meet and discuss SDG implementation. Most of the dialogue happened only during national consultation on VNRs.

- **Nigeria:** dialogue with CSOs takes place with the Office of the Senior Special Adviser to the President on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Netherlands:** CSOs have had more or less regular contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Punctual thematic dialogues with different ministries, but no genuine ongoing dialogues.

### (iv) Useful Resources

- Civicus website <https://www.civicus.org/>
- Civicus Guidelines on engaging with your government on SDG <http://civicus.org/thedatashift/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Guide-for-engaging-governments-of-the-SDG-MA.pdf>
- Civil Society Directory by CIVICUS listing regional and global institutions which can support civil society in its work [http://ifp-fip.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Civil\\_Society\\_Support\\_Directory\\_March2017-.pdf](http://ifp-fip.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Civil_Society_Support_Directory_March2017-.pdf)
- Inter Press Service article on Civil Society SDG engagement not guests <http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/07/civil-society-sdg-engagement-not-guests/>
- Handbook on “Rising to the Populist Challenge- a New Handbook for Human Rights Actors [https://www.dejusticia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Rising-to-the-populist-challenge\\_1.pdf?x54537](https://www.dejusticia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Rising-to-the-populist-challenge_1.pdf?x54537)

## 6. REVIEW OF NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Given the ambitious and comprehensive scope of the SDGs, national legislative and policy frameworks need to be reviewed by governments to ensure that these frameworks will enable the full implementation of the SDGs.

### (i) Key questions

- Has your organisation carried out an overall review of the adequacy of your national legislative and policy frameworks to establish whether they will enable the full implementation of all the SDGs in your country's domestic and foreign policies?
- Has your government put appropriate mechanisms and processes in place to ensure that key commitments of the agenda are fully observed when the SDGs are being implemented? (e.g. Leave No One Behind, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development, promoting Integration and Inter-linkages between the SDGs, adopting a Rights Based Approach and Respecting Planetary Boundaries).

### (ii) Possible Actions:

- Carry out research into what governments in other countries have done in terms of reviewing their legislative and policy frameworks linked to SDG implementation.
- Work with CSOs and stakeholders from other sectors to jointly assess whether national legislative and sectoral policy frameworks will enable the full implementation of the SDGs in your country. The results of this analysis, when ready, should be sent to your Prime Minister's office and to all government departments for their consideration.
- Write a letter to your Prime Minister's office seeking a meeting to discuss SDG implementation. Ask the PM's office to initiate a formal review of national legislative and policy frameworks to assess their ability to fully implement the SDGs. Highlight specific policy or legislative areas which CSOs & partners believe need to be reformed or updated to enable the full implementation of the SDGs.
- Write to all other government ministers seeking a meeting with them, or with their senior officials. Ask each department to conduct a review of the legislative and policy frameworks for which it is responsible to ensure that these frameworks enable the full implementation of the SDGs in your country.

- Your organisation's advocacy should also stress the importance of the government observing key transversal commitments of the SDGs in the way that the agenda is implemented through domestic and foreign policy. For example, call on government departments to adopt a joined-up, "whole of government" approach to SDG implementation. This is necessary to respect the Agenda 2030 commitment to promoting integration and respecting the inter-linkages between different goals and targets.
- Include the analysis of national legislative and sectoral policy frameworks in any CSO Shadow Report which your organisation and its partners produce.

### (iii) Useful Resources

- Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform - Mainstreaming SDGs into national policies, plans and strategies and integrating the three dimensions of Sustainable Development  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=20000&nr=312&menu=2993>
- ESDN Case Study No 20 Integrating SDGs into national SD policy frameworks and governance structures- activities in 4 selected EU Member States  
[http://www.sd-network.eu/pdf/case%20studies/ESDN%20Case%20Study\\_20\\_SDGs%20integration\\_final.pdf](http://www.sd-network.eu/pdf/case%20studies/ESDN%20Case%20Study_20_SDGs%20integration_final.pdf)

## 7. DEVELOP NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS AND NATIONAL LEVEL INDICATORS

Best practice internationally in implementing the SDGs to date suggest that governments should develop an overarching national implementation plan for the SDGs, and national level indicators to measure progress in implementation.

### (i) Key Questions

- Has your government developed a national implementation plan to enable your country's implementation of the SDGs through its domestic and foreign policies?



