



# CHAMPIONS TO BE?

MAKING THE 2030 AGENDA  
A REALITY

HIGH-LEVEL  
GROUP ON THE  
2030 AGENDA:

BRAZIL  
COLOMBIA  
GERMANY  
LIBERIA  
SOUTH AFRICA  
SWEDEN  
TANZANIA  
TIMOR-LESTE  
TUNISIA

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## MAKING THE 2030 AGENDA A REALITY

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by world leaders at a United Nations summit on 25 September 2015. It is an ambitious, universal Agenda in which 193 states commit to protecting people and the planet and to ensuring sustainable development in three dimensions – social, economic and environmental – in all parts of the world by 2030. During the summit, the Swedish prime minister and heads of state and government from Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania, Timor-Leste and Tunisia set up a High-Level Group (HLG) on the 2030 Agenda. The HLG committed itself to leading efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda globally, at all levels of society.

Welcoming this initiative, civil society organizations (CSOs) from the same nine countries have come together in a Civil Society Group on the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, henceforth referred to as “the CSO group”. This group aims to support and collaborate with the members of the HLG in their efforts to ensure political commitment and leadership and to guarantee the participation of civil society in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The CSO group also has a watchdog role, to make sure that the nine governments show leadership and become true champions, not only in implementing the Agenda but also in monitoring and reviewing it.

The 2030 Agenda is ambitious, and much is at stake. In just fourteen years’ time, all the goals in the 2030 Agenda must have been met. In most of the nine countries, several good initiatives to start the implementation have been taken, but efforts need to be stepped up if it is going to be possible to achieve the integrated and indivisible goals in the Agenda. Leadership must go well beyond rhetoric in order for the members of the High-Level Group to become the leading examples they have set out to be.

The CSO group has therefore prepared this report, which aims to contribute to the High-Level Group’s fulfilment of the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda. The report maps the efforts undertaken by the governments and civil society organizations in each of the nine countries. It highlights what has been achieved to date and indicates what must come next for a successful implementation of the Agenda. It helps foster the exchange of ideas and mutual learning, highlights good practices and challenges, and reveals existing gaps in areas relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Finally, the report presents twelve key recommendations for governments and CSOs to take action on before July 2017.



### THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the first global agreement ever to successfully combine commitments on sustainable development in all three of its dimensions – social, ecological and economic – with commitments on peace. It is universally applicable, meaning that it applies to all the countries in the world, at all levels of development. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be driven by a new global partnership and the means of implementation, as agreed on in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the global agenda on financing for development which was adopted by UN member states in July 2015.



The 2030 Agenda builds on a set of core principles, the key one being to “leave no one behind”. This commitment means that people living in poverty, and those most marginalized, must be given the highest priority and must be put at the heart of the action. Through its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, the 2030 Agenda aims to ensure sustainable development in an integrated and balanced manner. The goals and targets are designed to steer global action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and for the planet. No goal or target will be considered met unless it is met for all people.

## THE HIGH-LEVEL GROUP ON THE 2030 AGENDA – CHAMPIONS TO BE?

*Implementing the 2030 Agenda and its Global Goals for sustainable development is crucial if we are to improve people's lives and at the same time protect our planet. I have convened an informal group of Heads of State and Government from all around the world who have begun their national efforts to achieve the Goals, and we are now urging others to begin implementation,* **STEFAN LÖFVEN, PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN**

### From rhetoric to action

Individually, many of the countries in the High-Level Group have already launched good initiatives at the national level. As a group, however, they have so far remained rather elusive. Since its creation, the HLG has issued two joint statements, on 25 September 2015<sup>1</sup> and 21 April 2016.<sup>2</sup> They spell out the group's ambitions and stress the need to maintain strong political momentum for the 2030 Agenda, emphasizing that the true test will be not its adoption but its implementation. The HLG has also agreed to work together to promote discussions and an exchange of experiences on challenges and solutions between governments, civil society, the private sector and international organizations, underscoring the critical importance of civil society's participation in making the 2030 Agenda a reality.

The members of the HLG have said that political leadership, partnership and responsibility at the highest level are all necessary in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda. They have also highlighted the importance of effective policies and action at all levels, as well a strong global partnership. Importantly, the members of the HLG have committed themselves to leading by example and to playing their part in delivering on the 2030 Agenda in their respective national contexts, and to engaging with other national leaders, civil society and other stakeholders when doing so. Finally, the HLG members have all made personal pledges to embody the required leadership and to leave no one behind.

