



The international landscape, civil society engagement and the role of Together 2030

Prepared by the Core Group of Together 2030

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Now that the process of agreeing the 2030 Agenda has ended the focus has to be on **turning the commitments into reality**. In line with [2030 Agenda](#), it is clear that the agenda cannot be implemented without the active and inclusive participation of civil society organisations, at all levels. It states:

39. The scale and ambition of the new Agenda requires a revitalized Global Partnership to ensure its implementation. We fully commit to this. This Partnership will work in a spirit of global solidarity, in particular solidarity with the poorest and with people in vulnerable situations. It will facilitate an intensive global engagement in support of implementation of all the Goals and targets, bringing together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors and mobilizing all available resources.

42. We acknowledge the role of the diverse private sector, ranging from micro-enterprises to cooperatives to multinationals, and that of civil society organizations and philanthropic organizations in the implementation of the new Agenda.

It is clear that governments are not the only, or in some cases, primary drivers of change, and that **partnerships with and between all stakeholders** will be essential if the Agenda is to be implemented.

[Together 2030](#) is an initiative that brings together partners across the globe around national implementation and tracking progress of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that the commitments of the 2030 Agenda are made a reality, with civil society contributing in a meaningful way.

Within this, there will be a clear and specific focus in ensuring that civil society organisations and stakeholders are able to share knowledge and experiences of implementation and accountability, work together on global, regional and national advocacy and track whether commitments made on Agenda 2030 are effectively turned into action, in order that they can make ambitious and sustained contributions in the implementation of the SDGs.



At present, there are huge disparities within the capacities of civil society organisations, and initiatives like **Together 2030** will be instrumental to overcome the challenges civil society faces in order to play a full and meaningful role in the implementation and follow up of Agenda 2030 at all levels.

Together 2030, despite being a new initiative has already some identified comparative advantages for the promotion of civil society engagement:

- Mobilization of a great number of organizations (305 as of 1st March 2016 from 85 countries)
- Most participating organizations are from developing countries (74% as of 1st March 2016).
- Presence at the national, regional and global level and the capacity of sharing information and mobilizing voices at all those levels.
- Leading organizations are very like-minded, with long experience of joint action-oriented work
- The work is focused on the delivery of Agenda 2030 as a “package” – universal, interlinked and not only on the SDGs or specific themes;
- We aim at - and have experience in setting up engagement systems that are open, inclusive and participatory.
- We assume the task from the moment in which the process of the Agenda 2030 implementation is taking its first steps

We recognise that we are only one of an **ecosystem of networks and initiatives** that will be necessary for civil society to play a full role in the 2030 Agenda, and we will be willing to work with the plurality of civil society manifestations, set up partnerships based on common purposes and share lessons and expertise. We consider it important to maximize the different self-organization formats of civil society because national implementation is dynamic and diversity in civil society should be encouraged.

The focus of Together 2030 is on strengthening civil society capacities and opportunities of **direct engagement** in the implementation and accountability of the 2030 Agenda at all levels and on supporting the structural conditions for meaningful civil society participation.

We believe that there is a clear niche for Together 2030, as a collective of organizations, to add value in these areas, particularly in linking the local and national, to the regional



and international advocacy efforts related to the 2030 Agenda of civil society organizations.

Our specific focus has been built on the original mandate in the Beyond 2015 “Policy to Action” project, and we believe that there are either nascent or established networks working in many of the other areas encompassing Agenda 2030. In addition, building from the Beyond 2015 experience, we are committed to establishing Together 2030 as a strong **advocacy network**.

Considering its membership and approach, there are specific areas where **Together 2030** will engage:

- **National commitment to implementation:** the 2030 Agenda states that “each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development.” This means that the primary domain for implementation is at the national level, which will need the right institutional and political conditions, with strong national accountability structures and the involvement of civil society and other stakeholders in multi-stakeholder partnerships. It will also need discussion of the convergence of various policy agendas, such as Nationally Defined Contributions from the Paris COP and human rights frameworks. A high level of commitment towards national implementation will demand a strong and coordinated civil society, capable and pushing for participation at decision-making spaces and ready to promote concrete and tailored advocacy engagement.

Together 2030 will establish/engage with national civil society structures to support their participation and promotion of national implementation.

- **Strengthened civil society:** for civil society to play a full role in implementation of the 2030 Agenda there are a number of important areas for focus. These include: increasing the diversity and legitimacy of civil society participation input into implementation and accountability; establishing better methods of sharing information and knowledge, increasing awareness and opportunities of engagement between CSOs; setting up more effective ways of jointly engaging with decision makers working together; strengthening technical capacities, especially in Southern CSOs; and mobilizing greater financial resourcing.

Together 2030 can engage its membership to share information and knowledge, promote capacity building and mobilizing resources to support national and regional efforts.

- **Improved structural conditions for civil society participation:** this is relevant at all levels, where there are greater opportunity for all stakeholders to improve how they work together and realize the call for multi-stakeholder partnerships for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This includes: opportunities for local CSOs to engage with national and subnational authorities; engagement at the national level with policy setting and accountability to citizens; improved access to regional decision makers; and increased opportunities for participation at global mechanisms like the High Level Political Forum.

Together 2030 will focus on developing mechanisms to allow the participation and engagement of civil society, especially of the most vulnerable and marginalized, and promoting the plurality of voices in the implementation and accountability of Agenda 2030.

- **Enabling international policy environment:** there are many policy areas that will need strong cross-border agreement if the 2030 Agenda is to be achieved. Amongst many others these include human rights frameworks, trade and tax agreements, and migration and climate policies. The primary place space in which this will be discussed is the **High Level Political Forum (HLPF)**. Additionally, the HLPF will be the main space for the follow up and review of Agenda 2030 at the global level. The engagement of civil society at this main space is critical to articulate the views and perspectives from the local and regional levels and also for a continued push towards action-oriented agreements and follow up.

Together 2030 will mobilize its membership to follow, engage and participate in the preparatory work and during the HLPF Sessions held every year.

- **Effective global facilitation and promotion:** The organizational structures, resources and openness of the United Nations to civil society and stakeholders at national level is a critical element for the implementation of Agenda 2030. The convening power of the United Nations and its capacity of supporting governments in the implementation and follow up of the commitments as well as its role in aggregating the voices of civil society - especially of those most vulnerable and marginalized - are essential to the advancement of the Agenda at the national level and for its follow up and review at national, regional and global levels.

TOGETHER 2030

The “Fit for Purpose” and the “Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review” are important global processes where questions about the ability of the UN to perform those functions will be addressed by governments.

Together 2030 will advocate at the global, regional and national level for an effective facilitation role of the UN System in its support to governments on the implementation and follow up of Agenda 2030.