

Compendium of Inputs

Questionnaire:

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

Paragraph 90 of the 2030 Agenda (<http://bit.ly/1Epf648>) 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:

- (i) 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,
- (ii) clarify institutional responsibilities,
- (iii) provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and
- (iv) [provide guidance] on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF."

In order to informally contribute to the reflection, major groups and other stakeholders are hereby invited to complete the below questionnaire to provide their views and proposals on these issues by midnight (NY time) on Sunday, 15 November 2015. The responses received will be made available on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

Please feel free to leave blanks for questions you feel unprepared to answer.

II. 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?**

SWP-Berlin: The HLPF has been tasked to play a central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes. When the HLPF meets every four years under the auspices of

the General Assembly, it should focus on the bigger picture and on political leadership and guidance. The GSDR could help to inform this meeting with its integrated scientific assessment.

Transparency International: To deliver on the ambitious commitments of the SDGs, the agendas and working methods should be aligned between the various bodies to make sure the UN structures are supporting delivery of the goals through oversight, monitoring and related supports. The GA should be used for strategic discussions on high-level issues coming out of the HLPF and ECOSOC committees, such as concerns about underperformance or political will (as revealed through the monitoring of the HLPF processes). The HLPF and ECOSOC committees should have specific mandates that are complementary to divide up the areas of work with the committees providing for regular and constant discussions. The agenda cannot wait for the convening of the HLPF to flag matters and discuss strategic directions based on the progress being seen.

Saferworld: In order to ensure successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, alignment of policy priorities with the SDGs will be key at all levels. In practice, the work of the GA and the work of the Second and Third committee in particular, should be built on the priorities set by the 2030 Agenda. This will include ensuring that the draft resolutions are more action – oriented and focused on contributing to SDG implementation. This might also entail deprioritising some areas of work while adding other priorities. Indeed, the 2030 Agenda is transformative and encompasses aspects of development that goes beyond the three pillars - this should be reflected in both the GA and ECOSOC's efforts going forward. The roles of ECOSOC and the General Assembly should be complementary – ECOSOC should provide an effective platform for coordinating development activities while the GA should maintain and build political momentum around 2030 Agenda implementation.

Save the Children: The General Assembly should hold a Special Session in 2017 to track progress on the SDGs in relation to children. Children constitute more than 30% of the world's population and virtually all of the SDGs will have an impact on children's lives and the realization of their rights. A Special Session in 2017 would align with the 15th Anniversary of the Special Session of the General Assembly on 'A World Fit for Children' and would provide a high-level political space to discuss the SDGs in relation children. This Special Session could be followed up with a second General Assembly Special Session in 2027 and complemented with a specific overarching HLPF theme on children and the SDGs.

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

SWP-Berlin: When the HLPF meets annually under the auspices of ECOSOC it should focus on thematic and national review (building on the AMR) and the UN system review (building on the QCPR). ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies and other entities reporting to ECOSOC should help provide tailored input for the HLPF review. A UN Task Team (possibly linked to the CEB) could help assemble and aggregate this kind of information.

Transparency International: The ECOSOC committees can also be used to bring multiple stakeholder voices to the table, including a formalised space for exchanges and discussions, particularly to secure the contributions of civil society.

It's important that countries implement individuals who have the capacity to take accurate information and data and communicate this information to the General Assembly. This can only happen with professionals who are focused on seeing the 2030 Agenda met. Too often the focus is on drafting the goals and not enough on ensuring they are implemented and how they affect other countries who may or may not have a strategic plan to meet targets.

Saferworld: Given that the HLPF will meet annually under the auspices of ECOSOC – with only 54 members – while it only will meet under the auspices of the GA – with all UN Member states – every fourth year, ECOSOC has a responsibility to ensure that its work remains truly universal and inclusive. This will include taking into account the lessons learned and experiences from all member states as well as enabling civil society stakeholders to participate actively in all relevant processes. It will also include encouraging member states to ensure that civil society participates actively in national review processes and that their views are reflected in the final national reviews that are being put forward to the HLPF.

- 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) landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)?**

Transparency International: It's important that developed nations make linkages with developing nations who see the importance of these goals and targets and even more important that the United Nations allows for such developing countries/states forge a relationship with countries that may not have the resources or not certain how to see the full impact of these goals.

The HLPF could provide a formal space for the UN conferences and processes to present their results. Inversely, the HLPF could provide the organising framework for the thematic framing of the conferences and processes. The SDG agenda needs to be integrated.

- 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? Guidance by the General Assembly is important to see the proper functioning and impact of the SDGs and also will allow all nations to have a cohesive structure that encourages what the United Nations was established for. It also gives a standardized method of disseminating information through these educational sessions, programmes and forums.**

Transparency International: At its 2016 fall meeting, the GA should issue a resolution that gives the HLPF a clear mandate to coordinate the follow-up and review processes. It should consider the recommendations of the SG report and the deliberations of Member States during

the 2016 HLPF. High-level guidance on strategic direction and trends is needed on the part of the GA.

