

# TOOLKIT FOR DPOs VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

How to review if the SDGs have been achieved  
for persons with disabilities in your country!

ON PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL,  
REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

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## chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit has been developed jointly by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and CBM as an exploratory and interactive tool for organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) on the review and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation, at national, regional and global levels. The toolkit aims to provide step-by-step guidance, ideas, suggestions and templates for building successful advocacy campaigns and strategies to participate in the monitoring mechanisms of the Sustainable Development Goals. This toolkit will build on the monitoring process called the Voluntary National Review (VNR) that takes place at the global level linked with national and regional components.

Every campaign is unique, and thus this toolkit is intended to be a guide that can be adapted as needed to fit each community's requirements and needs. The toolkit has been built concisely, yet comprehensively with links to in-depth information for further learning.

## chapter 2

# BACKGROUND: SDGs, CRPD AND HLPF

### What are the Sustainable Development Goals and how are persons with disabilities included?

On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This new Agenda has the objective to bring a fundamental change for all people and the planet. Governments committed to build a better future and to end poverty, reduce inequalities, and save the planet. This Agenda, in a 35-page document, and <sup>1</sup>  <sup>2</sup>  divided into 5 sections, guides sustainable development worldwide until 2030.

In section 3 of the 2030 Agenda, there are 17 Goals accompanied by 169 targets. Persons with disabilities are mentioned 11 times in the entire 2030 Agenda, out of which seven <sup>3</sup>  references are in the SDG targets.

<sup>4</sup>  There are Goals and targets that do not reference persons with disabilities, for example Goal 1 on poverty eradication, Goal 3 on health or Goal 5 on gender equality, however these Goals are implicitly applicable for persons with disabilities because of the inclusive language, such as “all men or all women.” Even without inclusive language, all Goals and targets are applicable to persons with disabilities as the overarching principle of the <sup>5</sup>  Agenda is to leave no one behind.

## What does it mean to implement the SDGs?

The Sustainable Development Goals were agreed at the global level. Every international commitment must be translated into national policies and programs. The fulfilment of international commitments at the national level varies in every country. In some cases, legislation will need to be passed, while in others commitments will be integrated into national programs without legal action. Review and monitoring mechanisms assess and analyze the national-level implementation of SDGs.

The philosophy behind the SDGs is that the three pillars of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental are interlinked and inseparable, and do not - and should not - function in isolation. When we translate this into action, the SDGs require governments to take a holistic approach to development. Ministries that independently have carried out their mandate should collaborate with other ministries and entities to foster intersection. The same principle applies to advocates with disabilities. Often, disability-focused programs and policies are placed in the department of the ministry of social affairs or department of health. Yet, now persons with disabilities need to be included and mainstreamed into other thematic areas, such as employment, infrastructure, humanitarian preparedness, and more.

## How are the SDGs implemented for persons with disabilities and linked with the CRPD?

The SDGs can impact the lives of persons with disabilities. They give an overall approach on what needs to be achieved for persons with disabilities throughout the 17 Goals and targets, but without any guidance. Yet, the critical importance is that the SDGs mention persons with disabilities and this draws the attention of political decision makers to create disability-inclusive policies and programs. The CRPD is a legally binding obligation for countries on how to empower and create inclusive societies for persons with disabilities. Both internationally agreed documents have the same objective for persons with disabilities. The SDGs are a political framework, while the CRPD as a legally binding document guides governments <sup>6</sup>  on how to achieve the SDGs for persons with disabilities.

## What is the High-level Political Forum and what are the Voluntary National Reviews?

The follow-up and review mechanism to monitor SDG implementation is called the Voluntary National Review (VNR) which is carried out at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). Governments reached an agreement in September 2015 to track the progress of national implementation of the SDGs. Consequently, governments created a voluntary and participatory follow-up and review framework that operates at national, regional and global levels. The aim of this framework is to help countries to assess the progress in the implementation. The HLPF provides for open, transparent, participatory and internationally comparable reviews and proposals, in which persons with disabilities are invited to participate.

## What does participating in the VNR process look like?

Participating in the VNR process looks like for the governments and DPOs, consists of <sup>7</sup> the following steps: 

ACTIVITIES	WHAT DOES A DPO DO?	WHAT DOES THE GOVERNMENT DO?
The national review process (Chapter 4.1)	Find out when and where national consultations/ activities take place  Organize amongst national DPOs to participate in consultations  Write joint advocacy requests	Governments are encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress, this means civil society, including persons with disabilities should receive invitation from their government to contribute.
Preparation of written material to submit to the HLPF - national level (Chapter 4.1)	Many governments will solicit the inputs from civil society, connect and ensure that persons with disabilities are included within submissions.  Prepare material on nationally specific issues and persons with disabilities to contribute to civil society statements and materials to the HLPF.	Governments will share the written draft report, ideally inclusive of the received inputs from civil society with the same actors who participated in the consultation process.

ACTIVITIES	WHAT DOES A DPO DO?	WHAT DOES THE GOVERNMENT DO?
<p>Peer learning at the regional review process (Chapter 4.2)</p>	<p>Organize and coordinate national DPOs to contribute to regional forums (either through preparatory activities or participation in the forum).</p> <p>Engage with the civil society mechanism at the regional level.</p> <p>Participate in the pre-meeting called the Civil Society Forum.</p> <p>Great opportunity to learn, share experience and create partnerships</p>	<p>Review mechanisms differ depending on national context.</p>
<p>An oral presentation at the HLPF meeting - global level (Chapter 4.3)</p>	<p>Participate in the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities</p> <p>If you attend HLPF, ensure that you connect and contribute to the drafting of the civil society questions to be asked at the VNR sessions</p> <p>Volunteer to ask the questions from civil society to your government</p>	<p>Governments are asked questions from civil society during their oral presentations at the HLPF.</p> <p>These questions are recorded and the governments respond to varying levels.</p>

ACTIVITIES	WHAT DOES A DPO DO?	WHAT DOES THE GOVERNMENT DO?
<p>Follow-up and feedback process for volunteering countries - national level (Chapter 4.4)</p>	<p>Following the HLPF, collect the contributions from your country (written and oral reports and civil society questions and answers). Request a follow-up meeting with your government. You can base your follow-up communications with your government on the aforementioned outputs. Contribute and participate in official follow-up activities. Participate in civil society networks and activities.</p>	<p>Governments may create a follow-up strategy or conduct follow-up activities after the HLPF. Critically, consultations or inputs may be welcomed for national-level strategies and plans related to SDG implementation.</p>

### Can you provide examples of DPO participation in the VNRs?

In 2017, the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities compiled a document assessing the work of DPOs during the VNR process carried out at the national, regional and global levels. A comprehensive report called the “Global Report on DPO Participation in VNR Processes” was released in draft form prior to the HLPF and will be updated afterward with concrete findings by the end of 2017.

This global report showcases the national-level DPO work carried out in different regions as well as best practices and challenges, and serves as a model for DPOs on how to engage with their governments. The case study features various volunteering countries, including Denmark, Italy, Sweden, Nigeria, Togo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Argentina, Peru, Indonesia, Bangladesh and India. You can read the draft report [here](#).

## FAQs

Are there any reporting guidelines for governments?<sup>10</sup> 

What are the national reviews focusing on?<sup>11</sup> 

## chapter 3

# OBJECTIVE

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have just started to be implemented at the national level. This means the Goals and targets are currently being integrated into national policies and programs. Each nation is taking an individual approach on how to achieve the Goals for its country. In order to ensure that the Goals and targets are achieved for all, leaving no one behind, a review and monitoring mechanism has been created to review each country's progress toward implementing the SDGs. Consequently, a global review mechanism has been established called the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) that takes place annually at the UN Headquarters in New York. All countries can participate at the HLPF, one of the most meaningful ways is for a country to volunteer to participate in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). The VNR process involves compiling an official report outlining the progress and challenges a country encounters in SDG implementation.

The Voluntary National Reviews also provide opportunities for civil society, including organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), to engage with their government. The VNRs take place at the global level, although build on monitoring processes at the national and regional levels. Moreover, the content in the VNRs always focuses on national progress. Consequently, for the overall achievement of the SDGs the most important for DPOs is to closely monitor their implementation and realization at the national level. As such, organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) have an obligation as well as an opportunity to follow their government's action on carrying out the SDGs for persons with disabilities.

**During the review/monitoring processes, organizations of persons with disabilities have the opportunity to share their feedback, analyses and recommendations of their government's progress (or lack thereof) on the inclusion (or exclusion) of persons with disabilities in the implementation of the SDGs to achieve the Goals for all.**

## chapter 4

# VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS AND SDG MONITORING

### I. NATIONAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are reports that incorporate the inputs of national, regional and global consultations. In this chapter we are focusing on the national-level activities. At the national level, governments are encouraged to conduct consultations with civil society and other groups and prepare a written report that is submitted at a later stage to the HLPF. The VNRs demonstrate a country's progress achieving the SDGs, with the objective to identify any gaps in national policies and national consultation outcomes.

**DPO Objective:** All SDG Goals apply to persons with disabilities, therefore all sustainable development national policies should include the issues relevant to persons with disabilities. For this to happen, persons with disabilities must be involved in any policy consultations with

the government and civil society. It is the role of DPOs to bring issues related to persons with disabilities at the national level to the government. It is important to highlight that the SDGs can *only* be fully realized for persons with disabilities if implemented in line with the CRPD. Thus, it is critical that persons with disabilities engage in the national consultation leading to VNR reporting.

## How can DPOs participate in national consultations?

### **Work together with other DPOs on SDGs and compose your joint advocacy request**

- It is important FIRST to identify and connect with<sup>12</sup>  DPOs and/or the umbrella DPO in your country.
- Have a meeting: establish a collaboration towards developing an SDG<sup>13</sup>  strategy. It is also important to note that this collaboration focuses on SDG implementation in your country.
- Include disability rights NGOs and development NGOs working on disability<sup>14</sup>  rights and disability-inclusive development into these discussions.
- Develop a joint advocacy paper<sup>15</sup> 

**Build a coalition with Civil Society Organizations** = Working with mainstream civil society organizations (CSOs) (such as youth and women's groups / movements in your community) - can provide strategic opportunities to brainstorm and build strong coalitions to deliver a unified message. Such collaboration compliments disability advocacy requests regarding SDG implementation.

