



Sixteen Plus Forum

16+ FORUM

FOR ADVANCING PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES
BACKGROUND NOTE
APRIL 2018

WHAT IS SDG 16?

The universal adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals marked a transformative shift for the multilateral system and the development community at-large. Central to this shift is the recognition that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG16) on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies highlights this shift and a marked departure from traditional development paradigms.

In many ways the bedrock of the 2030 Agenda, SDG 16 calls for the promotion of peace and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and the building of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. From anti-corruption and the rule of law to participatory decision-making, violence reduction and the promotion of peace, SDG 16 touches on all aspects of society, across the 2030 Agenda and with critical links to other frameworks, such as Sustaining Peace. It is about governance, (re)building trust and sustaining peace.

WHAT IS THE 16+ FORUM?

The core of the Peaceful, Just and Inclusive pillar of the 2030 Agenda, SDG 16 is one of the more innovative aspects of the new development framework. A marked departure from traditional development paradigms, it is also therefore particularly challenging to implement and capture.

A partnership between the [World Federation of United Nations Associations](#) (WFUNA), the Member States of Australia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Guatemala, Sierra Leone, Sweden, the Republic of Korea, Timor-Leste, Tunisia and the g7+, the 16+ Forum provides a platform to learn from solutions and best practices, while applying SDG 16 as a lynchpin from which to strengthen interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda and to other frameworks (hence the "+" of SDG 16+).

In short, the 16+ Forum seeks to demonstrate SDG 16+ in policy and practice, as an output and enabler of the 2030 Agenda, with critical links to Sustaining Peace and other agendas, and through a multi-stakeholder lens.



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World Federation of United Nations Associations

With an eye to the High-Level Political Forums in 2019, and beyond, the 16+ Forum, in collaboration with partner initiatives, aims to advance SDG 16+ and add to its momentum by showcasing practical steps taken towards its implementation at national and sub-national levels, inclusive of solutions, successes and challenges.

WHAT DOES THE 16+ FORUM DO?

THE ANNUAL SHOWCASE

In September 2016, WFUNA, together with the 16+ Forum Partners, announced the Annual Showcase, a collective undertaking to showcase SDG 16 in action- what implementation looks like, how to go about it, and lessons learned going forward. Held on a yearly basis and in a 16+ Forum Member country, the Annual Showcase focuses on SDG 16+ primarily from a national and local lens.

With the participation of governments, local and international civil society organizations, members of the UN system, the private sector and academia, the Annual Showcase serves as a yearly opportunity to highlight steps taken at the national and local level towards SDG 16+ implementation, while enabling mutual exchange going forward. The Annual Showcase, including field visits to civil society and government projects related to SDG 16+, helps to articulate how global rhetoric can translate into national and local implementation.

Prior to each Annual Showcase, a Capacity-building workshop is held with primarily local and national, but also international civil society organizations to strengthen their understanding of SDG 16+ and how to most effectively engage on SDG 16+ related issues at local and national levels. As such, both the Annual Showcase main conference and the capacity-building workshop are designed to help reinforce national ownership of SDG16+ and the capacity to advance it across stakeholders.

Findings from the Annual Showcase may also serve as inputs to HLPF Voluntary National Reviews.

THE TBILISI ANNUAL SHOWCASE, 2017 (INAUGURAL)

Bringing together over 150 participants from 27 countries, the 16+ Forum's first Annual Showcase (29 October to 2 November) set out to demonstrate what it means to advance peaceful, just and inclusive societies across countries and contexts. This multi-day gathering provided an opportunity for governments, civil society, academia and the private sector to share lessons learned and innovative solutions for implementing SDG 16+.

Maintaining focus at the national level, the Tbilisi Showcase opened with an insider look at the process and results behind Georgia's anti-corruption and good governance initiatives, particularly as related to the Open Government Partnership (of which it is Chair, 2017-2018), and its efforts to build "Peaceful Societies" through the country's peace and confidence-building efforts. Field visits to related institutions and civil society organizations illustrated the mechanics and partnerships driving implementation.

Collating solutions and best practices shared through various plenaries and breakout sessions, an outcome is to be available soon and in advance of the High-level Political Forum in July 2018. The Outcome Document is to serve as an input to the 2018 HLPF. (Directly following the Showcase, background documentation and panelist resources were made available online).

THE FREETOWN ANNUAL SHOWCASE, 2018 (TBC)

Looking further into 2018, the 16+ Forum aims to hold its second Annual Showcase in Freetown, Sierra Leone during October 2018. Opening with a focus on the host country, this Showcase would provide a platform to discuss successes and challenges in the Sierra Leonean experience, stemming from its Truth and Reconciliation Commission and as related to SDG 16+.