Saferworld: Successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda will depend on a comprehensive monitoring framework with indicators – both at the global and the national level – that provide a clear and accurate picture of progress on the issues that really matter. It is important that this process remains a technical one, led by the IAEG-SDGs and overseen by the United Nations Statistics Division and reported on to the Statistical Commission. It is also important that the ECOSOC and GA endorsement of the agreed proposal between July-September 2016 does not become politicised.

Save the Children: It should request that commissions, bodies and forums provide the following information related to their area of expertise in a short report:

- Progress, achievements and critical success factors to attain the SDGs;
- Challenges and gaps;
- New and emerging issues; and
- Recommendations to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.

In line with para. 74(e) of the agenda, this information should be gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and the social and economic groups or ‘segments of society’ that are the furthest behind. The recommendations should be considered by the HLPF for inclusion in the negotiated Ministerial Declaration.

Inputs should be sought from other accountability mechanisms such as the Human Rights Council (including its special procedures and the UPR), human rights treaty bodies and UN Secretary General Special Representatives (including on Violence against Children and Children in Armed Conflict.)

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?

SWP-Berlin: The annual HLPF should devote a special time slot to discuss the outcome of the annual meeting of the ECOSOC Forum on FFD together with the other Means of Implementation that are necessary to implement the SDGs. All of these processes should be seen as individual parts of the same whole.

This can happen by fostering better relationships between developed and developing nations. Developing countries should have more opportunities to collaborate and work with developed countries which allows for more innovation and better outcomes for SDG goals and targets.

Saferworld: Synergies between both forums are key – i.e. the discussions at the annual Economic and Social Council Forum on financing for development will need to be focused on how the ongoing financing for development efforts contribute to implementation of the SDGs

and to reassess what has not worked well. In the same vein, the outcome from the Forum on financing needs to feed into the HLPF discussions as an integrated element.

Center for Economic and Social Rights: The Forum on Financing for Development - which will follow up commitments made in Addis Ababa - must be closely linked to the Agenda 2030 follow-up and review processes, in particular review and monitoring of progress and challenges related to Goal 17. In particular, the findings and outcomes from the FFD Forum should be considered in country and thematic reviews at the HLPF where relevant. In particular, these outcomes will be very pertinent in helping to review a country's efforts in mobilization of domestic resources, policy coherence, development cooperation, and the global partnership for development.

Christian Aid: To demonstrate the importance of financing and Means of Implementation to the successful delivery of SDGs, Finance Ministers should ensure that they attend the FFD Forum and official summaries from the Forum should be submitted to the HLPF for consideration in reviews (as above). Should there be a thematic review of commitments made under Goal 17, there may be a need for greater synergy and for attendance of Finance Ministers at the HLPF.

III. 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 ECOSOC and "other intergovernmental bodies and forums". 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". 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". 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.

- 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 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? Focus on clusters of closely related SDGs. This will allow thematic reviews to be looked at and analysed from a broad perspective giving leeway for more participatory involvement from those who want to engage.**

Transparency International: All of the SDGs are closely related and depend on an integrated framework to achieve them. Singling out subgroups would undermine this reality for policies should be implemented.

To fully capture the integrated nature of the SDGs, it would be preferable to focus on a transversal, overarching theme - that is nevertheless linked to a number of SDGs and would show this integration. The thematic review could focus on interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs -- and discuss adequate ways to deal with them.

In a four-year cycle one of the thematic reviews should focus on issues in relation to SDG 16.

Saferworld: Realising that the SDGs are interlinked – for instance, the peace agenda is included across a number of Goals and targets – we would prefer if progress was addressed based upon a transversal theme (option ii). One way could be to identify the themes based on the five Ps in the preamble of the 2030 Agenda – these cross-cutting issues have already been approved through the GA adoption of the 2030 Agenda. With more ongoing armed conflicts than at any time this century, peace – one of the five Ps and therefore a unanimously agreed cross-cutting issue – should be included in the four-year cycle of thematic reviews.

Save the Children: Thematic reviews should focus on clusters of closely-related SDGs (option i) or examine progress for all SDGs based on a transversal theme (option ii). Regardless which option is pursued, all thematic reviews should ensure:

- a. In line with para. 74(b) of the agenda, the universal nature of the agenda is respected and all goals are reviewed at least three times from 2016-2030;
- b. In line with para. 74(e) of the agenda, the situation of the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind are considered each year. All thematic reviews of progress should support the pledge to *leave no one behind* by ensuring a focus on progress of those social and economic groups that are the furthest behind to achieve the SDGs, based on income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographic location or other characteristic.
- c. The process for selecting the theme is inclusive, transparent and participatory and provides the opportunity for input from civil society including children.

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?

Transparency International: The SDG agenda needs to be delivered as a ONE UN agenda. Functional commissions need to align themselves closely to it and to producing outputs that support the work plan of the HLPF (including related monitoring and follow-up).