- Did the development of the national implementation plan involve full and transparent consultation with all relevant stakeholders and citizens?
- Has the government agency responsible for national statistics agreed a range of national level indicators for measuring your country's progress in implementing the SDGs?
- Did this agency consult openly and transparently with all relevant stakeholders and citizens during the process of agreeing these indicators?
- Does your organisation believe that the national level indicators adopted for measuring your country's progress on SDG implementation are adequate?
- What are the main areas in which new or better indicators are needed to measure your country's implementation of the SDGs?
- How available are the data sets necessary to measure the progress made by your country in achieving all SDG goals and targets against the national indicators agreed?
- Examine any national level indicators that have been agreed for measuring SDG implementation.
- Establish whether your organisation and its partners are satisfied that these indicators will measure the achievement of all the SDG goals and targets.
- Work with relevant CSOs and other stakeholders where possible to highlight any gaps or perceived deficiencies in the national indicators agreed.
- Work to establish whether national data sets already exist in relation to the indicators agreed, and what the quality of these data sets are.
- Seek a meeting with the officials of the office responsible for national statistics. Share your analysis of the gaps and deficiencies in the national indicators that have been identified to measure SDG implementation, and the quality of the available data-sets.
- Partner with reputable research and academic organisations with expertise in working with indicators to explore the possibility of developing alternative and better indicators to measure SDG implementation, including "citizen-generated" data.
- Include reference to your organisation's analysis and work on national indicators in any SDG Shadow Report it is involved in developing.

## **(ii) Possible Actions :**

- Write a letter to your Prime Minister's office calling for a National Implementation Plan for the SDGs to be developed, involving all government departments and state agencies. (Refer to examples from other countries which have already developed such plans).
- Call for an open and transparent process of consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including marginalised groups, to be carried out when preparing the implementation plan.
- Call for the national implementation plan to cover all SDG goals and targets, to avoid "cherry-picking" and to include a time-table for a mid-term review.
- Write to the body that is responsible for national statistics in your country and ask whether a range of national level indicators have been agreed for measuring your country's progress in implementing the SDGs.

## **(iii) Useful Resources**

- UN Zero Draft- Overview of Institutional arrangements for implementing the Agenda 2030 [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10735Updated\\_Issues\\_Brief\\_rev10\\_1\\_March\\_2017.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10735Updated_Issues_Brief_rev10_1_March_2017.pdf)
- Ireland's Development Education Association's submission on Ireland's National Implementation Plan (NIP) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the Interdepartmental Group chaired by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment [https://www.ideaonline.ie/uploads/files/IDEA\\_submission\\_on\\_Irelands\\_NIP\\_for\\_the\\_SDGs.pdf](https://www.ideaonline.ie/uploads/files/IDEA_submission_on_Irelands_NIP_for_the_SDGs.pdf)

## 8. STRATEGIC COORDINATION ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN GOVERNMENT

Best practice internationally to date in SDG implementation suggests that a “dedicated lead body” in the government to provide strategic oversight ensures their most effective implementation at national level.

### (i) Key Questions

- Has your government put a cross-departmental coordination mechanism in place at the highest level of government to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs?
- Is there a specific department (or departments) taking a lead role in ensuring the implementation of the SDGs on behalf of the government in your country?
- Is every government department taking on its responsibilities to ensure implementation of the SDGs? Are there government departments that appear not to be engaging with SDG implementation at all?
- Have your regional or local governments put cross-departmental coordination mechanisms in place to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs? Are they taking their responsibilities to implement the SDGs seriously?

### (ii) Possible Actions

- Lobby your Prime Minister’s office to establish a cross-departmental coordination mechanism at the highest level of government to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs in your country. Point to the good example already set by other countries.
- If a specific government department is taking the lead on SDG implementation, consult with CSOs and other stakeholders to establish how successful this has been.
- Send a letter to the Mayor and/or senior officials of your regional and/or local government calling for the establishment of a cross-departmental coordination mechanism to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs at a regional/local level in your country. Point to the good example set by other countries.

- Seek a meeting with government officials to discuss SDG implementation at regional and local levels and impress upon each department the importance of fulfilling its responsibilities to implement the SDGs at regional/local levels.