The High-Level Group has set out an ambitious commitment for themselves. With that comes the expectation that they will move from words to action.

### Observations from the mapping

Collectively, the HLG has not yet been visibly engaged in delivering on its objectives at the global level. The mapping in this report shows that while some important steps have been taken to show leadership and implement the 2030 Agenda in the nine countries, much remains to be done if they are to become champions. There is no clarity at this point as to how they are communicating or working together beyond their two joint statements.

Putting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into practice will not be possible unless the political commitments by member states are translated into bold politics, into updated strategies and resource allocation, and into strengthening civil society organizations and creating space for their work. The country case studies in this report give an insight into where the implementation of the 2030 Agenda stands in the nine countries involved. The case studies provide some good examples, but they also reveal that the government's efforts need to be stepped up even further in all of the nine countries.

### Civil society response

In November 2015, civil society organizations from the nine countries held their first meeting. Since then, they have worked together to collaborate with the High-Level Group, and to exchange ideas and support one another in their work on the 2030 Agenda at the national level in each country.

In January 2016 the CSO group published an open letter<sup>3</sup> setting out its suggestions for what leadership for the 2030 Agenda should entail. The recommendations were followed up on in dialogues with the various national governments, a move that was seen as a positive first step.

The group's membership has grown over time, although it still remains small and cannot claim to be representative of civil society as a whole. The group has agreed to continue to share best practices and experiences, and to continue the dialogue and review of the HLG and its various member countries. One of its core efforts is to continue pushing for inclusive civil society participation at all levels, hoping this will inspire others to do the same.

1 Statement by the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, <http://www.government.se/press-releases/2015/09/swedish-government-initiates-high-level-group-in-un/>, 25 September 2015

2 Statement by the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, <http://www.government.se/press-releases/2016/04/joint-statement-by-high-level-group-in-support-of-implementation-of-2030-agenda/>, 21 April 2016

## The Civil Society Group on the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda

is made up of the following twelve civil society organizations and think-tanks:



AFRICA MONITOR, South Africa



GERMAN NGO FORUM ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



PLAN INTERNATIONAL, TIMOR-LESTE



AFRICA PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATION, Tanzania



GESTOS, Brazil



PLATFORM FOR DIALOGUE AND PEACE, LIBERIA



CEPEI, Colombia



NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY COUNCIL OF LIBERIA



VENRO, Germany



CONCORD SWEDEN



PERMATIL, Timor-Leste



YOUTH WITHOUT BORDERS, TUNISIA

3 Open letter to the members of the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, <http://www.concord.se/wp-content/uploads/Open-letter-to-the-members-of-UN-HLG-Agenda-2030-21-January-2016-electronic-version.pdf>, 21 January 2016

# BRAZIL

Brazilian engagement with and commitment to the 2030 Agenda has been through a journey of ups and downs. Between 2012 and 2016, the Brazilian government was a leader in pushing for a strong, legitimate new agenda for sustainable development. National civil society was also engaged, and it continues to be so. In 2016, however, political instability has led to uncertainty, including around the 2030 Agenda, and how the Brazilian government plans to make it a reality is currently far from clear.

## ► THE 2030 AGENDA AND BRAZIL TO DATE: FROM LEADERSHIP TO UNCERTAINTY

The Brazilian civil society organization Gestos – HIV, Communication and Gender, and several other national CSOs, have been engaging with what is now the 2030 Agenda since the Rio+20 meeting on sustainable development in 2012. Rio+20 has been referred to as the birthplace of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the start of the three-year process that led up to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.



**POPULATION:** 204,3 MILLION  
**CAPITAL CITY:** BRASILIA  
**POLITICAL SYSTEM:**  
FEDERAL PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC  
**GDP:** \$1.773 TRILLION (2015)  
**GDP GROWTH:** -3.8% (2015)  
**INCOME LEVEL:**  
UPPER MIDDLE (OECD)  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 73.5 YEARS  
**LITERACY:** 92.6 %  
**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**  
0.755 (2014)  
**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.54 (2015)

Back in 2012, ABONG, the Brazilian Association of NGOs, organized many consultations on the Sustainable Development Goals in Brazil. They were prompted by the urgent need to define a more cohesive national position among CSOs during the negotiations for this Agenda, and the desire to establish formal channels of dialogue with the Brazilian government. The meetings provided an opportunity to deepen discussions on the positions taken by Brazil in the global debate. In 2013 it finally proved possible to agree on joint positions among CSOs working in different areas, all with different kinds of experience but with a clear agenda for defending the common good, promoting respect for human rights, and protecting the environment.