There should be a template for their input. There should be a concise presentation of new insights and innovative actions. While a “beauty contest”-Panel should be avoided, heads of commissions and other bodies should be present to answer questions.

Saferworld: The inputs should be provided to the HLPF in written form during a preparatory period ahead of the HLPF - they should be framed around and linked to specific SDGs that are subject to each thematic review in order to make the input concise and relevant to the HLPF

discussions. For instance, the Statistical Commission could report on progress toward meeting the targets under the SDGs that are under discussion each year, and highlight key gaps in terms of implementation.

Center for Economic and Social Rights: In particular, the role of the human rights mechanisms (for example the Universal Periodic Review and the treaty bodies that oversee implementation of the international human rights treaties) will be key to supporting accountability to people in follow-up and review at the global level. The human rights mechanisms collect a wide range of information and issue a large set of recommendations to countries that are very relevant to SDG implementation. The UN system should ensure a systematic flow of information between the human rights mechanisms and the HLPF, and integration of this information into the HLPF review process. States should be encouraged to include information submitted in compliance with their human rights treaty obligations in their SDG reporting. Compilation reports produced for country reviews at the UPR could be submitted directly the HLPF for its country reviews, as well as country findings from treaty bodies and special procedures' missions.

Save the Children: Commissions, bodies and forums – and sector-specific global partnerships – should provide the following inputs based on their area of expertise and in consultation with civil society:

- Progress, achievements and critical success factors to attain the SDGs;
- Challenges and gaps;
- New and emerging issues; and
- Recommendations to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.

They should also be able to provide conclusions and/or negotiated outcomes. For example, recommendations issued by UN international human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council special procedures and Universal Periodic Review, and treaty body concluding observations, should inform national and thematic reviews of progress under the HLPF by being considered for inclusion in the negotiated Ministerial Declaration.

The written inputs of various bodies should be available online and can be presented through their participation in multi-stakeholder national and thematic review sessions at the HLPF.

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?

Transparency International: The themes should be strategically selected to highlight topics where progress is slow or there are concerns about results or where an issue is already flagged as being critical. A multi-year work programme, as suggested below, is needed in advance..

Saferworld: One option could be to frame the annual themes for the HLPF around the five Ps (People, Planet, Peace, Partnership and Prosperity) that are included in the preamble of the 2030 Agenda. This will ensure an integrated approach to the follow-up and review process and will be key to avoid siloes between the different SDGs. Another option could be to frame the annual

themes for the HLPF around the six essential elements identified in the UN Secretary-General's Synthesis Report from December 2014 (People, Dignity, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership and Justice) but the five Ps would be preferable given that these have been agreed and adopted by UN Member States.

Save the Children: Good overarching annual themes for the HLPF include the following:

- *Leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first:* Putting promises into action for all segments of society
- Achieving progress on the SDGs for children
- *Towards a new accountability paradigm:* Good practices and lessons learned in ensuring people-centred follow-up and review from the local to the global level
- *Measuring progress for women, children and other marginalized groups:* Are we reaching the most vulnerable?
- *Measuring the means:* Adequacy of the MoI to achieve the SDGs
- Achieving the SDGs in conflicted- affected and fragile states
- Achieving the SDGs for migrants and refugees, including children

Ideally, the overarching theme for the HLPF should relate to the cluster of goals or specific thematic focus selected for that particular year. In terms of alignment, the HLPF theme should not necessarily have to align with ECOSOC's theme given that the HLPF is a universal forum whereas ECOSOC is not.

- 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?**

SWP-Berlin: The Second Committee could make suggestions for a four-year cycle of themes for the HLPF meetings under the auspices of ECOSOC - but be able to adjust this should there be pressing new or emerging challenges.

Saferworld: In order to ensure that all aspects captured in the SDGs are reflected in the thematic reviews in a way that avoids unnecessary competition between stakeholders prioritising certain SDGs, suggestions could be made for a four-year cycle of themes for the HLPF meetings in line with the five Ps. The final P can then be the focus of the first year of the new four-year cycle and so on.

Save the Children: Paragraph 18 of General Assembly Resolution 67/290 specifies that the agenda of the HLPF shall be 'focused, while allowing flexibility to address new and emerging issues.' Accordingly, the selection of HLPF themes should be determined every two years to provide some predictability, but also flexibility to respond to new and emerging issues. Providing the programme of work four years in advance would not allow the HLPF to be sufficiently flexible or responsive to new and emerging issues.

In selecting the themes for the HLPF, an inclusive, transparent and participatory process should be conducted that provides for the inputs of Member States, other intergovernmental platforms, and civil society including children. A similar process to this online consultation could be considered.

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

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

Transparency International: The Statistical Commission is tasked to collect the data based on the indicators (which are still to be agreed). They should inform the Annual SDG Progress Report by the Secretary General and other thematic reports in time. They should not spend resources producing reports but rather provide the platform for others to extract the data and assess progress.