### (iii) Useful Examples

Some country examples of coordination bodies:

- **Czech Republic:** the Office of the Government and its Department for Sustainable Development.
- **Chile:** National Council for Agenda 2030 implementation, coordinated by the MFA and composed by various ministries; Governmental network on SDGs. Civil society can participate through working groups.
- **Nepal:** High level steering committee chaired by Prime Minister. Coordination and Implementation Committee and SDG implementation and monitoring thematic committees. (representatives from CSOs in the committees).
- **Nigeria:** Office of the Senior Special Adviser to the President on the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Netherlands:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### (iv) Useful Resources

- UNDP Institutional and Co-ordination mechanisms- Guidance Note on Facilitating Integration and Coherence for SDG Implementation:  
[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2478Institutional\\_Coordination\\_Mechanisms\\_GuidanceNote.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2478Institutional_Coordination_Mechanisms_GuidanceNote.pdf)
- OECD Survey on Planning and Coordinating the Implementation of the SDGs: First results and key issues  
<https://www.oecd.org/gov/cob-sdg-survey-overview-of-results.pdf>

## 9. PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT AND SCRUTINY OF SDG IMPLEMENTATION

National parliaments play a critical role in providing political oversight of the action of governments. Their contribution to the ongoing monitoring and public debate on the progress of governments in implementing the SDGs is important. Many national parliaments are not yet fully aware of the SDGs or of the role that they can play in holding governments to account for the commitments they have signed up to when they adopted them. Civil society can reach out to parliamentarians and encourage them to take on this important role.

### (i) Key Questions

- Has your national parliament held a specific debate on the implementation of the SDGs in your country since the agenda was adopted in September 2015?
- Is there any parliamentary committee (or committees) that have taken on a responsibility for monitoring national implementation of the SDGs in your country?
- Has the parliamentary committee with responsibility for budgetary affairs ensured that the requirements of the SDG agenda are mainstreamed into budgetary planning and analysis each year?
- Has your national parliament adopted any new legislation linked to the commitments your government made when it adopted the SDGs?
- Has your national parliament had a role in monitoring and debating the National Voluntary Report (NVR) that your government will submit to the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) every few years? Have parliamentarians already called for such a debate to take place?

### (ii) Possible Actions

- Write a letter to relevant parliamentarians (Chairman, Committee Chairs, Heads of Political Groups) in your national parliament seeking a meeting with them and calling for a debate to be held each year on the implementation of the SDGs in your country.

- Ask the Chairs of all Parliamentary Committees to monitor the implementation of the SDGs through the work of their committees' (in particular the Committee with responsibility for Financial/Budgetary Affairs).
- In advance of meeting with parliamentarians, prepare an analysis of the key areas in which new legislation will need to be adopted by parliament to fulfil the requirements of SDG implementation.
- Call on your national parliamentarians to assume a clear role in monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and in holding a parliamentary debate on the issue each year.
- Call on your national parliamentarians to monitor, contribute to and publicly debate the NVR prepared by your government for submission to the UN HLPF every few years.

### (iii) Useful Resources

- UNDP- Parliament's Role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals  
[https://www.google.ie/search?dcr=0&ei=pjz-JWqWCK8jSwQLDtKvoCg&q=parliamentary+engagement+and+monitoring+of+sdg+implementation&oq=&gs\\_l=psy-ab.1.0.35i39k1l6.9070.11263.0.15682.59.19.0.0.0.86.1250.18.19.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..57.2.180.6...117.twm8dXBeS5A](https://www.google.ie/search?dcr=0&ei=pjz-JWqWCK8jSwQLDtKvoCg&q=parliamentary+engagement+and+monitoring+of+sdg+implementation&oq=&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.35i39k1l6.9070.11263.0.15682.59.19.0.0.0.86.1250.18.19.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..57.2.180.6...117.twm8dXBeS5A)
- Parliamentary Network on the World Bank & International Monetary Fund (the Parliamentary Network)'s power point presentation on "Parliamentary Engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals"  
[http://www.parlnet.org/sites/default/files/2017%20GPC\\_UNDP\\_Role%20of%20Parliamentarians%20in%20SDGs.pdf](http://www.parlnet.org/sites/default/files/2017%20GPC_UNDP_Role%20of%20Parliamentarians%20in%20SDGs.pdf)

## 10. NATIONAL VOLUNTARY REPORTING (NVR) PROCESS ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The VNR reports being prepared by different countries rarely add review processes to check the status of their action plans, evaluation milestones or to check how processes can be updated and improved. In a number of countries, CSOs are preparing spotlight reports to draw attention to the plans proposed by governments and to analyse their feasibility. Such spotlight reports can provide a great mechanism to pressure governments to remain accountable to the public and can draw from official as well as citizen-generated data.

### (i) Key Questions:

- Has your government submitted an NVR to the UN HLPF documenting the progress it has made in implementing the SDGs through its domestic and foreign policies?
- If yes, did your government involve all interested stakeholders, including marginalised groups and their representative organisations, in the preparation of its NVR?
- Was the process of preparing the NVR conducted in a transparent and accessible way by your government?
- Was civil society in your country broadly satisfied with the conclusions reached by your government in the NVR that it submitted to the HLPF?
- Did your government include civil society representatives in its official delegation attending the HLPF as part of presenting its NVR?
- Did civil society in your country collaborate to produce a Shadow Report with analysis of and commentary on the government's official National Voluntary Report? Did stakeholders from other sectors contribute to that Shadow Report?
- Was the shadow report produced broadly supportive of the conclusions reached in the government's official NVR?