At the end of 2014 these connections were consolidated in the formalization of the Civil Society Working Group for the Post-2015 Agenda, later renamed the CSO Working Group on the 2030 Agenda. Until the beginning of 2016 it was a fruitful process, with many bridges built and direct dialogue with the Brazilian government. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the CSO Working Group has mainly focused on three key areas:

- **Setting up the Brazilian SDG National Commission;**
- **Influencing Brazil's position on the global SDG indicators and debating future national indicators;**
- **Aligning the country's future national budgets with the 2030 Agenda.**

The debates around the creation of the **Brazilian National SDG Commission** evolved from earlier debates between civil society and government representatives in 2013, when civil society organizations demanded the creation of a formal space for CSOs to dialogue with them about the post-2015 processes that were underway. In fact, there have been many opportunities for CSO discussions with the government about the post-2015 negotiations that were happening at the United Nations. These have included two forums called "Arena Social", organized by the government. The second forum, called the Arena of Social Participation (21 to 23 May 2014), brought together representatives of civil society, public officials, experts and international guests to talk about the Millennium Development Goals and the Post-2015 Agenda). No proper body or commission was put in place, however, in which civil society could formally put forward concerns or suggestions in relation to the SDG process.

By July 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals had been approved by the member states in the last round of negotiations in New York. At the same time, the debate about creating a Brazilian National Commission took off. The composition of the commission, and its working method, were drafted and negotiated with the Ministries of the Environment, Planning, and International Affairs, as well as the president's cabinet. At that time, the commission was supposed to have had at least seven seats for non-government representatives, including from CSOs, trade unions and the business sector. It was expected that the decree setting up the National Commission for implementing the SDGs would be signed by President Dilma Rousseff at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, in September 2015.

It was not signed then, however, and instead, shortly thereafter President Rousseff announced the end of three strategic bodies: the Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of Race and Ethnicity, and the Ministry of Human Rights, which were being combined into one single body. This was a clear sign of the pressure on the government (from conservative partners within the government coalition as well as from opposition parties) to reduce the most progressive political spaces in Brazil – those where CSOs had the greatest influence and participation.

On returning home, representatives from Brazilian civil society organized a meeting in Brasilia and decided to push the national parliament on the issue. By November 2015 civil society was asking the parliament to call for a hearing with the government on the SDGs. This request was well received, but owing to a national political crisis the dialogue did not progress, and instead, all strategies developed to create the National Commission on the 2030 Agenda have so far been watered down. Additionally, the government's decision to re-structure some ministries has led to many changes among the key ministries that civil society had previously had a good dialogue with.

In March and April 2016, CSOs increased the pressure to establish the commission. For this purpose, communication was established with different allies both within and outside the government, and there was an expectation that a new decree would be signed. This time, CSOs were not allowed to take part in drawing up the proposal, but, owing to the impeachment process, President Rousseff left the government without signing it.

The limited possibilities for CSOs to participate in shaping the debate **on global indicators on the SDGs** was also perceived as frustrating by many CSOs. The Brazilian position on global SDG indicators was wholly defined by the National Statistics Office (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística), which at that time did not have a dialogue with CSOs or with the Ministry of International Affairs. So civil society decided instead to monitor and influence the Agenda through our international channels in New York, and directly with the Brazilian mission to the UN.

## ► **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

Finally, civil society has pushed for the Brazilian multi-year plan and budget to be aligned with the 2030 Agenda. So far, this has not happened. In fact, in June 2016 the Brazilian government does not seem to be organizing or coordinating internally to implement the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

According to an assessment carried out by CSOs, there is no clarity yet within the new interim government, which took over in Brazil in May, about the 2030 Agenda or what the process to implement it will look like going forward.

In other words, there is currently no clarity on what the Brazilian government's specific priorities are for delivering the 2030 Agenda domestically or for contributing to its achievement globally. Nor is there any further information available about how the government will manage to take on board the integrated na-

ture of the 2030 Agenda, or deal with any thematic priorities. It is not clear what strategy the government has for involving non-state actors in the implementation of the Agenda, or whether Brazil will include the SDGs in the upcoming national budgeting plans. There is no information available on the next steps by the federal government: the most recent information we obtained was about an ongoing process, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for briefing the interim government on 2030 Agenda issues.