Saferworld: The Statistical Commission should support and give guidance to the IAEG-SDGs over the next 15 years and take on a coordinating role in order to ensure that the IAEG-SDGs can provide technical support for the implementation of the approved indicator and monitoring framework. This will include support the IAEG-SDGs in order to ensure timely and comprehensive input to relevant reports such as the Annual SDG Progress report. This will include liaising with relevant officials within the UN Secretariat in the drafting process of the Annual SDG Progress report. Specific bodies of the UNSC – such as the Praia Group on Governance and Peace Statistics – could be drawn upon to continually engage on strengthening the global indicators and supporting methodological and capacity development. Finally, the UNSC should play a role in encouraging and supporting its members – national NSOs – to provide the necessary data required for global monitoring of progress.

Save the Children: The UN Statistical Commission can contribute to the HLPF's work by providing updates every two years on the following:

- Progress on reporting against all global indicators including progress on the full disaggregation of data for all global indicators;
- Recommendations to refine the global indicators framework based on feedback from Member States and non-state actors;
- Progress and challenges related to the collection and analysis of high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data;
- Measures taken to support capacity-building for data collection and analysis at a national level;
- Measures taken to establish minimum benchmarks for data (eg: 'a data floor');
- Measures taken to engage non-state actors, including children and marginalized groups, in the collection and analysis of data;

- Measures taken to ensure data is available, accessible and useable to all, especially marginalized groups; and
- Recommendations to further strengthen data collection and analysis.

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

Saferworld: There should be a focal point within the UN Secretariat who would receive input from different stakeholders on new and emerging issues, with the responsibility to act accordingly and brief the HLPF on these issues on a regular basis if necessary. HLPF will need to have the necessary mechanisms in place in order to be able to respond to these issues. It can for example involve adding an 0,5-1 day to the 8-day HLPF consultation period in order to deal with these issues and discuss whether they will need to be included under selected annual themes going forward.

Save the Children: Rather than allocate a specific session or dedicated time slot to consider new and emerging issues, the HLPF should require that all inputs and reports identify and reflect upon new and emerging issues across all goals on an annual basis. In this regard, new and emerging issues can be mainstreamed across all national and thematic reviews under the HLPF. Accordingly, all Member States, UN entities, other intergovernmental bodies and forums, and non-state actors including civil society, should provide the following information based on their area of expertise in relation to the SDGs in a short report:

- Progress, achievements and critical success factors to attain the SDGs;
- Challenges and gaps in achieving the SDGs;
- New and emerging issues; and
- Recommendations to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.

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?

Transparency International: Information outside the UN and national statistics system should be considered as a critical input to understanding progress. This holistic vision is critical if the HLPF is to be truly participatory, transparent and accountable.

SWP-Berlin:

Citizen reviews should be encouraged. ...

Private sector reporting should be aligned and cover the annual thematic focus.

The new Platform for SDG Partnerships should produce a report, reviewing those partnerships with a focus on the annual theme.

Shadow reports on the annual theme should be put online and DESA could issue a synthesis report for the HLPF thematic review.

Saferworld: Shadow reports conducted by non-state actors on the different SDGs should be available online, compiled, synthesised and handed to the HLPF representatives in advance of

the HLPF. In addition, CSO representatives who have produced shadow reports relevant to the annual theme should be invited to present their findings to the HLPF – potential discrepancies between the findings of civil society and the official data presented by UN Member States in their reviews should be discussed and analysed. Global partnerships, initiatives and platforms that are relevant to specific themes being discussed by the HLPF – for example the Open Government Partnership on governance or the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding on peace – should be invited to brief the HLPF on how they and their members are facilitating global action on meeting the SDGs.

Save the Children: Platforms and processes outside the UN system, including by non-state actors and sector-specific global partnerships, should provide inputs to the HLPF via the SDG Progress Report, the Global Sustainable Development Report, written reports and statements at reviews. These entities should report on progress, challenges, emerging issues and recommendations related to their area of expertise.

Civil society, including children and marginalized groups, should be able to submit independent supplementary information and participate in thematic reviews. To ensure children can engage meaningfully in reviews, they need access to age-appropriate information in a language they understand well in advance of a review. They should be able to participate in reviews remotely using new technology, with all HLPF meetings webcast. Children should be allowed to provide input in a format that is suitable for their level of development and should receive feedback on how their inputs have been considered.

IV. 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?

Transparency International: At least once in a four-year cycle, assessing

- first the level of ambition of national strategies, goals and preparatory measures,
- second the output and implementation of measures, and
- third the outcome and impact of measures, including the follow-up of the recommendation of the first two rounds of reviews.

There should also be the space for more real-time reviews, by collecting snapshots of information available on a country.

Saferworld: The discussion could be framed around successes, gaps, lessons learned in order to ensure that there will be a meaningful exchange of experiences and feedback at the HLPF.

