

TOGETHER  
2030

# Experiences from national voices: Civil society engagement on national reviews of the 2030 Agenda

*From policy to action*

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# Experiences from national voices

## Civil society engagement on national reviews of the 2030 Agenda

### Introduction

The case studies gathered by Together 2030 represent only a small amount of the work being done by civil society organisations around the world to engage with follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are a small, but we believe, representative sample of a civil society that has thrown its weight behind the implementation of the new vision of sustainable development, and there are a number of interesting insights we can gain by looking in depth at CSO engagement in this way. These case studies were gathered in order to complement the Together 2030 Perceptions Survey.

The first insight has to be the amount of work that many civil society organisations have put into ensuring that national stakeholders take the 2030 Agenda seriously, are held to account and start implementation. If you look across the board, you will see accounts of CSOs who have pushed government planning, engaged the media and brought hundreds of like-minded partners together; you will see frustration, but you will not find anyone giving up; and you will see a commitment to ensuring that those with responsibility for implementation are held accountable.

The second insight we have is that when it comes to ensuring the participation of civil society, there is no clear distinction between those countries who volunteered for national reviews and those that did not. Whilst this may not seem to be an expected result, it is one that we saw in the Together 2030 Perceptions Survey as well. We would therefore recommend that we avoid the temptation to focus support exclusively on supporting CSOs in volunteer countries, as that would leave a large number of committed CSOs in the lurch.

The third insight is the amount of similarity in the recommendations, which include the importance of:

- Working in partnership with others in civil society – the wider the coalition, the harder it is to ignore
- Engaging the public – widen awareness of the 2030 Agenda and what it means for the lives of people around the world
- Engaging Parliamentarians – they are an important, and overlooked, stakeholder in promoting implementation, follow up and review

However, the real stars of this report are the case studies. We have deliberately not over-edited or over-analysed them, because we believe that legitimate voices need no dressing up. Similarly,



Together 2030 does not exist to overshadow our members, but to provide them with a platform – this is the objective of this report and we hope you read these sort case studies and find them as interesting and as challenging as we do.

Together 2030



# AFRICA

## Democratic Republic of Congo

We were able to follow and support the involvement of the Government of the DRC in the process of developing SDGs until their adoption in September 2015. As CSOs, we have come to recognise the need to focus on the development of a roadmap for the implementation work of the SDGs in DRC with the participation of all stakeholders. But this remains a herculean task for a Government more well known to be in the breach of taken oath than in its compliance. However, this process has been initiated in order to ensure the integration of SDGs implementation in the National Strategic Development Plan.

At present, the Government is in the process of drafting the new National Strategic Development Plan, attempting to integrate the SDGs within this new plan. The Strategic Plan will focus on the key national milestones including 2021, 2030 and 2050.

Currently, with the various stakeholders, we are in the process of developing a prioritisation matrix for SDGs implementation, aligning different national policies to the 17 SDGs. This matrix will be used to assess the extent to which these existing policies have taken into account the 2030 Development Agenda. The recommendations from this exercise will serve as basis for our advocacy on the new National Strategic Development Plan.

This work has not been easy, but the fact that the Government has set up the "Congolese Observatory of Sustainable Development" (OCDD), will hopefully ensure monitoring and assessments of the impact of the implementation in DRC. Particularly the participatory approach of this will be beneficial for all, matching the CSOs Coalition for the monitoring of the SDGs implementation.

The SDGs are indeed a revolutionary challenge to the traditional development practice. We would encourage CSOs globally and locally to be as involved as they can in monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and the various approaches the government takes. CSOs should creatively design strategies to work closely with Governments and other partners so as not to have anyone left behind.

**Madeleine Andeka**

Action Citoyenne pour le Développement Intégral du Congo ACDIC  
Pour la Societe civile de la Republique Democratique du Congo.