As was the case in Tbilisi, the focus of all interventions is to be on the practical steps of implementation, as well as the value of scaling SDG 16+ related policies and programmes that are already in place and working. The provisional agenda is to be set, first and foremost, in partnership with Sierra Leone and relevant Ministries, but also in consultation with other 16+ Forum member states, civil society partners, and additional stakeholders, including partner SDG 16+ initiatives based in New York.

Similarly, to the year before, the first day of this 3-day gathering will be dedicated to field visits. Days two and three will consist of plenary and breakout sessions. A civil society capacity-building workshop is also held directly in advance of the main conference.

THE MID-YEAR EXPO

The Annual Showcase is complemented by the 16+ Forum's "Mid-Year Expo", held on the sidelines of the High-level Political Forum, with the purpose of bringing lessons learned from the Showcase and national level implementation to New York.

Also on an annual basis, but in New York, the Mid-Year Expo provides an opportunity to maintain focus on SDG 16+ implementation, while highlighting the SDG 16's interlinkages to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs being highlighted through the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) and Voluntary National Reviews.

Separate yet inherently linked to the Annual Showcase, the Mid-Year Expo brings the experience of countries and capitals in implementing SDG 16+ to New York, maximizing on the high-level participation during HLPF to further evidence SDG 16's relevance across the 2030 Agenda. As with all 16+ Forum activities, the Mid-Year Expo works in concert with other SDG 16+ initiatives to maintain focus on SDG 16+ and contributing to the collective learning process for governments, civil society and other stakeholders in attempts to realize peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

The first Mid-Year Expo was held in July 2017, with the second to be held either on July 16 or July 17, 2018.

SESSIONS & SIDE-EVENTS

Capitalizing on the array of high-level fora, conferences and commissions in New York throughout the year, the 16+ Forum will also hold side-events and sessions focused on the relevance of SDG 16+ across international priorities.

Soon after the Forum's official launch, a 16+ Forum side-event was held over the 2016 General Assembly. In 2018, the 16+ Forum plans to hold an event on the sidelines of the ECOSOC Special Meeting "Towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies through participation of all". The sessions and side-events will also seek to increase support and membership of the 16+ Forum, as a convener working to advance SDG 16+.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE?

In a sea of dynamic High-level Political Forums, UN General Assemblies, multilateral agendas and international conferences, the Annual Showcase offers a focus on SDG 16+ implementation at the national and community level. It presents a forum for policy makers and thought-leaders to connect related work across the 2030 Agenda to other agendas, including that of Sustaining Peace, amidst evolving UN peace and security architecture.

Through the Annual Showcase, Mid-Year Expo, Side-events and Outcome Documents, the 16+ Forum aims to advance the meaningful implementation of SDG 16+ at the national level, and in partnership with various stakeholders, but especially civil society, by demonstrating how it has been done – the strategies used to

develop and implement policy and the mechanisms employed to strengthen inter-governmental and inter-stakeholder coordination. In so doing, it also aims to maintain focus and momentum behind SDG 16+ at the international level, all the while supporting and working with partner SDG 16+ initiatives based in New York and elsewhere.

In short, the 16+ Forum is expected to reach the following four outcomes:

1. Increased focus on Goal 16 Implementation at a national and global level
2. Evidence-based learning documented and best practices shared with relevant stakeholders
3. Increased capacity for civil society actors focusing on Goal 16 initiatives
4. Increased awareness for SDG 16+, its interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda and to other frameworks, such as Sustaining Peace

WHAT ARE OUR PRINCIPLES?

Inclusivity – bringing together governments from local, national and international levels, civil society and other stakeholders to promote mutual learning, exchange and partnership. Any Member State is welcome to join the 16+ Forum to participate in the Annual Showcase to present its work on Goal 16, exchange ideas with other partners, and strengthen civil society capacity to support national implementation. The 16+ Forum promotes a whole-of-society approach to development and so further welcomes collaboration with civil society, international organizations, UN agencies, academia and the private sector. Civil society and other stakeholders will be integral participants with equal opportunity to present their own contributions alongside Member States.

Solutions-oriented – action and implementation at all levels has to match the ambition of the SDGs. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, the project will seek to foster mutual learning between different national contexts, in a view to support global implementation.

Complementarity – the 16+ Forum is intended to complement and support the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda, as well as other SDG 16 initiatives within the UN Community.

National Ownership – recognizing the broad scope of issues covered under the banner of Goal 16 and the wider 2030 Agenda, the Annual Showcase and other 16+ Forum activity will be grounded in national ownership. This will ensure host countries and participants highlight issues and topics that are relevant for their specific context. This fits closely with the principles underpinning implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

Universality – mirroring the universal scope of the 2030 Agenda, participation in the 16+ Forum will be balanced with representation from around the globe. Each year, the Annual Showcase will aim to rotate to a different region, ensuring participation of diverse stakeholders, multilateral cooperation and highlighting Goal 16+ implementation within varied contexts.