### **The role of other stakeholders**

There are many initiatives by other bodies in Brazil, including the UNDP, local governments and civil society, to mobilize and push the 2030 Agenda. It is important, though, to emphasize that CSOs, and the CSO Working Group on the 2030 Agenda, are key players in the debate and will continue to mobilize around the SDGs in Brazil. To date, civil society actors have played the following roles:

- Spreading information about the 2030 Agenda to society at large, for example by setting up a blog following and reporting from the political negotiations on the Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement;
- Building civil society's capacity to encourage broader CSO engagement in the 2030 Agenda negotiations and implementation;
- Holding the government accountable for their commitment to the 2030 Agenda by actively and regularly engaging with it, and acting as pro-active players, offering both constructive criticism and suggestions.

The CSO working group on the 2030 Agenda joined in the efforts of international civil society networks to focus politically on the process of defining the Sustainable Development Goals. They realized that this new framework for international development cooperation efforts would guide and inform the establishment of multilateral regimes on the matter, directly impacting civil society movements and organizations worldwide in the future.

In 2016 Gestos also closely followed the process of aligning the 2030 Agenda with the agendas of other UN bodies<sup>1</sup>, like the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development, as well as the 2016 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, whose SDG target is to accelerate the fight against HIV and to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

<sup>1</sup> [www.brasilnaagenda2030.org](http://www.brasilnaagenda2030.org) is a publication in Portuguese which provides detailed information about the process and actions led by the CSO Working Group on the 2030 Agenda, as well as information about the follow-up and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.

# COLOMBIA

Colombia is recognized as an international standard setter for SDG implementation and monitoring at the global level. It put forward the original proposal for the SDGs in Rio+20. It was also the first country in the world both to align its national development plan to the SDGs and to set up a governmental body to implement the 2030 Agenda at the national level. Although Colombia faces several challenges in implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda, there's a clear political will to enforce it on the part of government and other stakeholders.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

Colombia was the first country in the world to incorporate the SDGs into its national development plan ("Todos por un nuevo país", 2014-2018). An initial study conducted by the National Department of Planning indicates that out of the 169 global SDG targets, 92 of the goals in the national development plan are already aligned to the SDGs.



**POPULATION:** 48.2 MILLION  
**CAPITAL CITY:** BOGOTÁ  
**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** UNITARY  
PRESIDENTIAL CONSTITUTIONAL  
REPUBLIC  
**GDP:** \$293.2 BILLION (2015 ESTIMATE)  
**GDP GROWTH:** 3.1 % (2015)  
**INCOME LEVEL:** UPPER MIDDLE  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 71 YEARS  
**LITERACY:** 94.7 %  
**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**  
0.720 (2015)  
**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.53 (2014)

In order to get the implementation of the SDGs started at all levels, early in 2015 Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos issued a presidential decree setting up a national High-Level Governmental SDG Commission.

The Colombian government has aligned the SDGs with other political agendas, such as the Peace Agreement (52 targets are aligned with them and with the National Development Plan), the Green Growth strategy (88 targets included), and the activities aimed at achieving OECD membership (87 targets included). In this way, the Colombian government has aligned its policies and plans with a total of 145 SDG targets.

Likewise, the national SDG commission has identified 100 targets (mainly from SDGs 1,2, 3, 5 and 11) that must be tackled through joint work with subnational governments, 88 targets (especially from SDGs 8, 9 and 12) that require private-sector commitment, and 34 targets (especially from SDGs 10, 14 and 17) that require international donor support.

The National Council on Economic and Social Policy (or CONPES, from its Spanish title) is the highest authority on development policy in Colombia. The SDG commission is pushing for a CONPES document to be drawn up, in order to align the efforts of governmental bodies and to allocate domestic resources to implementing the SDGs.

In terms of prioritization, the National Department of Planning has highlighted SDG 4 (education), 10 (tackling inequalities), and 16 (peaceful societies) as the main goals connected to the three pillars of the Colombian National Development Plan: peace, equity and education.

