ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

VNRs & transparency in a time of Covid

Oli Henman, Global Coordinator, A4SD
E: oli.henman@action4sd.org
T: @olihenman

Supporting national civil society engagement

- We are a network of more than 3,000 community groups and activists from all over the world

- Every year we support approx. 15-20 national coalitions in VNR parallel reporting

- Our website hosts wide range of CSO parallel reports from every year since 2016

- Together we're stronger- as a coalition, civil society voices can be heard and included in official processes

- Key opportunity to connect from local-national-regional-global!

Lessons learned from the first cycle of HLPF reporting

1. Majority of countries now provide space for formal stakeholder engagement

2. Most countries have provided a baseline of data

3. However recent years have seen a reduction in focus on means of implementation and financing

4. More countries refer to 'leaving no one behind' but actual targeted support is still insufficient

5. Limited demonstrable progress in the transformative potential of the 2030 Agenda

6. Member states still not making the most of mutual learning

VNR Reporting in times of Covid

- 2020- impact of pandemic, many consultation meetings hosted virtually

- National dialogues limited and regional forums postponed

- Global HLPF- a number of presentations pre-recorded and limited opportunity for dialogue

- Risk of disconnect between formal sessions and informal spaces

Impact of pandemic on 2030 Agenda

- Disparities in healthcare provision lead to disproportionate impact on developing countries

- Massive economic impact due to global slowdown

- Provision of treatment and vaccines further exacerbate inequalities

- Need for increased solidarity but many donor nations are reducing their international support and prioritizing national delivery

- Risk that the recovery does not deliver sustainability

Engagement via Major Groups & Other Stakeholders for HLPF

Major Groups (9)	Stakeholder Groups (12)
Business and Industry Major Group	Person with Disabilities Stakeholder Group
Major Group for Children and Youth	Volunteers Stakeholders Group
Farmers Major Group	Stakeholder Group on Ageing
Indigenous Peoples Major Group	Education and Academia Stakeholder Group
Local Authorities Major Group	Civil Society Financing for Development Group
Non-Governmental Organization Major Group	Sendai Group (Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism)
Scientific and Technological Community Major Group	Together 2030
Women's Major Group	LGBTI Stakeholder Group
Workers and Trade Unions Major Group	Stakeholder Group for Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent
	Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
	Africa Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
	ECE Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism

Survey of stakeholder views

1. Survey was shared on 7th August 2020 with all Major Groups and other Stakeholders through the Coordination Mechanism

2. 130 responses received from respondents in 48 countries, the highest number of responses came from respondents based in the USA, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, UK and Mexico

3. Responses came in from all of the recognised stakeholder groups

   – 69 respondents self-identified with more than one group.

   – Highest proportion of responses came from groups self-identifying as NGOs; Women; or Children & Youth

Feedback on Digital connection at HLPF 2020

a)	Disconnect between the official events and the side events, need to make 'Leave No One Behind' a higher priority

b)	Accessibility- there were a number of comments regarding accessibility: digital connectivity, interpretation, disability access, such as closed captions and sign language

c)	Importance of shared agenda setting and greater civil society engagement in preparation

d)	Blended formats- various comments highlighted that the virtual format could work alongside a physical meeting in the future

Improving transparency for VNRs

- Crucial to give sufficient time for VNR engagement, start well in advance

- Ensure wide range of voices can be heard (broad dialogue)

- Consider all SDGs and inter-linkages to *Leave No One Behind*

- Embed the VNR in national planning process

- Move towards co-design and co-decision with communities on the agreed priorities

Recommendations for improved transparency & accountability

1) Make the most of digitalisation and virtual meetings – combine physical and virtual formats to reach a wide range of participants

2) Bridge the digital divide – accessibility: interpretation, disability access, such as closed captions and sign language; physical hub in country for digital connectivity

3) Ensure meaningful participation – real interactive dialogue in official sessions; also a civil society forum alongside HLPF?

4) Establish an 'envoy' for civil society at the UN

Covid Citizen Action and the Great Recovery?

- March/April 2020 CSOs came together to agree key response to the pandemic

- Joint statement prepared with key partners including ActionAid, GCAP, CIVICUS, Oxfam, Restless Development, Femnet, Women Deliver and many more…

- By Sep more than 800 groups had signed and shared: https://action4sd.org/covid-19-citizen-action/

- Now moving forward to call for a Great Recovery that is healthy, green and just! https://greatrecovery.net/

ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

For more information please check our website:
https://action4sd.org/tools-resources/

Contact: Oli Henman, Global Coordinator, A4SD
oli.henman@action4sd.org