Save the Children: Countries should participate in state-led reviews every 4-5 years or at least three times during the 15 year implementation period of *the 2030 Agenda*. This could be achieved

by conducting simultaneous or parallel reviews of country progress every year during four days of the HLPF. (See also question 18)

Ensuring countries participate in reviews at least three times between 2016-2030 will allow the HLPF to periodically assess national progress and make recommendations to mobilize further action on implementation if countries' policies, programs or interventions are not achieving their intended aims. Such touchpoints are critical to allow the HLPF to collectively 'keep its finger on the pulse' in overseeing the implementation of the SDGs and to be in a position to address new and emerging issues.

In addition to reporting on progress, challenges, emerging issues and recommendations, all countries should report on their actions taken to follow-up HLPF recommendations from previous 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?

Saferworld: Given that the HLPF discussions will be focused on reviews prepared by member states, the national level preparations will be key and should be supported by the international community. This will include ensuring accountability and transparency by ensuring a multi-stakeholder review process where civil society plays an active role with their concerns and views reflected in the final review, the mobilisation of national statistical systems working in partnership with an array of data-gatherers in order to produce reliable, disaggregated and comprehensive data sets that can feed into national reviews. Civil society and other relevant stakeholders also need to be actively involved in the consultation process on identifying and setting national indicators for the different SDG targets.

Save the Children: The HLPF discussions should be based on:

- A government report with information provided by the state under review;
- A report from the UN summarizing information submitted by non-state actors including civil society and children; and
- A report from the UN summarizing information and data from across the UN system, including from UN agencies, the Universal Periodic Review and UN treaty bodies.

In line with para. 74(e) of *the 2030 Agenda*, all reports should have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and the social and economic groups or 'segments of society' that are the furthest behind. As noted above, these reports should provide information on:

- Progress, achievements and critical success factors to attain the SDGs;
- Challenges and gaps in achieving the SDGs;
- New and emerging issues; and
- Recommendations to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.

A synthesis of recommendations provided should be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration.

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?

SWP-Berlin: The global HLPF review provisions should explicitly ask countries how they involved Parliament, societal groups and the most marginalized and vulnerable at the national and sub-national level in implementing the goals and preparing their report.

Transparency International: There needs to be standards regarding minimally accepted levels of transparency, accountability and participation for reporting on and conducting the reviews.

Saferworld: the key issues around transparency, accountability and participation will need to be included and put at the forefront of the voluntary common reporting guidelines for State-led reviews at the HLPF.

Center for Economic and Social Rights: First and foremost, the common reporting guidelines should require States to take a human rights and gender equality perspective in their reporting (consistent with their existing international human rights obligations, explicitly referred to in Transforming Our World as underpinning the new Agenda). Similarly, a particular focus on the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals/groups and how they are faring should be encouraged. The reporting guidelines should make clear that reviews and related reports must address both progress and setbacks under all goals. States should be transparent about challenges and setbacks, in order to allow for informed and constructive guidance and recommendations in response. As part of their review of means of implementation, the HLPF reviews should also assess partnerships and private sector activities for financing and implementation of the SDGs, to ensure these partnerships are transparent, compliant with human rights obligations and the imperative to ‘Leave No One Behind’.

Reviews should not concentrate solely on domestic implementation. The SDGs also imply crucial actions for States – particularly in the Global North – to undertake with regard to the global partnership for development, their development cooperation, and coherence of other policies (e.g. tax, trade, investment policies) with sustainable development overseas.

Christian Aid: The HLPF should ask member states to report on the development of national strategies - the involvement of civil society, including traditionally excluded groups; the extent to which they are setting national targets which will implement the whole agenda (social, environmental and economic) and not ‘cherry picking’; domestic implementation and their equitable/fair contribution to global targets including MOI and policy coherence for development, assessment of any spillover impacts; and reviews should also take account of key

cross-cutting themes e.g. ‘leave no one behind’, human rights, gender, contribution to addressing climate change.

Save the Children: The HLPF should systematically address the following:

- The situation of the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind, per para. 74(e) of the agenda based on income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographic location or other characteristic;
- The actions countries have taken to fulfil the pledges to leave no one behind, reach the furthest behind first, and meet goals and targets for all segments of society;
- The actions countries have taken to consult with civil society, including children, in implementation and accountability processes; and
- Progress made to achieve the full disaggregation of data.

In line with the universal and integrated nature of the agenda, the HLPF should encourage all countries to report on all SDGs by outlining the following:

- Progress, achievements and critical success factors to attain the SDGs;
- Challenges and gaps;
- New and emerging issues; and
- Recommendations to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.

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?

SWP-Berlin: Countries should report on all goals. For flexibility one could use a “comply or explain” approach.

Saferworld: In addition to reporting on all Goals, Member States could be encouraged to report on what issues that have been most difficult to achieve progress on and why identifying key data gaps and suggest proposals on what needs to be done, and one section on lessons learned – civil society should be consulted on all these issues.