## Ghana

Caritas Ghana has been busy with advocacy focused on the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to reflect the SDGs in the national long-term development plan. We have done this through sustained engagement with the NDPC during the period of the intergovernmental negotiations towards the adoption of the SDGs. This was very well received and we are now looking to see how this would be done in practice. We also asked the NDPC to coordinate a multi-stakeholder platform for the review and monitoring of Ghana's implementation of the SDGs. Unfortunately, we have not made much headway in this regard.

### **Some of the challenges faced are the following:**

Inter-ministerial Committee on the SDGs: We have been pushing for Ghana to submit itself for the 2016 Voluntary National Review process. This was not successful as it seems all attention is on the 2016 General Elections. This leaves little time to focus on follow up processes of the SDGs.

Caritas Ghana engaged with the Government to plan a joint side-event at the forthcoming High Level Political Forum. The Lead person from the Government's side promised to discuss and come back to us. This did not happen till the deadline for proposing side events elapsed.

In the long term, we plan to produce an independent monitoring report of Ghana's preparedness to implement the SDGs. The result of this research would be used to engage in a multi-stakeholder dialogue meeting involving Government, corporate sector, civil society and faith groups to define ways of enhancing implementation. We hope to sustain these shadow annual reports as a means of tracking progress on implementation.

Our success has been our active and prominent engagement with the national civil society platform on the SDGs. Government actors recognise the advocacy role of Caritas Ghana on the SDGs. We have sustained media attention on the SDGs in Ghana and we have got the National Development Planning Commission committed to reflecting the SDGs in Ghana's long-term Development Plan which is still in preparation.

We have written brief articles reflecting on the status of the SDGs implementation in Ghana. This has generated a lot of media attention and contributed to citizen awareness about the SDGs.

To CSOs in similar positions, we would highlight the need to create greater public awareness on the SDGs, as an essential element of building civic demands for implementation. We would also recommend building a broad platform of civil society to cover the full range of the SDGs, and at the same time maintaining regular contact and liaison with the national development planning unit of Government, in order to ensure better integration.

**Samuel Zan Akologo**  
Caritas Ghana

## Nigeria

The Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD) formerly known as Campaign2015+ International is a coalition of over 150 registered civil society and nongovernmental organisations committed to citizens' empowerment, human rights protection, development and peace in Nigeria. It is the only registered national coalition of organisations purposely created to be working on the monitoring of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Since the adoption by the United Nations on September 27, 2015 of the 17 SDGs, the group has sought partnership with relevant government agencies both at the federal and state levels and with international development partners working in the country. In addition to free distribution of copies of our over 260-page book "A compendium of Deliberations on Post-2015 Development Agenda", advocacy visits had been paid to the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP SDGS); the House of Representative Committee on the SDGs; and the Ministry of Budget and National Planning. There is no Senate committee on SDGs in Nigeria. Despite assurances we have received from the Deputy Chairman House Committee on SDGs, the lull in the activities of the Committee belies the open door policy we were promised, as it is difficult to meet the members. At the level of Development Partners we have submitted letters of introduction and collaboration to UNDP, USAID, DFID, PACT Nigeria, Oxfam, PLAN, World Bank, to mention but a few.

The experience thus far with both the government and development partners has been very frustrating. With the new administration, nothing seems to be in place. Not one response has been received from either the government agencies or development partners: it is all so confusing and frustrating. There are no known active programmes that the group can engage the system on, and we believe that implementing SDGs at national level is still at best at conceptual stage. It seems the anti-graft crusade, though good in principle, has gained the attention of government and taken priority over SDGs implementation in Nigeria.

Despite our activities including press conferences and seminars where governments were invited to, we are aware that there was a roundtable on the SDGs that was put together by OSSAP SDG-in April 2016 that we were not invited to, but about which we read media reports. We have not been included and struggle to trust the reports of the discussions at the round table, and believe that this exclusion is against the spirit and letters of the mantra of the 2030 Agenda, "ensuring that no one is left behind". However, the former UN MC (now UNSDGs) in Nigeria has organised two strategy meetings where civil society organisations were engaged.

