

**Input to the HLPF review**

This document was prepared by the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities (SGPwD) for the intergovernmental negotiations for the review process of the High-level Political Forum as per General Assembly resolution 67/290 (July, 2013) “Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.”

The Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities, as a recognized rightsholder group, that is explicitly invited to participate in the SDG review and follow-up process in the 67/290 resolution paragraph 16, would like to continue to contribute to the negotiations and work with you to provide concrete inputs and recommendations..

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| **Our key recommendations are as follows:*** Paragraph 15 of A/RES/67/290 shall be maintained and incorporated as it stands without any changes into the new resolution;
* Stakeholder engagement shall be further strengthened throughout the entire resolution and particular attention shall be given to ensure inclusion by defining accessibility and reasonable accommodation, including financial resources;
* Make leave no one behind an overarching HLPF theme that is annually reviewed along with annual themes and Goals under review;
* Member States shall report on concrete policy actions undertaken to realize the SDGs for marginalized populations, including persons with disabilities; and
* National consultations leading to VNRs shall always include persons with disabilities and their representative organizations and as such be accessible and inclusive for all persons with disabilities with proper resource allocation for accommodations.
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*Reflection on the thematic week, interlinkages and synergies.*

* The leave-no-one-behind principle shall be an overarching theme discussed annually during the thematic reviews in conjunction with the main theme and concrete actions through policies, programmes and budget allocation undertaken by Member States on realizing the leave no one behind principle should be shared.
* Member States shall share best practices carried out to ensure the inclusion of the most marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities.
* The HLPF must provide political leadership on the biggest global issues, particularly those with systematic issues such as illicit financial flows, international financial system, and hunger.
* The HLPF shall annually assess what obstacles exist – that cannot be addressed at the national level – to accelerate progress in SDG implementation and address these issues at the global level.
* Prioritize dilemmas and trade-offs among goals, as well as spill-over effects of policies at global and national levels; countries are good at acknowledging synergies, but it is important to address the tensions and avoid trade-offs - this is also key for supporting other countries.
* There shall be greater focus on groups of SDG interlinkages aligned with Member State reporting through concrete examples on how these interlinkages are realized.
* Enrich the dialogue with Special Rapporteurs and members of Expert Committees of Treaty Bodies to ensure alignment to human rights obligations and commitments.
* We strongly disagree with using the GSDR as the new model for the HLPF thematic structure, because entry points outlined in the GSDR are selective and limiting, contributing to the weakening of the 2030 Agenda.
* As for 2021, we would welcome a topic that focuses on the role and engagement of stakeholders around SDG implementation. The furthest behind, remain left behind, and at the same time, the UN continues to talk about the need for stakeholder engagement, yet the space is significantly shrinking, including in the HLPF review process.

*Reflections on the VNR process.*

* National consultations leading to VNRs shall always include persons with disabilities and their representative organizations and as such be accessible and inclusive for all persons with disabilities with proper resource allocation for accommodations.
* Develop Secretary-General Guidelines for safe stakeholder engagement that also include guidelines on inclusion and accessibility in line with the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy and UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report on enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings of the United Nations system.
* The cycle of VNRs shall be elaborated on in the new resolution emphasizing the need for second, third and fourth reporting as well as encouraging national follow-up processes.
* VNRs should pay less attention to national structures and more attention to interlinkages between Goals and actions to ensure no one is left behind.
* VNRs shall use data and be evidence-based, while also acknowledging data gaps that often reflect structural discrimination. In addition, citizen-generated data needs to be taken into account with the provision of proper guidance to ensure it enhances and complements national institutions efforts and official statistics.
* It is imperative to report on marginalized populations and to present disaggregated data by sex, age, and disability among other groups.
* Hold VNRs at the regional level to allow for regional peer learning and partnership building with the involvement of stakeholders.
* Provide more opportunities to exchange with stakeholders such as safe space for dialogues between technical experts in governments and stakeholders. Make the VNR Labs common practice and open to wide stakeholder participation.
* Official mechanisms shall be established at the national level to ensure stakeholder engagement, including the effective inclusion of marginalized groups in the implementation of the SDGs and in reporting thereon. Institutionalize stakeholder engagement mechanisms at the national level.
* Shadow / spotlight / alternate reports shall be considered and published at all levels (including on the UN website), placing particular emphasis on incorporating lessons learned, outputs and gaps of regional and global fora.
* The HLPF shall consider compiling action-oriented recommendations for VNR countries on which could be followed up. Stakeholders shall be allowed to submit key recommendations in writing after each VNR panel and these should be posted on the UN’s website.

*Reflection on the HLPF declarations.*

The HLPF declaration should be action oriented and evidence based. The HLPF needs to dedicate a session to the Ministerial Declaration annually to review progress made on the commitments from the previous year. It should be shorter, political but always include a few action points that Member States can act upon and report on at the following HLPF. In addition, the HLPF should provide concrete recommendations to VNR countries, stakeholders should be invited to share a set of recommendations as well.

*Reflection on how to improve the HLPF preparatory process.*

The HLPF should build on the regional outcomes, the background documents and the numerous reports that are submitted prior to the Forum. However, the wealth and depth of information without any synthesis does not make it possible to have a valuable conversation. In addition, there are no political trends, strategical outlines prepared to be undertaken prior to HLPF. In order to better prepare the HLPF, the Secretariat must be strengthened to be able to fulfill a more substantive role. Also, better coordination is needed between the Geneva processes that largely contribute to the review process as well as with the regional platforms. Outcomes of thematic dialogues and reports often get lost, although they are highly valuable. The work of the IAEG-SDG also must be integrated better into the HLPF, ensuring that evidence-based dialogue is further strengthened. Finally, stakeholder engagement mechanisms (global and regional) must be supported, including through resources via the UN system at all levels.

*Reflection on the regional processes.*

* Regional processes must be strengthened and ensure adequate participation of stakeholders.
* There should be opportunities for regional fora to review VNRs.
* The HLPF must consider reports of regional fora and their recommendations.
* The HLPF shall build on regional dialogues to allow for peer learning.
* Regional VNRs shall be strengthened to enrich regional exchange and partnership building.
	1. *What steps need to be taken to ensure that HLPF can become more inclusive of all relevant stakeholders, so that no one is left behind?*

*Recommendations on accessibility.*

* There shall be budget allocation of resources for accessibility, inclusion, and reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities to participate equally with counterparts without disabilities at the HLPF.
* There shall be the creation of an accessible online platform to ensure remote participation.

A fund should be established to ensure greater participation of stakeholders, some of the funding should be earmarked to the participation of members of marginalized groups.

* Provide International Sign and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services for deaf and hard of hearing participants for plenary sessions,
* Distribute portable audio translation devices for wheelchair users and sign language interpreters in the gallery for plenary sessions,
* Reserve specific seats for persons with disabilities with ample space to manoeuvre,
* Ensure all shared materials are accessible online for persons using screen reader software, or make the Forum and presentation materials accessible using universal design elemental and additional formats, such as the use of sign languages, Easy Read, plain language, captioned media, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and other accessible means, and
* Promote sharing of presentation materials in advance to sign language interpreters and CART providers.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the coordinators of the SGPwD: Orsolya Bartha (obartha@ida-secretariat.org) or Elizabeth Lockwood (Elizabeth.Lockwood@cbm-global.org)