- Identify and connect with national and local CSOs working on the SDGs
- Participate in a joint meeting, exchange views and share knowledge
- Disseminate and share the disability advocacy paper
- Foster coalition building, networking and the development of joint civil<sup>16</sup>  society positions inclusive of persons with disabilities
- Connect with the private sector and philanthropic organizations

**Use social networks, listservs and media to promote** the joint advocacy paper = the more widely the specific asks are known, the more beneficial is the advocacy.

**Understand the Role of the UN in your country and collaboration** = The UN can serve as a bridge, by bringing government and civil society together for the implementation of the SDGs. The UN, including UN agencies at country level are mandated to support the SDG implementation as a priority.

- Identify and connect with the UN agencies SDGs and Disability focal points in your country to push for the inclusion of persons with disabilities into the programs, policies and projects of agencies. 

### Mapping of Government focal points

- Identify the SDG focal point in your government. <sup>18</sup> 
- Locate your government-appointed SDG focal point on the UN website. <sup>19</sup> 

**FAQs** What if my country doesn't have a UN country office? <sup>20</sup> 

What if the SDG focal point in my country focuses only on environmental policy (or economic policy) and not social policy? <sup>21</sup> 

## How to launch your joint advocacy request?

### Approach your government, it's time to advocate!

Request a meeting, for two primary reasons: <sup>22</sup> 

(1) To present a joint advocacy paper

- Schedule meetings with SDG implementing actors within your government and connect with your 'traditional' disability focal points to explain your initiative and to create synergies between the two sections of the government.
- Having one meeting is crucial, however it is important to have follow-up meetings to ensure your requests are addressed.

(2) Inquire about the national consultation process and <sup>23</sup>  how you can engage/be invited.

**Engagement in the VNR national consultation** = Governments are encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress, this means civil society, including persons with disabilities should receive an invitation from their <sup>24</sup>  government to contribute views on SDG implementation achievements.

- Ensure that your position is strongly represented.
- Join forces with other civil society actors, in some countries there will be a civil society network or campaign in which you can participate. 
- Map and identify what communication channels your government initiates. 
- Manage expectations and be prepared = Often these consultations are not accessible for persons with disabilities. 
- Look for follow-up opportunities on national consultation with your government. 

## FAQs

What if the national consultation process is not accessible? <sup>28</sup> 

How will I know that my country volunteered to participate in the global review? <sup>29</sup> 

What can I do if no focal point is listed on the UN website? <sup>30</sup> 

What can I do if the focal point is not responding, is unavailable? <sup>31</sup> 

How many voluntary national reviews will there be? <sup>32</sup> 

Is my country supposed to have a national monitoring mechanism? <sup>33</sup> 

Is it necessary for my country to report at the global level in order to launch a national review process? <sup>34</sup> 

What can I do to encourage my country to conduct a review process? <sup>35</sup> 

What if the national government has adopted a national disability law(s) and has ratified the CRPD, but nothing has been implemented, how can the SDGs assist in the implementation of national disability policies and laws? <sup>36</sup> 

## II. REGIONAL LEVEL ENGAGEMENT OF DPOS

For the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, work must occur at the national, regional and global levels, and the three levels must continuously be joined in order to ensure that SDG implementation is relevant, effective and reaches all populations.

Regional-level engagement within sustainable development is new for all actors, including the UN, and the level and format of engagement varies largely from region to region. However, all are guided by and connect to the annual theme of the HLPF. The forums are hosted by the five UN regional bodies located in the Asia-Pacific region, European region, Latin America and the Caribbean region, Arab region, and African region. HLPF 2017 marked the first time that regional sustainable development forums were announced in all of the aforementioned regions. It is important to note that persons with disabilities can participate, present, write documents and co-organize at these forums. They provide a unique opportunity to learn from others, build partnerships and networks, and address region-specific issues.

**DPO Objective:** DPOs are recommended to use regional forums for intensive networking, sharing experiences from the national level and conducting bilateral meetings with governments. DPOs at the regional level often have the opportunity to input into the regional SDGs and disability plans, and to raise attention to disability issues to create an impact at the national level.

### How do you participate in the regional sustainable development forums?

- Locate your regional UN Headquarters.<sup>37</sup> 
- Connect with your regional DPO networks.<sup>38</sup> 
- Identify and connect with regional civil society organizations engaging in SDG implementation and when available civil society coordination mechanisms<sup>39</sup> unifying and coordinating regional civil society. 
- Identify and connect with the UN regional sustainable development focal point for civil society.
- Follow the information posted on the regional UN websites, in particular<sup>40</sup> announcements of future Sustainable Development Forum meetings. 
- Keep up to date on listservs and websites for the announcements regarding UN funding to participate in the forums, and then apply!
- Register! For the Sustainable Development Forum.<sup>41</sup> 

- Register! for the Civil Society Meeting (when applicable)
- Organize disability-specific preparatory meeting before the Sustainable Development Forum and civil society meetings <sup>42</sup> 
- Ask specifically how you can contribute to the Regional Sustainable Development Forum's outcome report. <sup>43</sup> 
- Engage in preparatory processes and aim to secure a speaking role. <sup>44</sup> 
- Follow-up on outcomes from the Sustainable Development Forum.

## FAQs

What if I can't find a civil society coordination mechanism? <sup>45</sup> 

Can I join as a single advocate, or do I need to represent a constituency? <sup>46</sup> 

How do I submit inputs, or contribute as a member of a stakeholder group? <sup>47</sup> 

Is it necessary for my country to report at the regional level in order to launch a national review process? <sup>48</sup> 

What can I do to encourage my country to be involved in the regional processes? <sup>49</sup> 

How can I connect with regional DPOs and be involved in the regional processes? <sup>50</sup> 

How can I contribute to the follow-up activities if I was unable to participate and connect with the regional Sustainable Development Forum? <sup>51</sup> 

Where do I find my UN regional sustainable development focal point for civil society? <sup>52</sup> 

### III. GLOBAL REVIEW ENGAGEMENT = HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

The presentations given by each volunteering country at the global level take place annually at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Governments spend at least a year or longer to prepare their report and presentation on the implementation of the SDGs. Although presentations are voluntary, it is prestigious for Governments to demonstrate their progress in achieving the SDGs and to present at the HLPF. Governments are encouraged and they usually seek civil society contribution and support prior to the submission of their reports to the UN. These country reports, formally called the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), are a key way to judge if the Goals have been put to action for all people.

The government's presentations are short and based on (inputs/comments received), including from civil society actors. Civil society can ask questions and challenge governments during their presentations, however there are no legal consequences to what is included in the report and presented by the government. This is in part why the reviews and presentations receive critical attention. <sup>53</sup> 

Any issues raised during these global presentations receive significant international and national attention, which increases political pressure to implement the SDGs. While the representation of persons with disabilities at the HLPF serves significant importance, the engagement of persons with disabilities within their governments during the national review process is significantly more impactful.

Following the HLPF, the global-level presentations and the content of reports provide civil society actors with an opportunity to continue dialogue at the national level. While it seems that the primary goal of the voluntary national reviews is to deliver a presentation at the international level, the main intention is to revitalize the connection between the State and its people. In addition, the presentations aim to encourage dialogue and to ensure that contributions of all are included within the development of national policies.

DPO Objective: DPOs can bring national topics related to persons with disabilities to the global level. The global review reflects only a fraction of the issues from the national level, however, the contribution from national level DPOs is critical to ensure that governments become aware of the gaps and potential of achieving the SDGs for persons with disabilities. Consequently, it is not the participation that is critical, but the contribution of messages from the national to the global level and subsequent reintegration of global outcomes into national advocacy.

## How can a DPO contribute to the global-level review process? The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is an official group that coordinates the participation of persons with disabilities in sustainable development and other related processes at the United Nations. Membership is open to all persons with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), non-governmental and other organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities, and non-governmental donors.

The global-level activities carried out by persons with disabilities is conducted through the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities. This platform envisions a world, in which human rights are upheld, in particular those within the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and in which disability-inclusive sustainable development is achieved. 

## How to participate in the global process: The High-level Political Forum including the Voluntary National Reviews

### Engage with the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities

- Connect via the CRPD listserv and IDA website to receive information <sup>56</sup>  about the Stakeholder Group and how to participate.
- Follow and engage in the activities of the ongoing year-round preparatory processes sent through the CRPD listserv
  - There will be a number of web-based platforms for discussions, information via bulletins, calls for contributions and so forth.
- Be prepared to exchange, contribute and ask questions: The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is a diverse community composed of experienced and new members.
- Share information with your networks!
- Contribute and participate in the writing of the official submission! <sup>57</sup> 
- Use the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for your benefit, as a knowledge platform and capacity-building opportunity!
- Find and build partnerships! <sup>58</sup> 

### Apply for UN Funding

- The CRPD listserv will periodically contain information <sup>59</sup>  about possible UN funding opportunities.

- Managing expectations:
  - There is usually a very short turn-around time to submit applications.<sup>60</sup> 
  - The application process is fairly complex. In addition to the technical questions, quite important is the experience and engagement in national implementation process of the SDGs.
  - Only applicants from and residing in the Global South are eligible.
  - The UN application process includes questions regarding reasonable accommodation. Ensure that you provide any reasonable accommodation requests!
  - You will have to arrange for your own logistics.
  - Only two meeting days are funded in line with UN rules.
- Persons with disabilities have received funding every year. Although, many applications were submitted, ultimately only one or two persons with disabilities received funding.

