

Preliminary Impressions on Follow-up and review by the co-facilitators

19 May 2015

- We wish to share some preliminary impressions which we garnered from two days of rich debate.
- Reassuring to see that we all share the conviction that implementation of the SDGs depends on – and is actually the main purpose of- a well-functioning and effective review framework. Discussion showed that you concur on many points. But we will clearly need some more discussion and reflection on some aspects.
- The first thing we have to agree on is the terminology. Should we speak about a “Monitoring and accountability framework” or a “follow-up and review framework”? Different processes use different terminologies.
- There is a convergence of views on the critical principles that should guide this framework. It seems we captured them reasonably well in our discussion paper. But some key terms are: universality, voluntary, nationally owned, evidence- and data-based, multi-stakeholder and inclusive, transparent, ‘positive but not punitive’ or “lean but not mean”– leading to an exchange of experience and best practices, using existing mechanisms and not overburdening countries.
- It is clear that the HLPF will be the main platform for review and follow- at the global level. You generally concur on the key actions you want the HLPF to perform. It should keep track of our progress towards the SDGs and identify shortcomings and gaps. It should make recommendations on what countries need to do to stay on track as well as on the global partnership for sustainable development and means of implementation.
- It is also to discuss new and emerging issues. It will also have to address major challenges relating to the measurability of targets and indicators.
- At the same time, many see the HLPF as “the crown of a network of accountability mechanisms. You have asked for a mapping of such existing mechanisms. Ambassador Kamau and I have requested the Secretariat to prepare such a document which we should be able to share within 48 hours.
- There is the idea that thematic reviews of progress could be conducted in various platforms throughout the UN system, feeding into the HLPF. ECOSOC and the GA also have a key role in this regard.

- We will need your guidance on the sharing of tasks between the HLPF and ECOSOC. ECOSOC went through a major reform two years ago. The creation of the HLPF meeting under both GA and ECOSOC was part of this endeavour. We must of course build on these reforms which are not cast in stone.
- There is some divergence on how to follow-up and review the commitments on Means of Implementation and those on Financing for Development – whether to have a single overarching framework covering both or separate mechanism. Addis would thus need to define ways to follow-up on the MOIs. But ultimately the follow-up work on MOIs would also feed into the work of the HLPF.
- We also need to clarify other aspects specifically related to the HLPF. What should be the key outcomes of its work? You have already mandated it to adopt a negotiated ministerial declaration. Some of you said that it should also result in reports on global progress.
- We still have to clarify further the differences between the HLPF when it meets every year under the auspices of ECOSOC and when it meets under the auspices of the GA every four years. It should not be overburdened especially not when it meets at Head of State level.
- We also need to define what the HLPF will do next year, or more generally during the first cycle leading to its next meeting under the auspices of the GA. Some of you suggested that it focus in 2016 on how countries are adjusting their national frameworks to respond to the SDGs and what kind of strategies they are putting in place. Some suggested that HLPF in 2017 could review the SDGs that absorbed the agenda of the MDGs and give time for countries to integrate the other SDGs in their systems.
- We also need to ask how the HLPF can deliver on the multitude of tasks we would like it to perform. There is a certain urgency for the HLPF to define its working methods and this year's session is an opportunity that cannot be missed. Consideration could also be given to the HLPF meeting twice a year.
- We would need to think whether there are tasks that the HLPF can delegate to other platforms. This would apply in particular to the thematic reviews, which can be done in other governing bodies of the UN system (and possibly culminate in a discussion at the HLPF).
- We could also consider whether, given the volume of activities we want to transfer to the HLPF, we should also discontinue some activities on other tracks so as to free

time and resources. It cannot be that the UN keeps continuously adding processes without letting others go.

- There is also the idea that country reviews could actually be discussed at regional level. Some of you seem to want all country reviews to take place at regional level. Others feel this would not be possible in all regions. It would however be hard to conceive of a HLPF which does not conduct country reviews.
- The Global Sustainable Development Report will have a critical role to support the work of the HLPF. Some consider that it should support thematic reviews, building on the work of the UN system, other sources and scientific evidence.
- We spoke about vertical and horizontal dimensions of the follow-up and review framework. The vertical dimension involves reviews at local, national, regional and global levels. You all seem to agree with this kind of architecture and also want to ensure coherence and linkages between those various levels, without being too prescriptive.
- The horizontal dimension relates to the interplay between Governments and non-state actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector. There is broad agreement that reviews should be inclusive - and participatory – at all levels. Some mentioned the need to hold non state actors accountable, including with reporting from the private sector. The UN system would also need to report on how it supports Member States in implementing the post-2015 development agenda. Some of you spoke of the role of ECOSOC and other usual governing bodies in this regard.
- We would welcome your further views on whether there should be two separate secretariats for ECOSOC and HLPF, or an integrated one. But we must also ask ourselves how far we want to address this in the summit outcome document.
- Finally, we need to determine how much detail we wish to include in the outcome document of the summit, and how much we will leave for other forums to determine in the following months.
- We look forward to hearing reactions to these initial impressions on Wednesday afternoon.