We have however gotten a successful registration of the group by the Corporate Affairs Commission as Civil Society on Sustainable Development Goals. By this we are better positioned with legal backing to fully engage our government on SDGs implementation, monitoring and accountability in Nigeria.

"If we give up, those that are already sleeping will start snoring and perhaps go into a coma. We cannot and will not allow that to happen."

As a group we will not give up. We are bound by our broad objectives and reason for our existence which include who we are and what we do. We will keep up the spirit and vision of holding our government accountable for the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria. If we give up, those that are already sleeping will start snoring and perhaps go into a coma. We cannot and will not allow that to happen. As much as it is possible and within our means, we will continue to seek spaces and opportunities to engage the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria at federal, state, and community levels.

**Tola Winjobi and Celine Nkiru**

Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development Goals  
(formerly Campaign2015+ International  
<http://www.campaign2015plusinternational.org> )

## Kenya

In Kenya, we have established the SDGs Kenya Forum which is a platform that serves to:

1. Provide a coordinated and structured approach for civil society and citizens to engage the government and other development actors towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (SDGs)
2. Create space and open up a forum for CSOs to strategically align, organise and participate in critical conversations with various ministries, county governments and development partners
3. Strengthen partnerships and provide technical support to respective government departments and development partners that are key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (SDGs) including feeding into multi-lateral platforms that are strategic for the advancement of SDGs implementation

We are also part of the Deliver For Good campaign by Women Deliver which seeks to globally advance the gender rights, as a critical aspect of SDG Implementation.

Our experience throughout the negotiation, and now implementation, phases have been exciting and insightful: with the African Youth task force on post-2015 and the SRHR Action, we provided a platform to engage politicians on issues that would otherwise be dismissed. We have been able to promote strategic engagement with the national government, both through the Kenya post-2015 reference group, as a multi-sectoral civil society group, and through our work with the Women's Major Group, which has enabled us to ensure that the feminist perspective has also been amplified in Kenya.

All these factors are important in recognising and further articulating, through multiple platforms, how various issues intersect and interrelate to affect our lives. We believe that the expertise in terms of advocacy, policy analysis, communication across various mediums and coalition building is



indispensable.

Members of the SDGs Kenya Forum comprise of diverse CSOs seeking to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and our role and mandate was agreed before adoption of the goals and now continues post-adoption. Organising around diversity of resource, expertise and influence is what has been our strength and tapping onto the resource base provided by this group of collective. This has been incredibly important for us, and we would recommend that other CSOs in other countries should aim to build and work in coalition, but in a way that ensures you do not lose your focus and strength as an individual and organisation.



**Catherine Nyambura**

SDGs Kenya Forum, FEMNET, Dandelion Kenya

## Zimbabwe

The transition from MDGs to SDGs has not been an easy one for Zimbabwe. It has however left important lessons to learn for civil society as it adjusts to the critical role it will play in providing policy input, following new initiatives and holding the government accountable. This role is not that easy to play as the provisions of the new constitution, which explicitly states national values and principles of good governance, have yet to be aligned with legislation. This has led to less engagement on follow up and review that we would have liked.

The nation has undergone a lot of drastic challenges in the past few decades, and the political and economic state of Zimbabwe has had a direct impact on the Agenda 2030 implementation, follow up and review. It is clear that the Government has limited reach, due to the many internal structural challenges it faces. The huge challenge is that only a few CSOs have the capacity to meaningfully engage directly with the government on the 2030 Agenda. However, a Parliamentary engagement programme on the SDGs was created in August 2015, and this has made it easier for civil society to engage with the government indirectly through the parliamentarians.