### Attending the High-level Political Forum

- Each civil society member with a disability and representatives attending the HLPF can be included and represent the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>61</sup> 
- Engage in all activities offered to participants either through the UN website or via the CPRD listserv or email.<sup>62</sup> 

### Engagement in the Voluntary National Reviews

- Contribute online! Follow information shared on the CPRD listserv!
  - As a first step analyze your country's report that has been officially submitted to the UN.<sup>63</sup> 
  - The UN will share a form with questions relating to the countries for review and will collect inputs. You will be able to input through this form.<sup>64</sup> 
- Connect with and inform your global disability advocates and colleagues attending HLPF about your advocacy requests.<sup>65</sup> 
- Participate - either online or in person - in the drafting process for the statement/questions to be asked of Governments at the High Level Political Forum.<sup>66</sup> 
- Present the questions at HLPF. For those attending HLPF and engaging in the drafting of the statements/questions there is an opportunity to become the presenter on behalf of civil society. Presenters are agreed in the small

groups by the drafters. You may volunteer to deliver the statement during the voluntary national reviews, however the selection of the presenter<sup>67</sup>  often depends on the level of engagement and level of interest.

- **Engagement in the VNR process can be challenging considering all the aforementioned obstacles, including the limited time and lack of opportunities for civil society to input. Regardless, knowledge can be gained by understanding the process, which in turn can create opportunities for further engagement and thus widening the advocacy focus at the national level. Implementing the SDGs can mobilize international and reconstruct domestic resources creating opportunities to implement and carry out the CRPD.**

### Participate in other activities at the HLPF

- Participate in bilateral meetings at the global level during the High-level Political Forum, which are always organized by the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities. The meetings have a political and a substantive nature. Such meetings provide excellent opportunity to communicate any substantive messages you may wish to share with your government or to highlight<sup>68</sup> 
- Be an active participant in or support the organization of side events.<sup>69</sup> 
- Annually, persons with disabilities organize a side event at the HLPF.<sup>70</sup> 

## FAQs

When should a DPO become engaged in the global-review process?<sup>71</sup> 

How can I get involved and participate in the global-review process?<sup>72</sup> 

How can I get involved in the process if I do not attend the HLPF in person?<sup>73</sup> 

## IV. FOLLOWING THE HLPF GO BACK TO YOUR GOVERNMENT AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Prior to HLPF, independent of the country's internal political system, the global process/HLPF reporting triggers a national consultation based on a dialogue between the government and civil society. For many countries, this is a unique opportunity to engage with the government and can create opportunities in the current political atmosphere. It is largely the responsibility of civil society, including DPOs, to remind political leaders that this is not a one-time obligation, but should be an ongoing permanent dialogue. It may be challenging in some countries to establish a follow-up mechanism on international commitments, while in other countries it may naturally flow. The objective of DPOs should be to engage in the follow-up mechanisms / HLPF outcomes to seek direct communication with the Ministry that presented the SDG implementation action plan during the HLPF.

After the VNR concludes at the HLPF, it is highly critical to follow-up to assess outcomes at the national level. Currently, many countries are satisfied with the outcomes of the global review without any follow-up mechanisms. Not all countries have such a follow-up mechanism in place, but it is important to highlight that this the responsibility in part of the national civil society to push their governments to continue and maintain a dialogue/conversation. The national follow-up mechanism should not be a “blaming-or-shaming” session, but rather a constructive approach to address issues raised in the global-level review process, or issues that have been left out.

**The participation of DPOs in the entire VNR process is to enable persons with disabilities to enhance and broaden their advocacy efforts with their governments at the national level. The entire global reporting mechanism, VNR, serves the one and only purpose to foster periodic dialogue between the government and its people.**

### How to initiate and participate in a follow-up process after the HLPF at the national level:

If relevant, watch your country's review on UN webtv and analyze the submissions (short and long) written reports. On the basis of this analysis, prepare your paper highlighting that issues addressed and left out.

- Find out if there is any follow-up on HLPF dialogue planned by your government.
- Reconnect with civil society and propose to establish a follow-up mechanism.
- Contact and arrange meetings with the Ministry/Minister who presented at the HLPF.
- Advocate to establish synergy with other existing<sup>74</sup>  national follow-up or review mechanisms.
- Propose a partnership to your government and consider<sup>75</sup>  engaging with the IDA and IDDC Partnership on SDGs .

V. IN A NUTSHELL OR WITH A PICTURE  
OR YOUR COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT



## chapter 5

# SHADOW OR PARALLEL REPORTS

Organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) are familiar with the concept of composing shadow or parallel reports. DPO representatives write these reports when their country is undergoing a review by the Human Rights Council during the Universal Periodic Review or by the Treaty Bodies, most importantly by the CRPD Committee. In these reports DPOs highlight gaps and challenges of CRPD implementation and these reports become an official part of the review process.

Often, parallels are drawn between Geneva-based processes and the HLPF/VNRs, and as a result DPOs ask how shadow reports also can be submitted during the VNRs. Yet, quite simply, shadow reports are not accepted at the HLPF during the VNRs.

The review processes in Geneva are conducted by expert bodies and are lengthy and provide for in-depth reviews of a country's human rights record. The HLPF and VNRs are political

in nature, meaning that during the VNRs (ideally based on extensive national and regional consultations and documentation), an extremely short time is allocated for each country to present. Although it is important to note that this is done in a room full of political leaders and civil society and other stakeholders. The VNR subjects are broad and varied since they focus on SDG implementation and specifically in areas that a country prioritizes. As such, there is not enough time to go into depth and have a proper dialogue, although to legitimize the process, civil society has the right to ask a question.

While shadow or parallel reports are not accepted at the global level, DPOs should still be encouraged to compose them. There are several reasons for this:

- First, shadow reports at the national level can be communicated and submitted and/or shared with the government.
- Second, these reports can be a good record for DPOs and governments to monitor progress over time and assess how gaps were or were not addressed.
- Third, shadow reports can be shared with media to bring attention to certain issues.
- Fourth, these reports can be shared with donors that may rely or even benefit from this information when analyzing how SDG implementation-linked donations and/or investments have impacted persons with disabilities.
- Finally, shadow reports can be widely disseminated as a tool for advocacy at the global level during bilateral meetings with respective governments and more broadly.

## FAQs

Do you have any examples of shadow reports?<sup>76</sup>



Is there a structure that you recommend for shadow reports?<sup>77</sup>



## chapter 6

# 2030 AGENDA, PARAGRAPH 89: DPOs MUST REPORT AT THE HLPF

Paragraph 89 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states that “The HLPF will support participation in follow-up and review processes by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in line with Resolution 67/290. We call on these actors to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Agenda.”

The 2030 Agenda was historic in that it invites civil society actors to be included in the 2030 Agenda process, from creation to implementation, including reviewing and monitoring of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda asks major groups and other relevant stakeholders to report and also references a resolution, which is on the HLPF format. In other words, persons with <sup>78</sup> disabilities are invited to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. 

In view of this persons with disabilities are not only recognized other stakeholder but also explicitly mentioned in the referenced resolution. From this it is clear that the reporting applies to persons with disabilities. As such the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities will have the obligation to report.

Moreover, governments have been encouraged to work with civil society at the national level in the implementation phase. Specifically, a seat has been given to persons with disabilities to review their countries progress on the SDGs and offer feedback at the global level. Simultaneously governments have requested that persons with disabilities participate in the process by asking DPOs to report on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This means persons with disabilities have to report on what they are doing to implement the SDGs for persons with disabilities.

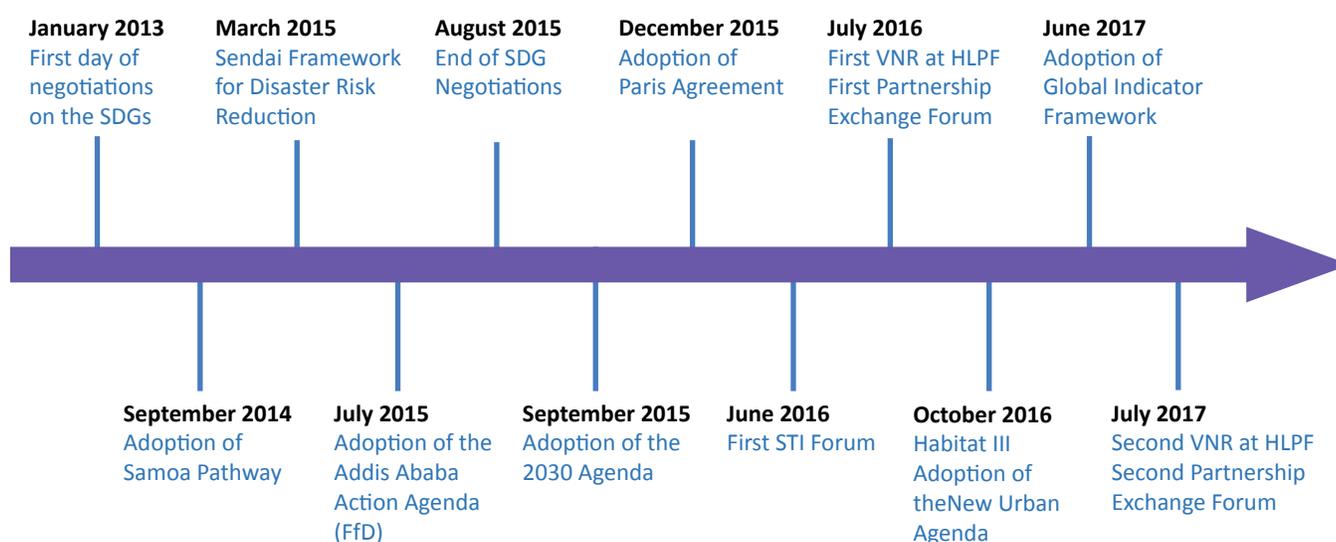
Many questions remain on this process such as on the how, when and how often, there are no clear answers. As of today, we only have a few answers since no stakeholder has submitted such a report and no stakeholder has been invited to present on the basis of its report. More specifically: the reporting requirement is expressed in the 2030 Agenda, which is a political declaration and not a binding legal obligation. Also, one cannot impose anything binding at the global level on civil society actors. This also answers that there is no regulation as to how often stakeholders should report. However, reporting as the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities itself would be highly beneficial. Regarding the how: The Major Groups and other Stakeholders coordination mechanism has discussed this issue and developed a vague guideline, which is again not binding.

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities is developing a process that will enable the widespread collection of inputs and information about activities that have been carried out by DPOs worldwide.