Save the Children: Guidelines should encourage countries to report on progress, challenges, emerging issues and recommendations for further implementation of all SDGs. Ensuring countries report on these key topics across all SDGs can provide a level of cross-country comparability.

Guidelines should also encourage countries to report on the following:

- Actions taken to prioritize marginalized groups in order to leave no one behind, to reach the furthest behind first and to meet all goals and targets for all segments of society;

- Actions taken to promote the participation of civil society, children and marginalized groups, in awareness-raising of *the 2030 Agenda*, and implementation and accountability processes including the production of national reports;
- Actions taken to produce high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data that is publicly available and to consider citizen-led or third party data; and
- Actions taken to independently monitor progress on the SDGs at national levels.

Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:

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

Saferworld: While a smaller set of countries should be invited to present their reviews for open debate and discussion, all countries should submit country review reports to the HLPF ahead of its meeting.

Center for Economic and Social Rights: The country reviews should be the core part of the HLPF, in order to generate evidence about successful strategies and policies, and emerging problems that require corrective action. The HLPF country reviews are a key site for reinforcing the accountability of national governments to their population. The country reviews at the formal HLPF meeting should involve the country under review, other countries, UN agencies with presence in the country, and civil society organizations including those who operate at the national level.

The country reviews must be more than just an opportunity for the country under review to present a report or showcase its good practices. Rather, they should be an opportunity for real engagement, dialogue and learning.

Save the Children: Country reviews should be discussed via peer or partnership reviews at the HLPF.

Each year, a number of countries could be reviewed over four days of the HLPF. Parallel or simultaneous partnership/peer reviews could be conducted by groups of countries representing a balance of high, middle and low-income countries, as well as geography. The Ministerial Segment could then focus its attention on reviewing global progress, building on discussions from national reviews. Each country could be reviewed every 4-5 years or three times over the course of *the 2030 Agenda*.

Partnership/peer reviews should provide for the meaningful participation of non-state actors in the country under review, including the private sector, civil society and children. A space for such reviews would help to facilitate a dynamic ‘platform for partnerships’ where countries, UN agencies, the private sector and civil society alike come together to address challenges, showcase good practices and share lessons learned.

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

Center for Economic and Social Rights: National reviews will need to pay careful attention to the means of implementation, as a cross-cutting issue relevant to all goals, as well as through dedicated attention to Goal 17. Reporting guidelines can help to ensure these issues are addressed, as well as the organization of reviews and presentations: for example it may be helpful to require/encourage that all review and reports address means of implementation, in particular how these efforts are being financed and what financing gaps exist.

Countries (especially developed countries) should be encouraged to present based on a) domestic implementation including means of implementation b) direct contribution to implementation overseas via ODA/development cooperation and c) impacts on implementation overseas via other policies and actions – i.e. policy coherence with sustainable development objectives. This latter area will be very important in assessing how far countries are attending to the ‘spillover impacts’ of their policies, for example in the areas of tax, trade, investment and the environment, which can have a profound effect in creating an enabling or disabling environment for sustainable development globally.

Honest assessments during national reviews can help to mobilize new support and partnerships by drawing attention to challenges and areas in which countries need more support. Importantly, partnerships themselves must also be subject to review, monitoring and accountability, including through analysis at the HLPF.

International Budget Partnership: Countries should report on the revenues, spending and progress achieved towards each of the SDGs. Budget documents, from the pre-budget statement and executive’s budget proposal to the enacted budget and citizens budget to execution and audit reports, should be made publically available in a timely, comprehensive manner.

Save the Children: The HLPF can ensure adequate attention to the means of implementation by providing a space where countries of different income levels share progress and challenges, especially in relation to transnational issues which directly or indirectly impact the means to deliver on the SDGs.

As noted in question 18, a model of partnership/peer reviews for country-level reviews under the HLPF would help to facilitate ‘a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and for stocktaking and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development’ per para. 18 of Resolution 67/290. Providing a multi-stakeholder space for countries of different income levels, UN agencies, the private sector and civil society to reflect on implementation is essential to mobilize new support and partnerships for the means of implementation.

The eight days of the HLPF can also provide informal spaces to facilitate interaction, matchmaking and networking among different stakeholders to further promote multi-stakeholder partnerships.

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?

Center for Economic and Social Rights (some initial ideas): A summary report could be written, including commitments from the country under review, and with recommendations issued by other countries, civil society, and UN agencies.

Follow-up could take place at the national level (i.e. the commitments and recommendations should be reviewed and monitored at the national level processes and mechanisms) and then at the country's next HLPF review.

International Budget Partnership: The HLPF national reviews of implementation can contribute to multi-stakeholder reflection, learning and feedback, and a solutions-oriented approach to address gaps in implementation, including a review of planning and monitoring mechanisms.

Save the Children: There should be a written summary of recommendations from each national review that is made publicly available and accessible in a timely manner. These recommendations should contribute to a continuum of accountability at national, regional and global levels.