The National Position Paper on the post-2015 agenda (June 2015) set a change of tone as a cross-cutting government position for 2016-2030. A handful of CSOs tasked themselves to writing position papers they submitted to the government for consideration for input into the National Position Paper. The National Dialogue and Knowledge Sharing Conference on the implementation of the SDGs (9-10 July 2015) endorsed by local authorities, private sector and senators and senior government representatives was the largest gathering of CSOs and the government representatives at different levels. CSOs have also been working with Members of Parliament in various parts of the



region to ensure follow up and review mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda.

The government has also recently set up a National Sustainable Development Goals Technical Committee (NACOS) which consists of civil society, business and development partners to ensure for the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. The NACOS initiative a national coordination mechanism for the implementation of the SDG also works closely with local governance at all levels. This has been a great bridge in the gap between local, sub-national and national government; bringing them to the same table for policy discussions and information exchange. There is also a sense of uniting for common goal that is starting to emerge between civil society organisations and the government. The government has also committed to Agenda 2030 and created various committees to ensure the realisation of the agenda including a monitoring and evaluation committee in the Office of the President. We would say that the greatest achievement to date is the increasing links that are being built between the private sector, information and technology sector, government and civil society organisations.

To other CSOs in a similar situation, we would recommend:

- Prioritise capacity building on technical analysis and observation of policy issues.
- Build broad coalitions around the SDGs. Where the commitment by government is insufficient, Parliaments and civil society must be engaged in meaningful ways that are inclusive and sustainable.
- Work with UN agencies to help them to decentralise their work to provincial levels.
- Work with the media, as it has an especially important role to play. The media has to be capacitated in covering SDGs, including monitoring progress made on the 2030 Agenda and ensuring accountability for commitments made by the government.

Finally, demand clarity on which the government agency or ministry is responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**Sanele Hanyana**  
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# ASIA

## Indonesia

The transition process between the signing of the 2030 Agenda and the focus on national implementation has been time consuming. Civil society organisations have started engaging on the technocratic detail, networking and campaigning and political advocacy; we recognise that implementation requires the commitment of the national government to ensure that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are met in an inclusive and participatory manner.

The process has started well, as we were able to meet with Vice President Jusuf Kalla on 24 September 2015 during the UN General Assembly in New York to discuss the first steps. The next propitious moment was when representatives of civil society organisations met with President Joko Widodo on 17 December 2015. In both meetings, Indonesia affirmed its commitment to implement SDGs and create more space for civil society engagement in the implementation process.

The aim of our work is to ensure: firstly, recognition from the government of Indonesia (Vice President, Foreign Affairs Ministry, Bappenas) on the role of INFID and of civil society in the formulation and ratification of SDGs at a national level; secondly, greater room for communication and dialogue between CSOs and policymakers, whereby Indonesian CSOs have better access to engage in meaningful dialogues with the Presidential Office, Foreign Affairs Ministry, Bappenas and Vice Presidential Office; and thirdly, the establishment of a civil society network on the post-2015 development agenda, and a mailing list on SDGs with over 300 CSO members from throughout Indonesia.

In terms of substance, the following have been achieved: The government of Indonesia has publicly pledged its commitment to implement SDGs; Goal 16 has become a critical issue for the Government, which the Indonesian official delegation advocated for throughout, and an understanding reached in SDGs; the goal on inequality has been recognised as an important issue by the Government of Indonesia; the Government of Indonesia advocated for a goal on gender equality in the SDGs; and we were able to increase awareness of the concept of a Joint Secretariat, as a participatory and inclusive working model (Joint Committee) for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

Following up on progress so far we intend to:

- strengthen the role of CSO fora, including that of INFID;
- push for greater and higher-level commitment from the Government of Indonesia;
- demand for clarity on the government agency or ministry responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- propose a participatory working mechanism/model capable of ensuring the engagement of all parties, particularly CSOs, for the government and UN agencies at the regional level, such

as by establishing a Joint Committee or Joint Secretariat at the national level;

- support CSOs to develop their own technical recommendations, both in terms of process and substance, and not simply issue joint statements, but also technical analysis and observation of policy issues; and regularly conduct dialogues to share information among stakeholders, including the government, to build awareness and knowledge among state ministries and agencies, and local governments.