## chapter 7

# RELATED PROCESSES

This chapter provides a brief overview of processes related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Most of these are referenced in the Agenda or made an integral part of the process. The timeline below provides a basic understanding of the flow of processes and adoptions related to sustainable development.



## Financing for Development

The 2030 Agenda and its SDGs were negotiated over a period of three years. During these discussions, Member States were aware that the political commitments had to be backed by financial commitments. As a result, in order to define financing for sustainable development, a parallel process was established called financing for development (FfD). This process resulted in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. This Agenda is a global framework for financing development and includes guidelines on domestic public resources, international development cooperation, domestic and international private and business finance, debt and debt sustainability, science, technology and innovation and capacity building.

The AAAA has a follow-up and review mechanism, which is held annually at the UN Headquarters in New York and called the Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum). During the event the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is reviewed. Stakeholders, including persons with disabilities are invited to attend and contribute to the discussions. The Forum concludes with inter-governmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations that are fed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development.

### ***The Inter-agency Task Force***

The Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development was convened by the Secretary-General to follow up on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and is comprised of over 50 United Nations agencies, programs and offices, regional economic commissions and other relevant international institutions. The Addis Agenda (para 133) mandates the Task Force to:

- report annually on progress in implementing the Addis Agenda and other Financing for Development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and
- advise the intergovernmental follow-up process on progress, implementation gaps and recommendations for corrective action, while taking into consideration the national and regional dimensions.

The IATF report in part influences the FfD Forum outcome document and<sup>79</sup> thus is an important document to influence for inclusion of persons with disabilities.



## Global Indicator Framework

During the negotiations leading to the 2030 Agenda, governments realized that progress of implementation needs to be measured through data. As such, Member States decided to establish a global indicator framework that measures each Goal and every target with data.

The aim of the global indicator framework is to integrate it into national statistical systems and that Member States report according to data collected at the national level.

The global indicator framework was developed by statistical experts and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2017. Global indicators measure the progress made in implementing the SDGs. Such data is key to decision-making and help with the measurement of progress, making international comparisons and ensuring that no one is left behind. Data and information from existing national and international reporting mechanisms should be used where possible. In order to enable data collection, statistical capacities require strengthening. We need very robust data sets on disability to help monitor progress.

Persons with disabilities are among those furthest behind and accordingly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their indicators clearly state that disaggregated data are needed and should be collected for the purpose of monitoring advancement in the implementation of the goals for this segment of the population.

Organizations of persons with disabilities recommend the use of the Washington Group short set of questions. For disaggregation by disability among children the recommended tool is the UNICEF/Washington Group module on Child Functioning. Both instruments can be<sup>80</sup> easily and cost effectively inserted in all national data collection efforts. 

## Partnerships for SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the importance of the Global Partnership in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 17 recognizes that the implementation of the SDGs is a challenge for governments and therefore seeks to strengthen the Global Partnership by calling upon all stakeholders to take part in implementing the SDGs. In particular, it stresses the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships that call upon diverse stakeholders such as persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to mobilize and share their expertise and resources in order to achieve the SDGs. The development of public, public-private and civil society partnerships is also encouraged and promoted.

Partnerships are critical for persons with disabilities and their representative organizations because this is the best way to ensure that the disability community has representation and that the challenges faced by persons with disabilities are accounted for and met in the implementation of the SDGs. Persons with disabilities must therefore take a direct role in these partnerships to ensure that their interests are part of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs for the years to come.

<sup>81</sup>  The Partnership for SDGs is an online platform that created as a result of Goal 17. It provides global engagement for multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments from all and IDA and IDDC has a registered initiative. IDA and IDDC work in

partnership to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and realize the UN CRPD. IDA and IDDC collaborate in various projects and initiatives, including to ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development brings visibility and realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. 

During the High-level Political Forum, a Partnership Exchange special event is organized to enhance the Global Partnership for sustainable development. The event focuses on reviewing the work of multi-stakeholder partnerships and other voluntary initiatives in driving implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017, IDA's Chair, Colin Allen  presented on behalf of the IDA and IDDC Partnership for SDGs.

## Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum)

During the negotiations leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Member States realized and acknowledged the important role of science, technology and innovation. As a result, the 2030 Agenda establishes the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs, which meets annually to discuss cooperation around these thematic areas to support the implementation of the SDGs.

The participation and contribution of pwds at this forum is critical because the use of ICT and accessible and assistive technology (AT) improve the quality of life of persons and children with disabilities by increasing access to education, employment, community activities and other services. ICT is a critical driver to ensure that the SDGs are achieved for persons with disabilities, however, ICT can only effectively contribute to the realization of the SDGs if considered in line with Article 9 on Accessibility of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). 

## Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (SFDRR) was adopted at the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Sendai, Japan on 18 March 2015. It is a separate, but linked process with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is a 15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement which recognizes that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders. It aims for the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.

The Framework is inclusive of persons with disabilities with five explicit references and two additional references to universal design. Additionally, “inclusive” and “accessible” are used throughout the document creating a strong disability-inclusive DRR document. This includes the need for “universally accessible response” and calling for the media to disseminate accurate information in an “accessible manner.”

A set of DRR indicators to measure global progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework were adopted by the UN General Assembly in February 2017. These are <sup>85</sup> linked to the SDG indicator framework. 

## SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) took place in September 2014 in Apia, Samoa over the theme “The Sustainable Development of SIDS Through Genuine and Durable Partnerships.” The conference produced an outcome document, titled “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.” The document was negotiated during the preparatory process at the UN Headquarters in New York and was adopted without further discussion during the closing plenary on Thursday, 4 September 2014.<sup>86</sup>  The SAMOA Pathway includes 10 explicit references to persons with disabilities.

## Habitat III

The UN General Assembly decided to convene the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization. The conference was held from 17 to 20 October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador and successfully concluded with the adoption of the New Urban Agenda.

The New Urban Agenda will guide the efforts around urbanization of a wide range of actors, including nation states, city and regional leaders, international development funders, United Nations programs and civil society for the next 20 years.

The New Urban Agenda has 15 references to persons with disabilities throughout every aspect of the document in non-discrimination, affordable housing, public services, accessibility in the built environment, and access to information and communication technologies. It also includes a paragraph entirely dedicated to persons with disabilities (Paragraph 36): “We commit to promote appropriate measures in cities and human settlements that facilitate access for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment of cities, in particular to public spaces, public transport, housing, education and health facilities, to public information and communication, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and rural areas.”

## Paris Agreement

COP21, also known as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, was held in Paris, France from 30 November to 12 December 2015. Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reached a landmark agreement, called the Paris Agreement, on 12 December, charting a fundamentally new course in the two-decade-old global climate effort. Culminating a four-year negotiating round, the new treaty ends the strict differentiation between developed and developing countries that characterized earlier efforts, replacing it with a common framework that commits all countries to put forward their best efforts and to strengthen them in the years ahead. This includes, for the first time, requirements that all parties report regularly on their emissions and implementation efforts, and undergo international review.

Persons with disabilities are explicitly referenced in the opening section of the Paris Agreement: “Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity”

## chapter 8

# GLOSSARY, ABBREVIATIONS AND RESOURCES

## GLOSSARY

**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is Resolution 70/1, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted on 25 September, 2015. This historic document lays out the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that aim to mobilize global efforts to end poverty, foster peace, safeguard the rights and dignity of all people, and protect the planet. There are 11 explicit references to persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda.

**Binding** is an enforceable legal obligation under international law.

**Civil society** is the “third sector” of society, along with government and business. It comprises civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. The UN recognizes the importance of partnering with civil society, because it advances the Organization’s ideals, and helps support its work.

**Convene, Convening** come or bring together for a meeting or activity; assemble.

**CRPD (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)** The purpose of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is to promote, defend and reinforce the human rights of all persons with disabilities. The Convention and its Optional Protocol was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. There were 82 signatories to the Convention, 44 signatories to the Optional Protocol, and 1 ratification of the Convention. This is the highest number of signatories in history of a UN Convention on its opening day. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and is the first human rights convention to be open for signature by regional integration organizations. The Convention entered into force on 3 May, 2008.

**Cross-cutting** is linking traditionally separate or independent parties, interests or themes.

**Declaration** is a formal statement of special significance issued by ministers (Ministerial Declaration) or delegates at the closure of a conference, summit or other event. Declarations may be legally binding but usually are not.

**DPO (Organization of Persons with Disabilities)** are representative organizations or groups of persons with disabilities in which persons with disabilities constitute a majority of the overall staff, board and volunteers in all levels of the organization.

**ECOSOC (The Economic and Social Council)** is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals. It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits. The UN Charter established ECOSOC in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the United Nations.

**Engage, Engagement** is to participate or become involved in. For example, to present at a meeting or conference, to provide feedback on an advocacy or policy paper, to coordinate meetings, and more.

**Expert Group** is a subsidiary conference formed to discuss issues at a technical (as opposed to political) level and sometimes to make recommendations to the parent conference. The members of such groups are often appointed or elected in their personal capacities.

**Expert Meeting** is an Informal meeting of representatives of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, scientific bodies and academia to discuss scientific, technical or other issues. Participation in such meetings is by invitation.

**Focal Point** is an official or agency designated by a government to serve as the focus or channel of communications on a particular topic.

**Global** is relating to the whole world; worldwide.

**HLPF (High-level Political Forum)** is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.

**Inequality** is social or economic disparity.

**Interlinkages** join or connect (two or more things) together. For example, in between the SDG Goals and targets.

**Intervene, Intervention** is when a delegate, having been given permission to speak by the presiding officer, makes a statement, he or she “intervenes” in the debate. His or her statement is an “intervention.”

**Joint advocacy** is when advocacy is done in conjunction with other organizations supporting the same aim, as this adds greater representation to the issue, expanding and strengthening the advocacy campaign. It also helps to empower members and individuals. Joint advocacy work can frequently accomplish goals that the individual members could not accomplish alone. Three main models of joint advocacy groups include:

- Networks: primarily for information sharing
- Alliances: longer-term strategic partnerships
- Coalitions: usually formed for a single issue or campaign

**Linkages** are relationships and interactions between tasks, functions, departments, and organizations, that promote flow of information, ideas, and integration in achievement of shared objectives.