The Commission is identifying avenues for working with the different stakeholders, such as civil society and academia, during the implementation phase. It is also pushing subnational authorities (at city and state level) to include the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in their development plans. The National Department of Planning has carried out an exercise to align the local authorities' development plans with the SDGs.

Initial meetings have been held with the private sector and communities at the subnational level, in order to raise awareness of the global agenda.

Also, Colombia is one of the five Latin American countries in which the Congress (parliament) approves the national development plan, giving it legal status. All ministries, departments and subnational entities

therefore have to align their goals and priorities with this plan. Up to now, however, no plans have been made to involve parliamentarians in the implementation or monitoring of SDGs.

In terms of data for sustainable development, the government has conducted a diagnosis to determine the availability of information for measuring the SDGs. According to the diagnosis, information is available for 54% of the goals, while for 30% of them there is information that may require improvements or methodological adjustments; lastly, for 16% of the goals there exists no data or any clear methodology for measuring them.

Colombia is a member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD), and its commitment to the partnership is that it will explore and incorporate new sources of information and generate and disseminate high-quality data to monitor the progress made with achieving the SDGs. Colombia also works actively in the regional fora on Data for Sustainable Development, such as in the Andean Statistics Committee and the Statistical Conference of the Americas (attached to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC).

Colombia has a National Management and Results Evaluation System (Sinergia) to evaluate and monitor the results and impacts of the government's investments, projects and programmes. It monitors the national development plan and other long-term strategies and international commitments (such as the 2030 Agenda).

Although there are no binding legal requirements for non-state actors to report on their programmatic operations to national authorities, there are some initiatives that aim at facilitating such reporting, such as:

- The Social Map: developed by the Department of Social Prosperity, the map seeks to track social initiatives run by foundations, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- The Strategic Projects Map: developed by the Association of Corporate and Family Foundations (AFE), the map seeks to track all social initiatives run by the 62 member foundations.

In terms of financing for development, Colombia's situation is not very promising: the national budget for 2016 was cut owing to the decrease in government revenue (revenue from oil exploitation has decreased dramatically). Also, the role of the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC-Colombia) in this matter is not clear, as the agency has said that its strategy and human resources are focused on finding new resources for implementing the Peace Agreements. There is no clear strategy for raising new funds for the 2030 Agenda.

## ► WHAT COMES NEXT?

At the international level, Colombia will present its voluntary national report to the next HLPF in July 2016. According to the first draft of this review, Colombia:

- Will present a review focused on SDG 1 (poverty), 3 (health), 8 (sustainable economic growth) and 15 (life on land), and their interlinkages.
- Will take into account the annual ECOSOC theme for 2016, "Implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda: moving from commitments to results", and the annual HLPF theme for 2016, "Ensuring that no one is left behind".
- Suggests that each annual review before the HLPF should be focused on a group of SDGs and their interlinkages, always including SDG 17 and its targets.

Colombian CSOs are seeking to strengthen their capacity to support SDG implementation and monitoring. Traditionally, civil society in Colombia has participated very actively and has been involved in defining the SDGs through regional and thematic consultations.

In terms of data, the National Department of Statistics will work on design plans for strengthening administrative records and other mechanisms, and will draw up the national strategy for monitoring the SDG indicators

It is expected that the National Council on Economic and Social Policy (CONPES) will draft a document, as recommended by the national SDG commission. The document will focus on specifying how to align the

efforts of governmental bodies, allocating domestic resources to the achievement and monitoring of the SDGs, as well as putting the SDGs on the agendas of the ministries that are not represented in the SDG Commission, so that they can take the 2030 Agenda into account in their work.

## ► CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION:

### Challenges:

- Like most middle-income countries, Colombia has high levels of inequality. It will be important to bear that in mind when developing policies aimed at achieving the SDGs.
- Given that the national authorities are now aware of the importance of the 2030 Agenda and the advantages it can bring, raising awareness in subnational authorities and grassroots organizations is key to ensuring the implementation of the SDGs at the subnational level, leaving no one behind.
- Even though the Colombian statistical system is among the best in Latin America, the data requirements for monitoring the SDGs, especially data disaggregation, will require investment in technical and human capacity in order to improve data management capability.
- The recently signed Colombian peace deal needs to be taken into consideration along with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In the short and medium term, Colombia should work simultaneously on the two agendas. The challenge is to coordinate the peace deal and the 2030 Agenda effectively, and to identify their synergies.
- Greater openness to non-governmental actors will be needed in the process of designing social policy, in order to fulfil the inclusiveness mandate resulting from the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Part of the challenge comes from the need to create early entry points for non-governmental actors in the drafting of public policy.
- Colombia's budget is closely linked to international oil prices. Boosting clean energy and the promotion of environmentally sustainable development models can have impacts on international oil markets and can cause market turbulence, resulting in national income instability.