**Hamong Santono**

INFID

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## Philippines

Ever since the post-2015 processes started in 2011-2012, the Philippine government, through the National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of Foreign Affairs, has recognised the vibrancy of the civil society sector and the need to be open to civil society participation, input and critique on national reports and positions. Immediately after the adoption last September 2015, the Philippine government started the work on national indicators that will guide national implementation. There were 2 technical workshops on the development of national indicators; civil society was invited and we were able to attend.

However, the process is at a standstill now since the national elections just concluded in May and the country is in the process of transitioning to a new government. This also means that even the various ministries who were holders of the Agenda 2030 processes are stalled due to incoming new appointments from the new administration.

Through our network and with the success of Beyond 2015 in the Philippines, we plan to establish a national civil society task force on national implementation and accountability of the 2030 Agenda. We will be focusing with partners, on various line departments on poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction and mitigation, accountability, bottom-up budgeting, among others.

We measure success two ways: if our government and community partners benefitted from our engagement and, as a network, if our members benefitted on the partnership. We have achieved a certain degree of success in educating government and community partners on what social entrepreneurship is and how social enterprises can help people out of poverty through redistribution of wealth, resources and opportunities. We are also now advocating with the Philippine Congress and Senate for the enactment of a social enterprise/entrepreneurship policy. All of this, of course, ties with our work on the SDGs implementation, follow up and review.

**“It is critical to push for and constructively use any civil society space in government processes.”**

If we were to recommend to other CSOs in a similar situation, we would say that it is critical to push for and constructively use any civil society space in government processes. Also, be sure to get together with like-minded civil society organisations and social movements in country and even regionally and globally for sharing and cross fertilisation of ideas, experiences, challenges and opportunities.

### **Gomer Padong**

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## **Sri Lanka**

It is still early days in Sri Lanka, but the Government has just set up a Ministry of Sustainable Development, the only SDG ministry in any country in Asia and the Pacific. The main goal of this Government Ministry is to support other parts of the Government and institutes to implement the 2030 Agenda in their work.

The main challenges at the moment relate to the difficulty around communication and facilitation between all the relevant Government stakeholders.

As a CSO, we are working with the Ministry of Sustainable Development Sri Lanka on this planning process for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. At the moment, stakeholders are engaged with the consultation for the national sustainable development plan that will be implemented in Sri Lanka.

“...with open engagement and the voluntary action, we can achieve a lot in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”

We led the youth campaign for Action 2015 Sri Lanka before the UN Sustainable Development Summit, and as part of that campaign we have created school hubs in all regions in the coastal line of Sri Lanka to spread the message to the community. Our future plans are to work on an advocacy campaign to empower communities to engage with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The hope is that this will contribute to a more truly national process in Sri Lanka in terms of planning and outreach.

Our recommendation to other CSOs in a similar situation would be to work in as transparent a manner as possible – with open engagement and the voluntary action, we can achieve a lot in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**Sudarsha De Silva**  
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# EUROPE

## United Kingdom

By focusing on partnership with other UK-based NGOs, Sightsavers played a leading role in the United Kingdom's approach to the SDGs and is committed to continuing that engagement with government on the national follow up and review of the mechanisms of the 2030 agenda.

We are seeking to accomplish this through working with partners on multilateral bodies like the Bond SDG Group, where Sightsavers sits as a committee member, and also as an individual organisation, using our contacts and meetings with the UK Government to keep the 2030 agenda as a major focus, and writing in response to government policy and consultations.