**Major Groups and other Stakeholders** represent a multi-stakeholder format in which stakeholders from civil society engage actively and meaningfully alongside country representatives. Civil society representatives have the right to fully engage within global-level sustainable development processes through the Major Groups and other Stakeholders format. With the 9 Major Groups being established in 1992 under the resolution of Agenda 21, the importance of substantively engaging with the Major Groups was reaffirmed in the lead-up to and during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also known as Rio+20. The outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference: “The Future We Want” expressly addressed the Major Groups’ role as vital in developing sustainable societies and, importantly, established “other stakeholders” that officially recognized persons with disabilities as a key stakeholder in sustainable development.

**Mandate** is an official instruction given to a person or organization, allowing them to do something.

**Meaningful** is having a serious, important, or useful quality or purpose.

**Member States (of the United Nations)** are the 193 sovereign states that are members of the United Nations and have equal representation in the UN General Assembly.

**Monitor, Monitoring** is to observe and check the progress or quality of (something) over a period of time; keep under systematic review.

**Multi-stakeholder partnerships** seek to bring stakeholders together to participate in the dialogue, decision making, and implementation of solutions to common problems or goals.

**National Level** can include federal/country-wide, state/provincial, and local/municipal levels.

**Networking** is the act of making contact and exchanging information with other people, groups and institutions to develop mutually beneficial relationships.

**Non-governmental organization (NGO)** is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, environment or health. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early-warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations system differs depending on their goals, their venue and the mandate of a particular institution. The term, "non-governmental organization" or NGO, came into currency in 1945 because of the need for the UN to differentiate in its Charter between participation rights for intergovernmental specialized agencies and those for international private organizations.

**Partnerships** are connections between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships are built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that place people and the planet at the center, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level. A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships.

**Resolution 67/290** was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 July 2013 and is on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The relevant paragraphs on stakeholder participation include **14**, **15** and **16**.

- 14.** Stresses the need for the forum to promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to make better use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions, and in this regard decides that the forum shall be open to the major groups, other relevant stakeholders and entities having received a standing invitation to

participate as observers in the General Assembly, building on arrangements and practices observed by the Commission on Sustainable Development, including Economic and Social Council decision 1993/215 of 12 February 1993 and Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, which shall be applicable to the forum;

**15.** Decides, in this regard, that, while retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders shall be allowed: (a) To attend all official meetings of the forum; (b) To have access to all official information and documents; (c) To intervene in official meetings; (d) To submit documents and present written and oral contributions; (e) To make recommendations; (f) To organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat;

**16.** Encourages the major groups identified in Agenda 213 and other stakeholders, such as private philanthropic organizations, educational and academic entities, persons with disabilities, volunteer groups and other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development, to autonomously establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms for participation in the high-level political forum and for actions derived from that participation at the global, regional and national levels, in a way that ensures effective, broad and balanced participation by region and by type of organization.

**Side Events** are events organized at an international conference and take place concurrently with the conference. Typically, they may include discussion groups, seminars and informal occasions for delegates to exchange views and explore each other's thinking, and/or presentations, exhibitions for their information. Side events usually take place on the conference premises.

**Social Movement** is a large number of people who challenge established social norms and express themselves through a variety of forms of mass social and/or political action.

**Stakeholder** refers to an individual, group, or organization that has a direct or indirect interest or stake in a particular organization, these may be businesses, civil society, governments, research institutions, and non-government organizations.

**Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities** is a official group that coordinates the participation of persons with disabilities in sustainable development and other processes at the United Nations.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** aim to mobilize global efforts to end poverty, foster peace, safeguard the rights and dignity of all people, and protect the planet. There are seven explicit references to persons with disabilities in the SDGs.

**Umbrella NGO or DPO** is a coalition of NGOs or DPOs operating in a more formal, structured arrangement than a network, which operate under one constitution or are DPO members. Umbrella organizations usually, but not always, operate at the national level.

**UN General Assembly (UNGA or GA)** is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations the only one in which all member nations have equal representation, and the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN.

**UN Regional Commissions of ECOSOC** include ESCAP: Asia Pacific region, UNECE: Europe region, ECLAC: Latin America and the Caribbean region, ESCWA: Arab Region, and ECA: Africa Region

**UN Regional Groups of Member States** include African Group, Asia-Pacific Group, Eastern European Group, Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), and Western European and Others Group (WEOG)

**UN Secretary-General** The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the head of the United Nations Secretariat one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. The Secretary-General serves as the chief administrative officer of the United Nations. Equal parts diplomat and advocate, civil servant and CEO, the Secretary-General is a symbol of United Nations ideals and a spokesman for the interests of the world's peoples.

**VNR (Voluntary National Review)** are country-led and country-driven regular and inclusive reviews of progress of SDG implementation at the national and sub-national levels by Member States at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). Reviews are voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders. The VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AAAA</b>	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
<b>AT</b>	Assistive Technology
<b>COP</b>	Conference of Parties
<b>CRPD</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>DPO</b>	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>DSI</b>	Down Syndrome International
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>ECE</b>	Economic Commission for Europe
<b>ECLAC</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council
<b>ESCAP</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
<b>ESCWA</b>	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>FfD</b>	Financing for Development
<b>GRULAC</b>	Latin American and Caribbean Group
<b>Habitat III</b>	United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
<b>HLPF</b>	High Level Political Forum
<b>IATF</b>	Inter-Agency Task Force
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>IDA</b>	International Disability Alliance
<b>IDDC</b>	International disability and development consortium
<b>IF</b>	The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus
<b>IFFHOH</b>	International Federation of Hard of Hearing People

<b>II</b>	Inclusion International
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PDF</b>	Pacific Disability Forum
<b>RIADIS</b>	The Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families
<b>SAMOA Pathway</b>	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SFDRR</b>	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing Countries
<b>STI Forum</b>	Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs,
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNGA/GA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
<b>VNR</b>	Voluntary National Review
<b>WBU</b>	The World Blind Union
<b>WEOG</b>	Western European and Others Group
<b>WFD</b>	World Federation of the Deaf
<b>WFDB</b>	World Federation of Deafblind
<b>WNUSP</b>	The World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

## WEB LINKS

### **International Disability Alliance**

<http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/>

### **International Disability and Development Consortium**

<https://iddcconsortium.net/>

### **CBM International**

<http://www.cbm.org/>

### **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

### **High-level Political Forum**

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

### **Voluntary National Reviews**

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

### **Sustainable Development Goals**

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

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

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

### **Global Sustainable Development Report**

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalreport/2019>

### **Division for Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

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

### **Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/>

### **Finance for Development**

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/index.html>

### **Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Forum**

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/TFM/STIForum2017>

### **UN Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

### **UN Division for Social Policy and Development Disability**

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/>

### **Inter Agency Task Force**

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffd-follow-up/inter-agency-task-force.html>

### **Addis Ababa Action Agenda**

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffd3/documents.html>

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/313](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/313)

### **The Beijing Platform for Action**

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

### **The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**

[http://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291\\_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf)

### **The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway**

<http://www.sids2014.org/index.php?menu=1537>

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/15&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/15&Lang=E)

### **The Report of the Open Working of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, and Resolution (67/290)**

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/67/290](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/67/290)

### **Case Study on the Engagement of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (DPOs) in Voluntary National Reviews**

<http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/global-report-vnr-processes>

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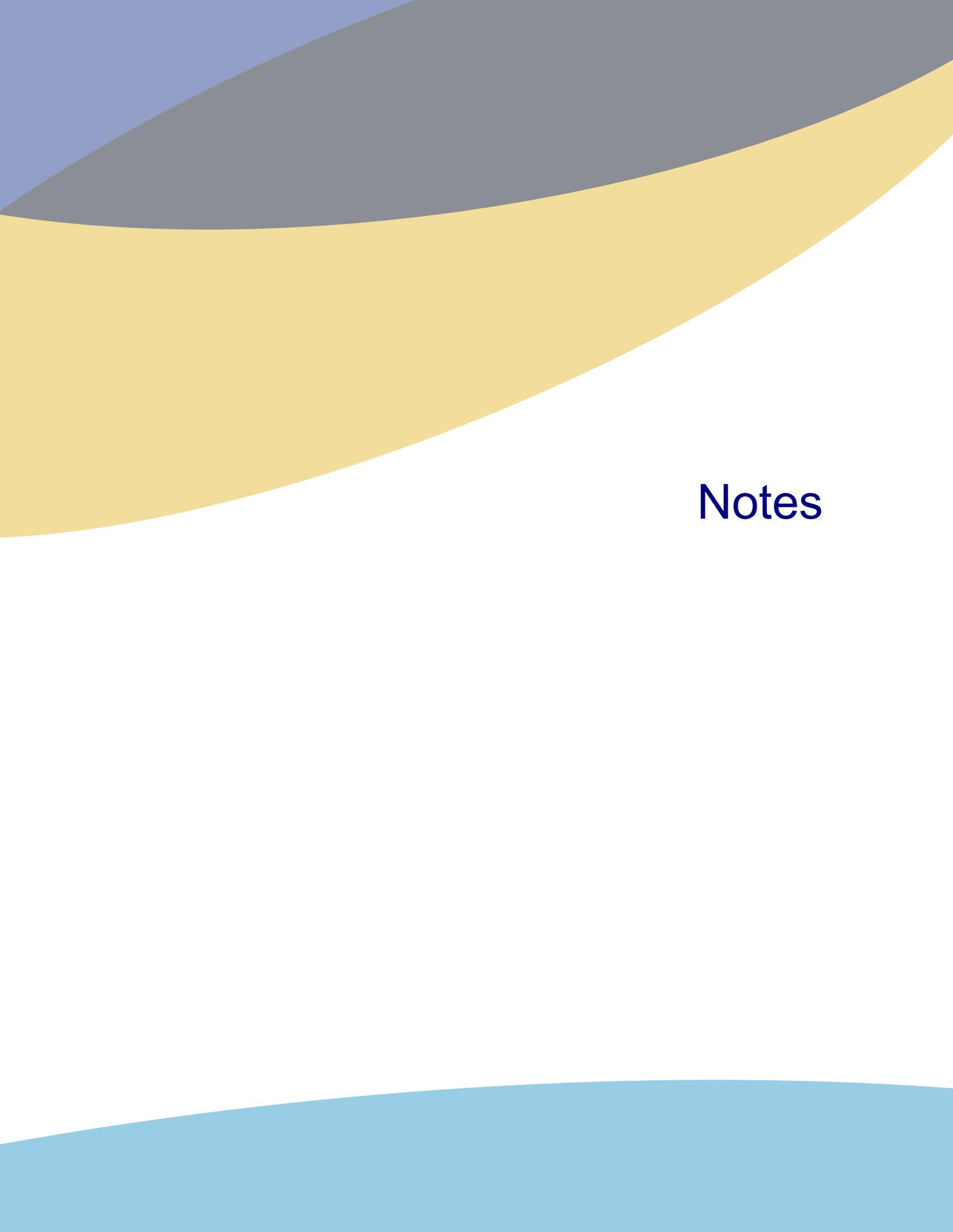
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Notes

<sup>1</sup>  (1) Preamble, (2) Declaration, (3) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, (4) Means of implementation and the Global Partnership, and (5) Follow up and review. One of the sections is the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda targets not only the poorest countries in the world, but are universal and apply to every country in the world.