### Opportunities:

- Colombia played a prominent role in the process of negotiating the SDGs, and was the country that argued for linking the environmental and development tracks in a common agenda, so today it is one of the so-called "early implementers" countries. The attention that the country attracts globally, as a result, can be channelled towards obtaining the external resources and capacity that Colombia needs in order to implement the 2030 Agenda fully.
- Subnational authorities (at state and city level) have not yet completed their first year of government. This is a good time to keep up the political momentum on the SDGs, fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda.
- Civil society should perceive national and local governments as partners and allies, giving them inputs to improve the actions and policies that further the SDGs and taking advantage of the formal participation channels (at both national and subnational level) established by law in Colombia for this very purpose.
- Colombia is part of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance, in the spirit of multi-stakeholder collaboration. The commitments made in this context open up possibilities for joint work with various non-governmental actors, on clear bases that have been set out in advance.
- Colombia's government is also part of the Post-2015 Partnership Platform for Philanthropy and Private Social Investment, a pilot platform that allows the country to dialogue directly and work jointly with the philanthropic sector, helping to overcome mistrust and fostering joint work based on the multiple capacities and contributions that philanthropy can offer the SDG implementation process at national level.
- Throughout Latin America, the international cooperation provided by Colombia through South-South schemes is well recognized. This positions it as a tool that supports Colombia's leadership in the implementation of the SDGs on the regional stage.
- Colombia is currently moving along its process of accession to the OECD, which puts it in a unique position to foster dialogue among high- and middle-income countries, an essential requirement for SDG implementation at the global level.

# GERMANY

## ► THE GERMAN SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

In December 2014 the German government declared it was designating the National Sustainability Strategy (NSS) as an instrument relevant to the German implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since 2002, the said purpose of the NSS has been to serve as a guide for a comprehensive, sustainable political agenda taking responsibility for economically, ecologically and socially sound development for all generations, though with a strong environmental focus.

Despite the NSS, however, German politics are far from sustainable. Carbon emissions are still rising. The dominant agricultural model is based on industrialization worldwide, destroying small-scale farming and contributing to groundwater contamination by nitrogen and nitrates through over-fertilization. Gender equality, including the commitment to equal pay for equal work, is still a long way off. More so, regarding social cohesion and inclusion of all societal groups there are major gaps between comprehensive political commitments and coherent as well as effective practical advances.



**POPULATION:** 80.8 MILLION (2015)

**CAPITAL CITY:** BERLIN

**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** FEDERAL PARLIAMEN-  
TARY REPUBLIC

**GDP:** \$3.358 TRILLION (2015 ESTIMATE)

**GDP GROWTH:** 1.5 % (2015)

**INCOME LEVEL:** HIGH (OECD)

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 80.5 YEARS

**LITERACY:** 99 %

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:** 0.916 (2015)

**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.30 (2011)

The transportation sector is still mainly focused on an unsustainable use of roads rather than railroads, which has just been emphasized by the drafting of a new Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. In addition, the National Sustainability Strategy focuses on only a few aspects of society, and does not name indicators for important issues such as poverty. Furthermore, the strategy has so far focused only on sustainability within Germany. Just two indicators – official development assistance (ODA) and the import quota from developing countries – take into account the effects of German policies on the development of countries in the Global South. These are just some examples of the fact that a sustainability strategy does not automatically lead to sustainability.

The National Sustainability Strategy is revised every four years. With the 2016 revision process currently underway, the government intends to integrate the SDGs into the NSS. It has published a zero draft of the revised NSS – now called the German Sustainability Strategy (GSS) – providing an opportunity for civil society, other stakeholders and the wider public to comment. The draft is in line with the 17 SDGs, adds new indicators which cover some aspects of the SDGs, and outlines “management rules” on how to implement the strategy. However, so far it does not cover the full extent of the 2030 Agenda. The GSS will be adopted by the government in November 2016.