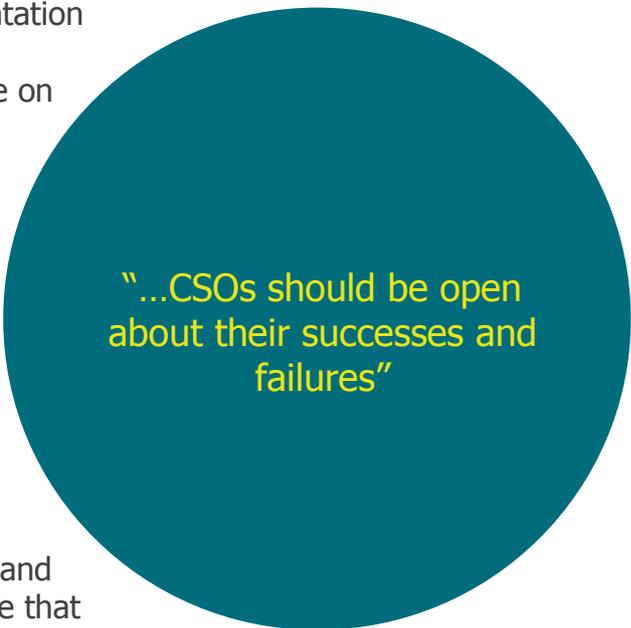
Conscious that the government will have a range of competing priorities and pressures, we have engaged more broadly with Parliament in general – meeting MPs of all parties, engaging with the frontbench teams of opposition parties and providing suggested questions to be tabled in the House of Commons and House of Lords to keep the 2030 Agenda on the *political* agenda.

The UK Parliament's International Development Committee has undertaken an inquiry and published a report on the SDGs, and has key recommendations for government. The profile this gives to the 2030 Agenda is a great success for the sector. Similarly, we have worked with relevant All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) to bring parliamentarians together to raise awareness of the issues surrounding SDG implementation and spur on progress, including, and especially the APPG on the SDGs.

The UK Government has yet to deliver a real implementation plan, and while plans to work on cross-departmental implantation of the SDGs there is no coherent narrative on it. Politically the topic remains relatively reserved to a development context and there is low public or political awareness of the need for the UK to apply the SDGs to itself, leading by example but also addressing areas where it falls short. One area the agenda has some influence on is domestic disability rights, as the UK has been reported to UNCRPD for potential breaches in its obligations to people with disabilities due to welfare cuts and benefit sanctions.

It has been an interesting challenge seeking to promote the 2030 Agenda through working with the government, applying political pressure via Parliament and thinking through how we devise a more public narrative that relates potentially abstract ideas with a far-off end date to their lives.

Our recommendation for other CSOs would be to work with likeminded organisations to offer a stronger collective voice to articulate the 2030 Agenda and provide a comprehensive approach to the range of issues it encompasses. CSOs should be aware of the risk of speaking to their sector alone; they must use language that matches with government priorities and is politically salient to



provide a hook for those who are interested but not expert on this area. Only by making the agenda relevant, salient, and easier to address than ignore, will CSOs have the impact they desire.

At this early stage though, there are more questions to be asked than answers and more lessons to be learned than taught. CSOs should be open about their successes and failures, sharing information with each other domestically and globally, so we can provide a united front in keeping Agenda 2030 as a top priority.

**James Hallwood**  
Sightsavers  
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## Norway

ForUM has been extremely active in the follow up and review process in Norway. We have coordinated interdisciplinary recommendations on implementation of all 17 goals in and by Norway from civil society organisations to the government. This was done in a report (English and Norwegian) which has been launched at several public seminars and meetings with relevant Ministries: [http://www.forumfor.no/assets/docs/SDGs\\_Forum\\_lowres.pdf](http://www.forumfor.no/assets/docs/SDGs_Forum_lowres.pdf)

The report has also been sent as input to the Norwegian government in the drafting process of the national report, ahead of the voluntary examination on SDG implementation at the High-level Political Forum in July 2016. We have also been invited to our government's public launching of their HLPF report, on 21 June 2016.

ForUM has also set up a sustainability forum with two academic institutions to strengthen knowledge and debate, and had meetings and a seminar with government representatives. In addition, ForUM co-organised a seminar with the private sector and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs where both the Norwegian Foreign Minister, UN Special representative for SDGs David Nabarro and President Adesina of the African Development Bank attended.