<sup>2</sup>  Remember the 2030 Agenda is the document that includes the SDGs!

<sup>3</sup>  Brief history: The SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly Goals 1 to 5 considered the unfinished business of the MDGs. Persons with disabilities were not referenced in the MDGs and consequently excluded from many development programs and funding streams. In contrast, the 2030 Agenda provides a real avenue for the inclusion of persons with disabilities with 11 explicit references, seven of which are included in the SDGs.

See table below:

Comparing the MDGs and the 2030 Agenda

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	2030 Agenda
Adopted in 2000 and ended in 2015	Adopted in 2015 and ends in 2030
Focus on developing countries	Universal, applies to all countries
To reduce extreme poverty	To eradicate poverty in all its forms and to realize economic
8 goals and 18 targets with 48 indicators	17 goals and 169 targets with 231 global indicators
No references to persons with disabilities	7 references in SDGs: education (2), employment reducing inequalities, inclusive cities (2), disaggregation of data by disability  (All together 11 in Agenda 2030 and 11 in global indicators)

 <sup>4</sup> Human rights (paragraph 19), Vulnerable groups (paragraph 23), and Education (paragraph 25). Additionally, there is one reference in the Follow up and review section on data disaggregation by disability (paragraph 74, g). The references in the SDG targets are found in: Goal 4: education (2 References), Goal 8: employment (1 Reference), Goal 10: reducing inequalities (1 Reference), Goal 11: sustainable and inclusive cities (2 References), and Goal 17: means of implementation, data (1 Reference).

 <sup>5</sup> Also, in line with paragraph 23, whenever vulnerable groups are referenced in the Agenda (18 times) these provisions directly apply to persons with disabilities. Moreover, the 2030 Agenda references a number of UN documents that include references to persons with disabilities, including the Beijing Platform for Action, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Report of the Open Working of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, and Resolution 67/290.

 <sup>6</sup> Both the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) members were active in the process that shaped the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and jointly created a toolkit and comprehensive guide on the 2030 Agenda for persons with disabilities.

The toolkit presents information about the 2030 Agenda, how it connects to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and explores ways for persons with disabilities to be Influential and participate in these processes. [↪](#)

The comprehensive guide presents information about the 2030 Agenda, how it connects to the CRPD and explores potential entry points for persons with disabilities to influence and participate in the implementation and follow-up and review of the SDGs. [↪](#)

 <sup>7</sup> The table below contains only an outline of steps there will be a detailed explanation in the subsequent chapters on more engagement.

 <sup>8</sup> Some regions will be active and will have a fully developed civil society mechanism

<sup>9</sup>  This is the formal requirement in the 2030 Agenda and has been articulated many times at the global level encouraging governments to hold reviews although in reality this varies depending on context.

<sup>10</sup>  Yes, there are reporting guidelines for governments. The UN Secretary-General developed guidelines for Member States in the beginning of 2016. These guidelines are not binding but suggestions. The voluntary common reporting guidelines from the Secretary-General's report make clear that each country decides on the scope of their reviews and the format in which they wish to present their findings. However, countries may voluntarily use the components that are presented in the guidelines to help them frame the preparations for their VNRs. These are helpful for comparability, while ensuring flexibility and will be periodically updated taking into account the experiences of countries. The Agenda does indicate a suggested number of reviews that should be given, although the guidelines note the importance of regular reviews and suggest countries consider carrying out up to two voluntary national reviews until 2030. Read the full report/guidelines here:

**Q & A for VNRs at the 2017 HLPF**

**Suggested reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF (for States)**

<sup>11</sup>  The objective of the VNRs is to look at how all 17 SDGs have been turned into action. Countries have the freedom to decide on what they want to report. Often this means that governments do not report on all 17 Goals but instead report only on their national priorities or only on the SDGs under review at the HLPF for that particular year.

12



### DPO and umbrella DPO

Remember the definition between DPO and NGO/other group! See explanation below:

**DPO (Organization of Persons with Disabilities)** are representative organizations or groups of persons with disabilities in which persons with disabilities constitute a majority of the overall staff, board and volunteers in all levels of the organization.

**Umbrella NGO or DPO** is a coalition of NGOs or DPOs operating in a more formal, structured arrangement than a network, which operate under one constitution or are DPO members. Umbrella organizations usually, but not always, operate at the national level.

**Non-governmental organization (NGO)** is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, environment or health. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early-warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations system differs depending on their goals, their venue and the mandate of a particular institution. The term, "non-governmental organization" or NGO, came into currency in 1945 because of the need for the UN to differentiate in its Charter between participation rights for intergovernmental specialized agencies and those for international private organizations.

13



For example in some countries national DPO umbrella organizations have established a task force comprised of representatives from different national DPOs.

14  CBM is an international development organization committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world. CBM strives to remove the barriers that marginalize persons with disabilities in the most disadvantaged societies in the world. It does this by working with partner organizations in these regions, by influencing policy at all levels and by responding to emergencies and natural disasters. CBM works in Africa, Asia and Latin America with many country and regional offices. [↪](#)

Other development organizations and NGOs working with persons with disabilities can be found through IDDC. [↪](#)

15  What is a joint advocacy paper? A joint advocacy paper should have requests for your government on what to achieve for persons with disabilities. It should be action oriented explaining what you want your government to do and with a rationale why this is important. Link your request with one or many SDGs and interlink it with one or many CRPD Articles. You may have a longer and a shorter version. The long version containing critical issues for pwds in your country but also produce a short version that prioritizes the three main issues for persons with disabilities. Also keep in mind if your advocacy request is focusing on the most important issues related to persons with disabilities or whether it is aligned with priorities highlighted in your government's VNR.

16  Below is a list of international civil society organizations that are engaged with the SDGs in different areas, including women, child, poverty, inequality, environment, education, health and well-being rights, and so forth. You may want to check if these organizations have offices in your country.

[ActionAid International](#)

[Amnesty International](#)

[BRAC](#)

[Care International](#)

[IFRC](#)

[Plan International](#)

[Save the Children International](#)

[SOS Children's Villages International](#)

VSO International

World Vision International

WWF International

Health, Research and Economic Development

Africa Development Interchange Network

CAFOD

Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University

Centre for Disaster Risk and Crisis Redunton

Center for Environmental Education and Research

Centre for Girls and Interaction

Centre pour le Developpement Socio-Eco-Nomique

CIVICUS

Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network (CYCN)

Earth Rights Institute

End Water Poverty

HelpAge International

International Womens Rights Action Watch-Asia Pacific

Minority Rights Group

Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport

Feminist Alliance for Rights (previously Past 2015 Women's Coalition)

18  The importance of institutional set up is ensuring coherence and coordination is widely recognized and is a fundamental first steps in implementation of the SDGs. establish separate coordinating mechanisms for branches and levels of government include all relevant ministries and institutions and in several cases coordinating bodies are located at the highest levels of government connected to the offices of Prime Ministers or Presidents specific ministries are designated to coordinate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition engage technical expertise for the implementation of the Agenda including the establishment of advisory boards and panels to facilitate discussion. Way undertaken: (i) substantial progress in establishing and/or strengthening existing institutional frameworks (ii) inter ministerial coordinating offices (iii) committees or commissions. For example in Kenya ... Differently in XXXXX....

19  Website: Click on the link: [🔗](#) and then on the respective country and then click “focal point” for details. When your country volunteered to report it informs the UN and informs about the appointment of a focal point. It is also possible that a focal point exists within your government or a department that is liaising with national actors.

20  If your country does not have a UN country office you can find out if your country has a UN specialized agency office such as UNDP UNICEF and so forth. For example UNDP has offices in more than 170 countries.

21  The role of an SDG focal point is to cover the entire Agenda although it is possible that focal point is based in one particular ministry and therefore is more familiar with one area of the SDGs. Yet the role of the SDGs focal person is to be the contact person between government and civil society. Accordingly he or she must be knowledgeable of what representative within the government is handling the social policy implementation aspect of the SDGs and should be in a position to connect you with that person. Insist on being connected.

22  Template Letter for Requesting a Meeting to Share Advocacy  
H.E. «Full name of Minister».  
Minister of (Full title of the ministry, for example Foreign Affairs)

«Address Line 1»

«Address line 2»

«DATE»

EXCELLENCY/HONORABLE MINISTER,

On behalf of «the chair/representatives of the DPO's name/organization's name», «I am/we are» requesting a meeting with your Excellency to discuss how to realize/achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for persons with disabilities and how this should be reflected upon in the upcoming Voluntary National Review to be presented at the High Level Political Forum of «year». We would like to congratulate your Excellency and the government of «country» for volunteering to report at the High-level Political Forum. We the «DPO» are ready to engage with the your Excellency and the government to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are reflected upon during the review process at national, regional and global levels.