At national and sub-national levels, recommendations should be considered by government and non-state actors in the period between reviews, in order to make further progress in implementing the SDGs and to address any challenges, gaps or emerging issues.

At the regional level, key recommendations should be used to discuss shared regional challenges in implementation and possible solutions.

At the global level, countries should outline the steps they have taken to address recommendations arising from previous reviews. Country reports for subsequent reviews under the HLPF should thus outline: progress, challenges, emerging issues, follow-up on previous recommendations and any new recommendations that will further implementation.

V. Regional reviews and processes

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

SWP-Berlin: As many SDGs have a transboundary dimension, issues such as resource use or production and supply chains, should be dealt with at the regional level. Nuances will have to be found to allow for differentiated approaches at the regional level, building on those regional institutions that have the support of Member States. The HLPF under the auspices of the ECOSOC could dedicate a slot for reports from the regional level. Regional reviews could also support countries that want to go global and participate in the HLPF review.

Saferworld: Regional review processes should be reported on at the HLPF and should be seen as a complementary element to the national reviews – the outcomes from the regional review processes could help give an overview of progress made and gaps for each region.

VI. 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 and other relevant stakeholders defined by General Assembly resolution 67/290 and the practices of the General Assembly open working group on SDGs)?

SWP-Berlin: Resolution 67/290 grants major groups and other stakeholders access to all meetings of the HLPF - that includes the review sessions.

Major Groups and other Stakeholders, especially from the local level, should be able to comment national reports. DESA or another support structure for the HLPF could compile a synthesis report on those comments for the HLPF review sessions.

Saferworld: As mentioned earlier, shadow reports of civil society should be included and discussed at the HLPF in addition to the state-led reviews. The HLPF can also support those stakeholders who don't have a presence in New York and/or are not part of the Major Groups to participate actively in the HLPF discussions and the preparatory work. This should include enabling civil society representatives to participate at HLPF by financially assisting their participation, by ensuring that the SDG online platform is regularly updated, that UNDESA continues to send out relevant updates and information via email about developments at the UN and that civil society members working on themes not captured in the Major Groups such as peacebuilding are allowed to speak at relevant conferences and debates.

Center for Economic and Social Rights (echoing much of Saferworld's response): The HLPF should support and facilitate both in-person attendance by MG&OS at the HLPF (including financial support for attendance by grassroots groups, and designated speaking slots) and independent reporting by MG&OS as a crucial part of thematic and country reviews. Country reviews in particular must actively seek and facilitate the contributions and participation of national civil society organizations. Financial support could be provided through a trust fund established to support travel and technology for remote participation. Access and transparency should be ensured by publication of all review documents online, and webcasting of the reviews.

Save the Children: The HLPF should support the participation of stakeholders including civil society by:

- Providing dedicated time for interactive dialogue with Member States at meetings;
- Establishing a trust fund to support stakeholders to participate in reviews;
- Using new technologies to facilitate the participation of stakeholders outside UN Headquarters including through video calls and other online platforms; and
- Addressing other financial, linguistic, logistical or age barriers that prevent the participation of specific groups;

Stakeholders should be able to contribute to reviews by:

- Providing written inputs for national reviews to a UN report that summarizes information submitted by non-state actors including civil society;
- Providing written inputs to thematic reviews for consideration by the HLPF;
- Providing written inputs to the SDG Progress Report and the Global Sustainable Development Report; and
- Participating in multi-stakeholder thematic review and national partnership review sessions.

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?

Transparency International: There should be a formal and agreed space for actors to participate in review. This would be stipulated in the minimum criteria for a review to be considered valid.

SWP-Berlin: A well-designed review mechanism could help to engage and support frontrunners trying to make a difference on the ground.

Saferworld: These reports should be included as an integral element of the work of the HLPF that is sufficiently reviewed and discussed. This could also include reports from the private sector on their contribution in order to ensure their active involvement in 2030 Agenda implementation.

Center for Economic and Social Rights: The major groups and other stakeholders (MG&OS) should be able to participate in national and thematic reviews at the HLPF, including by submitting independent reports. There must be an official channel for these reports to be submitted and considered to complement official reports from Member States. In these reports, MG&OS should be encouraged to report on their contribution to the implementation of the agenda, but also on implementation by the government and relevant partnerships, based on their experience working at the national, local and community levels.

Save the Children: Stakeholders, including civil society organizations, can report on their voluntary contribution to *the 2030 Agenda* by:

- Participating in multi-stakeholder thematic review and national partnership/peer review sessions;
- Providing written inputs to national and thematic reviews;
- Contributing to an independent report that summarizes non-state actors' contributions to the implementation of *the 2030 Agenda*, such as an annual Global Accountability Report. The report could be prepared with inputs from multilateral institutions, UN agencies, international agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations that are supporting the implementation of *the 2030 Agenda*;

- Contributing to existing and emerging sector-specific global partnerships, such as the Global Partnership for Education, the Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health, and the Global Partnership and Fund to end violence against children; and
- Reporting through other independent civil society processes.