ForUM has worked closely with the SDG and Financing for Development negotiations during 2014-15, and had a regular dialogue with the Ministries on the topic. Therefore it has been natural to continue working on their implementation, especially with Norway being one of the countries that has volunteered to report in the 2016 HLPF.

ForUM already had the CSO networks and groups, and contacts at the Ministries for working on Agenda 2030, so it has been smooth to establish work on implementation. The challenge during spring 2016 has been a very constrained time-limit for input to the government/UN, where deadline even was set two weeks earlier than the original date presented to us. Democratic coordination always takes time, and we probably would have been able to come out with a more comprehensive and detailed report/recommendations if we had had some more time.

It is too early to tell the impact of all this work, and to determine attribution, but our recommendations have been well received as constructive and relevant, and referred to by both relevant politicians and bureaucrats. We've seen a clear impact on Norway's actions from our work

during the negotiations on the SDGs.

To other CSOs in a similar situation, we would recommend that you make sure you: know the deadlines for inputs to the Ministries to be able to impact their actual work in relation to the UN and Parliament; add pressure through open seminars and Parliamentarians and through media to make the goals known; cooperate with other CSOs to strengthen positions and show coherence between different themes/goals. Approaching it in this way makes sense especially as the SDGs include a wide variety of topics, whilst consolidated multi-stakeholder input makes it easier for the government to digest the input. In addition, make sure that you operate with concrete, constructive and clear messages and recommendations.

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# LATIN AMERICA

## Mexico

Our organisation has been involved in dialogues with the Mexican government since 2011, following-up the intergovernmental negotiations on the Agenda 2030. Once the Agenda was approved, the dialogue has continued, with less intensity, due to the reorganisation inside the government, which has been focused now in designing the SDG roadmap for the Presidency.

Civil society's participation in Mexico around the national definition of the 2030 Agenda was critical. DECA Equipo Pueblo led the Beyond 2015 campaign in Mexico between 2013 and 2015. Since the beginning, the campaign sought to promote and facilitate the participation of civil society in the building of the new development agenda, identifying priorities and recommendations.

During 2013, our organisation led three CSO consultations in Mexico. Also, DECA Equipo Pueblo participated in the Latin American consultation led by the High Level Panel and the Mexican Government. In 2014, we continued leading consultations on the post-2015 process, presenting positions, key messages and recommendations. Also, we established a national and international CSO network to have a common strategy for advocacy and dialogue.

In 2015, we actively followed the post-2015 process, promoting a multi-stakeholder approach to advocacy, research and analysis in order to produce ideas and positions, and dialogue with decision-makers. We integrated joint positions from civil society to the negotiations team from the Mexican MFA for the Agenda 2030 intergovernmental negotiations.

Now that the agreement is in place, we have started the dialogue with the Presidency's Office for the SDGs information system (SIODM as it stands in Spanish) in order to participate in the process to define the national roadmap for the implementation, monitoring and accountability of the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

At present, the Mexican presidency is leading the definition of indicators at the national level, and we have promoted the dialogue between government and a group of 40 CSOs committed with the new 2030 Agenda.

In order to support the 2030 Agenda follow up and review in Mexico, we are aiming to actively participate in the national follow-up and review process, the dialogue with the governments in the design of national indicators, as well as increase capacity-building initiatives between CSOs to strengthen their participation with different government institutions.

We have so far been successful in ensuring the Government of Mexico played an active role in the intergovernmental negotiations in 2015 and in increasing the commitment of the Government to support civil society participation. We have also seen the government starting to raise awareness of



“Ensure the dialogue goes beyond the Executive; national Parliaments are a critical actor in follow-up and review processes.”

the 2030 Agenda, including on national television.