On 25 September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the objective to bring a fundamental change for all people and the planet. Governments, including «country» committed to build a better future and to end poverty, reduce inequalities, and save the planet. The rights of persons with disabilities are mentioned 11 times in the entire 2030 Agenda, out of which seven references are in the SDG targets. As representatives of the DPOs of «country» we are ready to work with you collaboratively and in partnership in order to realize these commitments for persons with disabilities in the entire country, including grass-root level.

[Suggestion: you may want to include here a little / short summary of your organization / DPO, explaining who you are and whom you represent.]

Our representative «rep» will be in contact with you shortly to confirm the receipt of this letter and to discuss the possibility of scheduling a convenient meeting time. Thank you in advance for your consideration and we look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

NAME

TITLE

ORGANIZATION

<sup>23</sup>  When a country volunteers to report at the UN it is advised that it should have national consultations on the report to be presented. These consist of interactions and exchanges between the government and civil society actors and vary in format and scale depending on national context. The last two years governments reported about the following types of engagement with stakeholders national consultations include: (i) participation of all stakeholders through institution, (ii) awareness raising effort such as briefings to cabinet; (iii) meetings in parliament; (iv) wide scale communications and advocacy efforts to raise awareness, (v) dialogues and meetings, including to gather insights and inputs from multiple stakeholders; (vi) radio and television discussion and the development of communication strategies to make the sustainable development goals more understandable; and (vii) Web based platforms are also being used to engage civil society in SDG implementation and future reviews.

<sup>24</sup>  Ideally, as a first step when a government volunteers to report, a national level consultation is held over what should be contained in the report, This means that civil society is invited to provide inputs into the report. As a second step, governments share the report with the same civil society actors for a final review prior to submission. Please keep in mind, that this is the best case scenario.

<sup>25</sup>  For example: During the preparations towards the HLPF advocates in Kenya united the different disability organizations within Kenya and created a task force to develop a joint advocacy paper that the task force communicated to the government during the national VNR process. In addition disability advocates also participated in the national civil society coalition that worked closely within the national consultations

<sup>26</sup>  In some countries there might be only one type of national consultation while in others there might be a variety. Some countries will only hold consultation on the voluntary national reports to be submitted by the respective government to the UN. Other countries might hold a number and variety of consultations for example on the national development plan itself and separate one on the report that they submit to the UN.

<sup>27</sup>  This is something to keep in mind when conducting meetings with the government. Additionally not all civil society groups are inclusive of persons with disabilities. Finally sometimes consultations between the government and stakeholders can merely be “ticking of a box” ... meaning that the government only invites civil society actors who support their initiatives.

\*  Some countries will provide an opportunity for civil society to review the VNR prior to submitting it to the UN. For example in Africa this is called the validation process. This process provides civil society the opportunity to verify if they have been included in the VNR and subsequently to prepare their strategy for the global review process.

<sup>28</sup>  Be prepared. You can as a first step call on your government prior to the event and share your reasonable accommodation requirements. If the government is not answering / addressing this request favorably you can either ensure your own reasonable accommodation or contact the support of development NGOs in your country to support your participation. If this cannot be addressed request a bilateral meeting with your government and explain the reason.

<sup>29</sup>  Volunteering countries are listed on the UN’s website which you can revisit and monitor. If your country is listed on the UN’s website you can be certain the VNR process is underway. You can also ask your contacts at the government or your civil society partners whether they know of anything. List of volunteering countries by year: 

<sup>30</sup>  • You can reach out to your existing government contact and ask specifically about the SDG focal point.

- You also can ask your civil society partners, with whom they are they communicating in the government.
- You may also reach out to the global advocates for persons with disabilities who can contact your country’s mission in New York and make inquiries for you.

31  • You can write a letter to the Minister in which your focal point is located requesting a bilateral meeting. The higher you aim the more certain it is your letter will reach the desk of the focal point.

- You can seek the help of the UN country office, if possible.
- You can alert the global advocates for persons with disabilities. They can seek clarification from your country's Mission in New York and from the global UN coordinators.

32  The first time in 2016 22 countries reported in 2017 43 countries reported and for 2018 48 countries are set to report. There is no number set in stone however it must be kept in mind that reporting takes place during the ministerial segment of the HLPF which take place the last three days of the HLPF. This means that only a limited number of countries can report. The President of the HLPF is the one closing the list of countries.

33  Yes but whether there is one or not is up to your government. You can always reference the obligations outlined in the 2030 Agenda however you have no other power to push or ensure that your government actually establishes one. However discussing it raising it during your advocacy involving other civil society actors and asking them to jointly push your government this direction can be helpful. Additionally it can be useful to use media and social networks to advocate.

34  No it is not but up to this point all of the countries that have reported at the global level have held one or more national consultation processes. Thus if your country does not have such a process in place but volunteers to report at the global level they will definitely launch a national consultation (remember type and invitees vary from country to country). In other words global responsibility often triggers the creation of national mechanisms.

<sup>35</sup>  Advocate that your country undergoes a Voluntary National Review at the global level which will trigger attention and some kind of national consultation mechanism. Even if your country already conducted such a review you should continue to raise this with your government as the achievement of the SDGs is time consuming and progress should be closely monitored and reported on at all levels. (For example Togo has reported twice). To encourage your government to participate in the review you can use your traditional contacts but as well your civil society partners UN country teams and media outlets.

<sup>36</sup>  If you have advocated your government with no success in the implementation of national policies laws the form of your advocacy must be changed and you must start advocating for the implementation of the SDGs which ultimately will help realize the CRPD for persons with disabilities. The reason why is as follows. First the SDGs are a global commitment and thus they get high political attention. Second advocating for the implementation of the SDGs opens different doors and provides opportunities for new dialogue. Finally when you talk to your government about SDG implementation you can discuss the CRPD in terms of how this should be done. In closing the SDGs are a political commitment and a way to open doors for your overall advocacy for persons with disabilities.

<sup>37</sup>  Find list here:

**ECLAC**

**ESCAP**

**ECE**

**ESCWA**

**ECA**

38



For example, IDA Members in the region include:

[African Disability Forum](#)

[Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[ASEAN Disability Forum](#)

[Down Syndrome International \(DSI\)](#)

[European Disability Forum](#)

[Inclusion International \(II\)](#)

[The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus \(IF\)](#)

[International Federation of Hard of Hearing People \(IFHOH\)](#)

[The World Blind Union \(WBU\)](#)

[World Federation of the Deaf \(WFD\)](#)

[World Federation of Deafblind \(WFDB\)](#)

[The World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry \(WNUSP\)](#)

[The Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families \(RIADIS\)](#)

[Pacific Disability Forum \(PDF\)](#)

[IDA Members](#)

39



Sample listserv: APRCEM as of 2017: not all regions have civil society coordination mechanisms coordinating bodies which unite and organize the collaboration and work of civil society towards SDG implementation and the regional SD forums however, the Asia Pacific for example has a strong coordination mechanism for civil society, Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCCEM). This body coordinates CSO related activities throughout the year and a formal forum held prior to the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD). [↪](#)

<sup>40</sup>  Please note that for many of these regional forums, there was very little time between announcing these forums and when they were held, on average 5–6 weeks, in addition to announcing the location of these forums. Same as regional commissions.

<sup>41</sup>  Please keep in mind that this can be a complex and multi-level process. Registration for the Sustainable Development Forum will be on the regional UN website. Usually there is at least a two week window to register. In some regions, you may have to register in different sessions. Some regions require a reconfirmation, meaning that you will receive a personal email and if you do not respond within 48 hours or so you will lose your registration. If you attend a regional platform with a personal assistant, interpreter, or guide dog you need to highlight this in your registration or register them separately. We understand that this can be difficult, but UN security requires information about everyone entering the UN premises ahead of time for security reasons.

<sup>42</sup>  It is often useful to meet with DPOs prior to the Sustainable Development Forum. We suggest that you do a mapping of whom will be present and also invite local DPO representatives to take part in a regional discussion on the SDGs. In addition it is often useful to exchange information with other civil society organizations for an exchange of information and lessons learned. The best way to organize these meetings is to get support from regional DPOs disability and development organizations and NGOs.

<sup>43</sup>  The input process for civil society varies dramatically from region to region which is why it is critical this question is asked so the person can direct you to the correct resources.

<sup>44</sup>  We encourage you to be proactive. First coordinate with DPOs attending regional meetings and agree on one presenter. Communicate with the UN regional office particularly the focal point and propose the presenter. The UN focal point will inform you if there is a process on how to be a presenter and this varies region by region.

<sup>45</sup>  The UN focal point for the Sustainable Development Platform should be able to point you in the right direction. But it is true that not all the regions have a regulated civil society mechanism. In some regions such mechanisms are under development. You can reach out to your regional DPO for any updates or you can contact global disability advocates for further information. You may also start a dialogue other regional or global civil society movements.

<sup>46</sup>  At the regional level you do not need to belong to a given constituency Especially because often coordination is either not set up or there are no real constituencies. In the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities all are welcome as long your advocacy is in line with the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda.

<sup>47</sup>  First find out whether there is a coordinated civil society group. Second find out if there is regional engagement of persons with disabilities. The UN focal point and/ or global advocates for persons with disabilities might be able to point you in the right direction. Third you can reach out to other DPOs that have engaged in the national consultation process and want to participate at the regional level. Finally you can initiate collaboration yourself.

<sup>48</sup>  No, it is not. First, not all regional platforms provide a space to review, but instead just focus on thematic discussions. National review processes can happen anytime and be put into place independent of reporting at regional or global levels. If a country reports at the global level, it likely can trigger a national review process.

<sup>49</sup>  If your country volunteered to report at the global level it will likely actively engage in the regional level. If your country is not reporting at the global level it also most likely will participate at the regional level. Its contribution and level of activity will depend on your government's position. We encourage that you advocate your government to be active at the regional level. In case you attend the regional platform you can meet with your country or a group of countries.

50



If you are not connected to regional DPOs, we recommend that you research IDA members and connect with the regional IDA member you would like to contact. Additionally, we recommend that you locate disability and development organizations, for example CBM and other IDDC members.