- Did CSOs from your country participate in the UN HLPF in which your government presented its VNR? If yes, was the involvement of your organisation and other CSOs in the VNR process during the UN HLPF a meaningful and effective one?
- Is your organisation aware of the UN Regional Sustainable Development Forums established to provide regional monitoring mechanisms for the implementation by UN member states of the SDGs? If yes, has it participated in the UN Regional Sustainable Development process in your region?
- Has your organisation considered how the overall SDG reporting process at national regional or global levels could be improved in the coming years? Has it made any contribution to formal civil society recommendations on how to improve the national regional and global SDG reporting processes?
- Did the Shadow Report produced use a clear methodology and criteria for rating the progress of your government's implementation of the SDGs across key policy areas?
- Has your organisation researched best practice in relation to the Shadow Reports produced by civil society in other countries? Has your organisation considered engaging in capacity development on how to produce an effective Shadow Report?

### (ii) Possible Actions

- Find out if your government has already submitted, or is to submit its VNR to the UN HLPF over the coming years.
- Look at the VNR reports that have been submitted by other governments, read civil society's analysis of some of these VNRs (see A4SD link & Together 2030 Report) and identify best practice.
- Find out which government department will be responsible for coordinating your government's VNR and write to your Prime Minister and to other relevant government departments asking for the VNR process to be conducted as openly and transparently as possible with the full involvement of civil society and marginalised groups. Call on your government to include civil society representation in its official delegation to the HLPF to present its NVR.

- Research the Shadow Reports produced by CSOs from other countries and establish best practice. Identify a clear methodology and criteria for rating the progress of your government's implementation of the SDGs across all policy areas.
- Carry out research into how other CSOs participated in the NVR process of their governments and in the presentation of their country's NVR during the UN HLPF (see relevant A4SD and Together 2030 reports). Decide how civil society from your country can best engage with the NVR process led by your government. Write to the government department with a lead responsibility for preparing the NVR and ask for civil society to be included as part of the national delegation to the HLPF.
- Identify the UN Regional Peer Review process for assessing the progress of UN member states in your region on SDG implementation. Consult with other CSOs and find out how your organisation can best engage with, and influence this regional review process.
- Contribute to civil society reflection at national regional and global levels on how the HLPF and VNR processes can be improved and the participation of stakeholders made more meaningful.

### (iii) Useful Examples

- **Czech Republic:** public hearing organized by the Council for Sustainable Development on the VNR, where CSOs had the opportunity to provide feedback and inputs.
- **Chile:** the participation in VNR process was open to all organizations but mainly informative. National processes need to be clarified about the scope of the stakeholder's participation.
- **Nepal:** CSOs invited for feedback session on VNR report but it was at the last moment and CSOs were not sure how much of their input was incorporated in the final report.
- **Nigeria:** different stakeholders were invited to consultations. CSOs were involved at the early stage of report writing.
- **Netherlands:** CSO's contributed to the national SDG report, used as a source for the VNR.

### (iv) Useful Resources

- Together 2030 Article- "Progressing National SDG Implementation"  
<http://www.together2030.org/2018/03/15/progressing-national-sdg-implementation-a-civil-society-assessment-of-2017-vnrs>
- The Asian Development Association (ADA) draft guidelines on CSO engagement on HLPF-VNR-2018  
<http://ifp-fip.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ADA-Draft-Guidelines-on-CSO-Engagement-on-HLPF-VNR-2018-1-4.pdf>

Other useful IFP resource materials available:

\*To learn more about the Voluntary National Review processes, you can read the IFP's briefing note on "Everything you need to know about the VNR process".

\*If you are preparing a CSO Shadow Report in your country, have a look at the "Guidelines for CSO Shadow Reports monitoring the implementation of Agenda 2030 at national level".

Both of these documents are available on IFP's webpage:  
<http://ifp-fip.org/en/sections/resources/>

## **We're rebranding**

The International Forum for National NGO Platforms, widely known as IFP-FIP, is undergoing a rebranding exercise and will be called Forus starting in September 2018. The new name and branding aims to better reflect the purpose and ambition of the network and its members. The new strapline "Connect Support Influence" describe the key aims and activities of the network.

IFP  FIP

Becomes



**forus**

CONNECT  
SUPPORT  
INFLUENCE



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