To CSOs in a similar situation we would recommend the need to:

- Strengthen the articulation between CSOs to increase a multi-stakeholder dialogue and advocacy.
- Ensure the dialogue goes beyond the Executive; national Parliaments are a critical actor in follow-up and review processes.
- Raise awareness between grassroots organisations to ensure an inclusive implementation and follow-up process.

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## Colombia

CEPEI has been engaged only through informal channels of participation. Until now, the Colombian Government has not used the existing formal channels to facilitate the CSOs participation, taking into account there is an entire architecture for formal participation at the national and local level.

There are three key challenges that must be addressed in order to increase the engagement of Civil Society in the follow-up and review processes:

- A. No specific interaction mechanisms for follow-up and review has been established
- B. The parameters for collaboration are not public for the non-state actors
- C. There is a lack of clarity in the technical requirements and standards for collaboration

Through the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD), we have organised two multi-stakeholder workshops in which the Colombian experience on SDGs Data Roadmaps has received feedback.

The first one was held in New York in the side-lines of the Statistical Commission meetings in last March, in which participated the Director of the National Department Statistics (DANE as it stands in Spanish), the SDG Technical Secretariat in Colombia, and other relevant national stakeholders from private sector and civil society. In this workshop, the Colombian case was presented with other four national case studies.

The second one was held in Bogota, in the GPSDD meetings in April to address key issues and challenges faced by the Colombian government, specifically DANE, in addressing the SDGs. Other country representatives were also invited to foster cross-country sharing of lessons learned and

experiences. The workshop focused on how Colombia is approaching SDG implementation including key data gaps on indicators at the national and subnational levels.

In the long term, we are working to create the first SDG Data Lab in Colombia. This initiative includes DANE, and other different stakeholders from the private sector (such as the Bogota's Chamber of Commerce and Telefonica), civil society and academia; and it has the support of the GPSDD, where CEPEI is member.

**"Be pragmatic and precise:  
When approaching to  
government, present a clear  
initiative or plan."**

We have signed a formal agreement with the National Department of Statistics to foster the Data Revolution and therefore support the implementation of a Data Roadmap for Sustainable Development in Colombia. Both institutions committed to exchange anonymous microdata (being respectful of the current national laws and international standards) in order to run data mining and analysis pilots oriented to the Agenda 2030 follow-up and review. Also, both institutions will establish joint work plans to identify and fill data gaps, using the administrative registers and Big Data.

To CSOs in a similar situation, we would recommend:

- A. Be pragmatic and precise: When approaching to government, present a clear initiative or plan, in order to assure the engagement and interest of authorities
- B. Be proactive: Being involved into the follow-up processes makes necessary a continuous advocacy from Civil Society, seeing governments as the core of the Development Ecosystem, instead of enemies
- C. Bring aggregated value to the discussion: Collaboration goes beyond CSOs telling governments what is missing. Civil Society must propose solutions, initiatives, and innovative approaches

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## Final Word

Together 2030 would like to thank all of the organisations that contributed to this report. The report represents the views of civil society organisations around the world and, as with all things in civil society, it represents a diverse voice. In other words, the report in no way seeks to represent the voices of all civil society, which would be a illegitimate and futile exercise!

Members of Together 2030 express and prioritise different aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs and provide a broad range of views regarding its implementation and follow up. Members are united in the following objectives:

- To strengthen partnerships between civil society and stakeholders to support the effective implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.
- To make the voices of people heard and have people holding governments accountable for the progress towards achieving Agenda 2030 and the SDGs at all levels

In order to develop this paper, we asked members the following questions:

- Have you been engaged with the government on national follow up and review mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda?
- What was your experience like? short narrative on the process and challenges faced in engaging on follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda?
- Have you been engaged with any government implementation planning?
- Do you have any plans for longer term engagement?
- Have you achieved any successes?
- What would be your recommendations to other CSOs in a similar situation?

The Core Group and Secretariat then compiled the case studies, lightly editing them to ensure consistency, and brought them together in one report. As such the report does not represent the views of Together 2030, but rather that of its constituent members.

## Thank you.



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