**IDA Members:**

[African Disability Forum](#)

[Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[ASEAN Disability Forum](#)

[Down Syndrome International \(DSI\)](#)

[European Disability Forum](#)

[Inclusion International \(II\)](#)

[The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus \(IF\)](#)

[International Federation of Hard of Hearing People \(IFHOH\)](#)

[The World Blind Union \(WBU\)](#)

[World Federation of the Deaf \(WFD\)](#)

[World Federation of Deafblind \(WFDB\)](#)

[The World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry \(WNUSP\)](#)

[The Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families \(RIADIS\)](#)

[Pacific Disability Forum \(PDF\)](#)

[IDA Members](#)

[CBM](#)

[Additional IDDC members](#)

<sup>51</sup>  We recommend that you learn what happened at the regional platform. On the UN website you can find a summary and possibly also webcasting of the forum. We recommend that you analyze these to find gaps and lessons learned. You will learn who attended the regional forum which in turn can assist you in reaching out to contacts. You can also connect with regional DPOs or civil society organizations that participated in the forum.

<sup>52</sup>  These may change, but as of 2017, the regional focal points are as follows:

**ECA: Nassim Oulmane** [Oulmane@uneca.org](mailto:Oulmane@uneca.org)

**ESCWA: Karima el Korri** [Elkorri@un.org](mailto:Elkorri@un.org)

**ECE: Monika Linn** [Monika.Linn@unece.org](mailto:Monika.Linn@unece.org)

**ESCAP: Hitomi Rankine** [rankine.unescap@un.org](mailto:rankine.unescap@un.org)

**ECLAC: Mr. Luis Yanez** [luis.yanez@cepal.org](mailto:luis.yanez@cepal.org)



## Examples of civil society presentations at HLPF 2017:

### Questions from civil society during the 2017 Voluntary National Reviews:

- Session 1; Brazil - Nepal - Luxembourg
- Session 2: Monaco - Japan - Indonesia
- Session 3: Bangladesh - Costa Rica - Kenya - Netherlands
- Session 4: Chile - Malaysia
- Session 5: Belgium - Benin - Peru
- Session 6: Guatemala - Italy - Zimbabwe
- Session 7: Argentina - Czech Republic - Jordan - Thailand
- Session 8: Belarus - Portugal - Uruguay
- Session 9: Nigeria - Panama - Sweden
- Session 10: Ethiopia - Honduras - India - Maldives
- Session 11: Azerbaijan - Afghanistan - Belize - Denmark
- Session 12: Togo - Cyprus - Iran
- Session 13: Botswana - El Salvador - Qatar - Slovenia - Tajikistan

### National presentations at HLPF 2017. Each video has captioning and International Sign.

- Botswana. Qatar, Slovenia, Tajikistan and El Salvador
- Brazil. Luxembourg and Nepal
- Monaco. Japan and Indonesia
- Belgium, Benin. Peru. Guatemala. Italy and Zimbabwe
- Bangladesh. Costa Rica. Kenya. Netherlands. Chile and Malaysia
- Czech Republic, Jordan. Thailand and Argentina
- Ethiopia. Honduras. India and Maldives (Due to technical issues CART services are missing during first 24 minutes of the meeting)
- Azerbaijan. Afghanistan. Belize. Denmark, Togo. Iran and Cyprus
- Belarus. Portugal and Uruguay. Nigeria, Panama and Sweden

55



Membership of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPWD) is open to all persons with disabilities, organizations of persons with disabilities, non-governmental and other organizations working on the rights of persons with disabilities, and non-governmental donors working within this space. The Permanent and the Alternate representatives aim to work closely to design, plan, implement and monitor the activities of the SGPWD. An election process took place to fill the positions of the Permanent and Alternate Representative roles as well as for the roles of the Speakers, who will represent the SGPWD in global and regional UN processes, The SGPWD comprises of seven working groups, which cover each of the UN processes which involve the SGPWD or support the internal work and/or policy coherence of the SGPWD. Focal Points of Working Groups were elected by the members of the respective Working Groups. The Focal Points carry out the technical facilitation of the Working Groups, organize meetings, as well as maintain official records of meetings, lists of participants, and action steps. The SGPWD Terms of Reference link is here: [↗](#)

56



The IDA CRPD Forum listserv shares information about global-level activities. Engage as soon as you can, and no later than when you have identified that your country has volunteered to report at the UN.

The IDA CRPD Forum listserv is the largest interactive online community dedicated to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the SDGs, and the inclusion and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities. This is an open and moderated Forum, with a diverse range of informed and influential perspectives, including up-to-date information, opportunities and discussion.

As a participant on this list you are invited to:

- exchange information and experiences around the interpretation and implementation of the CRPD and the SDGs;
- share and receive reports and support each other around the implementation and ratification of the CRPD and the SDGs in each country, region or international area; and
- receive alerts about job opportunities, latest news from the disability community and invitations to join webinars related to the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda.

[The link to Yahoo group](#)

[Instructions on how to join the listserv](#)

57  The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities has the right to address the annual theme of the global review process. This means that a submission written in English can be made to the UN, which is then shared with all countries as well as all UN entities. Usually the paper is six pages long and written by DPOs from all around the world.

58  The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities opportunities to meet and connect with persons with disabilities or DPOs not only in your country, but as well with different DPOs and/or actors from NGO disability rights organizations. In addition, you can also connect with youth groups, Indigenous groups, women's rights organizations and others.

59  The UN provides funding for three categories: (i) the Expert Group Meeting (ii) Participation at HLPF and (iii) Presentations at HLPF. If you wish to receive information about these opportunities make sure to subscribe to the IDA CRPD listserve please follow instructions here: [🔗](#)

60  Since the funds are provided by the UN and they set the timeline.

61  Distinction delegates and civil society.

62  Follow coordination, participate in preparatory web based calls, all engagement opportunities will be shared through the coordination mechanism, speeches, interventions will be prepared in a collective manner.

63  Analyze whether the official report contains your advocacy requests that you have shared with your government. If yes, were they properly addressed? If not be prepared to raise it.

In addition, it is important to:

- Disseminate this information widely with all the DPOs and partners in your country.
- Reach out to the Minister who presented during your country's review.
- Refer to your country's presentation the next time you meet your government.

Whether addressed or not, suggest collaboration and partnership with your government in regards to persons with disabilities at the national level.

64  The IDA CRPD listserv will call on DOPs to directly contribute to the UN questionnaire. This means that we will not be able to modify the format and questions that are chosen by the UN with a limited time to provide answers to generic questions. In 2017, answers had to be no more than 300 words with the following points on how to contribute to the VNR statements:

- Key progress in implementation that may not be captured by the VNR or that wants to be highlighted.
- Key challenges on implementation that may not be captured by the VNR or that wants to be highlighted.
- Inclusive nature of national review and follow-up processes. Specific questions on the VNR representative.

65  Disability participants will only be able to engage in the specific country reviews if they receive inputs from you. of HLPF Inform In order to ensure that your advocacy requests either properly addressed by your government or not are communicated/highlighted during the voluntary national reviews most importantly share your views so representatives of Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities can raise them.

 <sup>66</sup> Statements and questions to be posed by the civil society representatives are drafted during the HLPF is in session. Groups of different civil society representatives are formed, who meet and through a google doc draft the statement/questions. These can be accessed and monitored from a distance, however, unfortunately, who is present will have a stronger control over the content. Also, those, who are present will have to follow the complicated and often chaotic process. Statements - including questions - are very short, more generic in nature and there is a large competition as to what will be the content.

 <sup>67</sup> Manage your expectations. Understand that engagement in the VNRs is a collaborative, but highly unregulated process. This process can be difficult to engage in with the limited amount of time to collaboratively draft questions and different amounts of space to input.

 <sup>68</sup> The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities organizes a number of bilateral meetings during the HLPF. These meetings with high-level government officials follow strict UN protocol and are very important to foster dialogue and open doors at the national level. The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities puts a small group of representatives together to attend these meetings. The group prepares prior to the bilateral meeting, including talking points, a proposed agenda and division of responsibility.

 <sup>69</sup> Side events at the HLPF are meetings or workshops organized by governments and at times civil society, to highlight one specific topic. These meetings are often open to the public and provide a good opportunity for exchange between governments and civil society.

 <sup>70</sup> [Link to side event HLPF 2017](#)

 <sup>71</sup> A DPO should get engaged as soon as possible, preferably even before a country volunteers to review. Global disability advocates and the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities offer a platform to share knowledge and experiences that may be beneficial for a DPO whose country has not yet engaged in a global Voluntary National Review process. Most importantly, any DPO engagement at any time is welcome.

<sup>72</sup>  You can monitor information shared on the CRPD listserv and contact the coordinators of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities and express your specific interest and be linked to ongoing processes and working groups.

<sup>73</sup>  The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities aims to share all information in an open, transparent and inclusive manner and it encourages remote participation. Often, DPOs do not have sufficient resources to travel to the HLPF at the UN Headquarters in New York to participate in person. Therefore, many online opportunities are created during the year to engage in the global process.

<sup>74</sup>  National consultation on the SDG implementation plan, national human rights review mechanisms.

<sup>75</sup>  IDA and IDDC work in partnership to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and realize the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and to ensure that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is inclusive of persons with disabilities.

[Click here for more information on this partnership.](#)

<sup>76</sup>  IDA's work in Geneva has examples of shadow reports.

<sup>77</sup>  We do not have a specific recommendation on the structure of reports. But, initially, we suggest that you analyze and reflect on your country's VNR report and then address gaps that were excluded. It is good to write an extensive report, but also to have a concise version.

<sup>78</sup>  [Links to Expert Group Meetings](#)  
[The report of the EGM in Bogota](#)  
[The report of the 2016 EGM](#)

79  Below are relevant Financing for Development documents:

[Implementing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda: The 2017 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development Follow-up](#)

[IATF Report: Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects, 2017](#)

[Additional Information](#)

80  Further reading can be found here: [🔗](#)

82  If you are interested in being informed about the IDA and IDDC partnership, read here for more information: [🔗](#)

83  [Link to Colin Allen's presentation](#)

84  [More information](#)  
[Download report](#)

85  The relevant documents are below:

[UNISDR](#)

[Sendai Framework](#)

[A/RES/69/283](#)

86  The relevant documents of the SAMOA Pathway are below:

[UN](#)

[Outcome Document](#)

[A/RES/69/15](#)