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

Saferworld: The focus of this review should be based on how well the UN system is doing in terms of contributing to the implementation of the SDGs, as well as how well it is doing in terms of overcoming siloes between different UN entities. This will be key given that the 2030 Agenda is transformative – business as usual, with the different UN entities continuing with their work without coordinating, is not an option. In this vein, the review should be a comprehensive one rather than different reviews looking at different areas of the UN system – a holistic approach is crucial.

Save the Children: The UN system can report on their contribution to *the 2030 Agenda* by:

- Participating in multi-stakeholder thematic reviews and national partnership/peer reviews as ‘One United Nations.’ The UN should adopt a ‘Delivering as One’ approach not just at a country level in delivering programs, but in relation to global national and thematic reviews under the HLPF;
- Providing individual agency written inputs to national and thematic reviews; and
- Contributing to an independent report that summarizes non-state actors’ contributions to the implementation of *the 2030 Agenda*, such as an annual Global Accountability Report. The report could be prepared with inputs from multilateral institutions, UN agencies, international agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations that are supporting the implementation of *the 2030 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?

SWP-Berlin: The HLPF needs a solid, transparent and participatory preparatory process. Past experiences with international review mechanisms suggest that a robust mandate, sufficient time and secretariat support as well as the meaningful participation of local civil society are crucial for an effective review.

Transparency International: The HLPF needs to have the right policy guidance as well as the resources (human, financial, technical, etc.) to execute it.

It is important that the UN continues to involve civil society to best support follow-up and review in a coherent and effective manner. There must also be room for honest dialogue by nations.

Saferworld: The Secretariat can be a vehicle for ensuring that civil society plays an active role in HLPF – this includes civil society from developing countries with more limited opportunities to engage in discussions. In addition, the Secretariat can play an important role in continuing to raise awareness among civil society on the 2030 Agenda by supporting national and local level awareness campaigns and capacity building. Indeed, the follow-up and review process tend to be a very technical one and continued and sustained efforts to engage civil society are needed in order to avoid this process turning to a sole state-led one.

Save the Children: The UN system can take the following steps to best support follow-up and review:

- Integrate the outcomes and recommendations from reviews at the HLPF into the UN’s funds, policies and programmes and, where appropriate, into other international and regional accountability mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council;
- Provide support to countries to follow-up recommendations from reviews at the HLPF including by facilitating the participation of civil society, children and marginalized groups in accountability and implementation processes; and
- Provide support to countries to further their implementation of the SDGs based on key recommendations from reviews at the HLPF.

VII. Other views and ideas

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

SWP-Berlin: There should be space for the process to evolve over time, with stepwise refinement and substantiation. A collective effort will be necessary to demonstrate the benefits of such a review mechanism as a “means of implementation”, to further work on the incentives for broad participation and to support countries conceptualising the process at the national level. Countries’ capacities need to be strengthened at the national level in order to enable data collection and setting up a transparent and participatory review process, with governments as duty bearers and citizens as rights holders.

Transparency International: The review process, however it is implemented, must respect the principles of transparency, accountability and participation.

Saferworld: The Secretariat can be a vehicle for ensuring that civil society plays an active role in HLPF – this includes civil society from developing countries with more limited opportunities to engage in discussions. In addition, the Secretariat can play an important role in continuing to raise awareness among civil society on the 2030 Agenda by supporting national and local level awareness campaigns and capacity building. Indeed, the follow-up and review process tend to be a very technical one and continued and sustained efforts to engage civil society are needed in order to avoid this process turning to a sole state-led one.

Save the Children: Follow-up and review for the implementation of *the 2030 Agenda* should be seen as a continuum of accountability from local to global levels. Recommendations, good practices and lessons learned emanating from global and regional reviews should feed into

national actions to accelerate implementation of the SDGs. While the framework must ensure coordination and flow of information across all levels, particular focus must be placed on strengthening national accountability between states and citizens, including children.

The HLPF should be the global platform for accountability for *the 2030 Agenda* acting as an umbrella to bring together different processes. Sufficient human and financial resources must be allocated to the HLPF in order for it to fulfil its mandate.

Accountability processes at all levels should be people-centred with meaningful opportunities for citizens, including children and marginalized groups, to engage effectively in follow-up and review at all levels, including through providing written and oral independent supplementary information in formal review processes at all levels.

Data collection systems and processes should also provide space for data collection with citizens, including children, and other stakeholders. Engaging citizens in participatory monitoring and data collection will not only increase the availability of data but also ensure it accurately reflects the context and realities of local communities.

Finally, to operationalize the commitment to *Leave No One Behind* and incentivize equitable progress across all goals, the HLPF should encourage Member States to set national interim equity or ‘stepping stone’ targets for different social and economic groups. Set for interim points between 2016 and 2030, these targets would specify the progress that disadvantaged groups must make to ensure they are on track to achieve 2030 targets and to catch up with more advantaged groups.