### The alignment and implementation strategies of other ministries

Owing to the various gaps such as the completely missing operationalization of the overarching principle to leave no one behind, and focusing only on some aspects of sustainability, the German Sustainability Strategy (GSS) does not cover all relevant policy areas relevant to the 2030 Agenda. German CSOs thus do not regard the GSS as an adequate tool for comprehensive national SDG implementation. Other ministries will complement SDG implementation in and by Germany with their own strategies and/or plans. For example, the development ministry (BMZ) has prepared a “nine elements plan”, which describes the main areas in which the ministry will be implementing the SDGs. It is not yet clear to what extent other ministries are already working explicitly on the SDGs, or plan to align their existing strategies coherently with them and with the German Sustainability Strategy. Hence it is not clear how the national implementation plan will come together, or whether a coherent strategy and international comparability can be ensured.

National CSOs have pointed out that the GSS and the implementation plans of the respective ministries must give consideration to human rights and to the social, ecological and economic dimensions, and be re-

gularly readjusted. They have to be oriented not just towards the needs and rights of current generations, but also, equally, to those of future generations. Furthermore, all departments should regularly write 2030 Agenda cohesion reports about their policies and present them to Parliament, for example in the form of government declarations by the Chancellor.

In order to ensure that all policies are aligned with the 2030 Agenda, all legislative proposals and sectoral policies need to be checked for compatibility with the 2030 Agenda (ex-ante “SDG check”) and, where necessary, corrected.

## ► INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To support the implementation of the 2002 National Sustainability Strategy (NSS), the German government has set up three bodies: the **State Secretaries’ Committee on Sustainable Development**, the **Parliamentary Council for Sustainable Development**, and the **Council for Sustainable Development**.

**The State Secretaries’ Committee on Sustainable Development (SSCSD)** is responsible for the coherent implementation of the NSS. Its members are the state secretaries of each ministry; the body is coordinated and led by the head of the Federal Chancellery, at the highest level of government. The SSCSD could be a very effective body for achieving coherence in government policies. However, particular ministry interest and a resource-weak bureaucracy have so far made it impossible to formulate and implement coherent sustainability policies, and it has been possible to prevent the implementation of unsustainable policies at the ministerial level.

**The Parliamentary Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD)** is the parliamentary body that deals with issues regarding sustainable legislation. Its members are elected representatives from all political parties. Unlike other parliamentary committees, however, the PCSD only has the status of a council: it is not a permanent institution of the German Bundestag (parliament), but has to be convened anew in each legislative period. This weakens the efficiency and efficacy it can bring to the task of checking every piece of legislation to see whether procedures, such as a sustainability analysis, have been followed (formal check). Owing to a lack of capacity even this is a major challenge. Finally, it does not ensure that the content of a law is sustainable.

Civil society recommends that the status and competence of the Parliamentary Council should be strengthened, e.g. by upgrading its status to that of a regular parliamentary committee and giving it a central role in SDG checking. This would require regular updates from the government to all parliamentary committees, as well as a parliamentary discussion of progress reports on the government’s implementation of the SDGs (reports to HLPF and on GSS).

**The Council for Sustainable Development (CSD)** is a cross-sectoral expert body which advises the German government on matters relating to sustainable development. The council currently consists of 15 members, who are all appointed ad personam by the chancellor and thus represent neither the institutions they work for nor civil society. However, the members bring not only their expertise but also their own particular institutional perspective on how to achieve sustainable development. The CSD is supported by a secretariat through which it also runs projects to raise awareness and promote sustainable development on behalf of the government. While in itself a useful tool, the CSD is often criticized for the lack of representation of the international sector, as well its lack of transparency and its nomination procedures. Civil society has recommended that the Council’s international perspective should be strengthened.

Although Germany does have a governance structure in place to deal with implementing the NSS and the 2030 Agenda, the institutions remain weak and inefficient. This is especially worrying as these very structures and the NSS have so far failed to make Germany sustainable. There is a need for political structures and political leadership to promote sustainability, ensuring coherence and preventing unsustainable policies at the ministerial level. The German government has announced that, over the course of the summer, there will be a review of the country’s sustainability architecture. There are as yet no plans to strengthen it.

## ► CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION AND FOLLOW-UP

During the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda the German government provided a number of opportunities for civil society to put forward its recommendations. The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) established a Dialogue Forum, in order to engage with civil society during the negotiations, and it is planned to continue the dialogue for the time being. However, even though the government established ongoing dialogue mainly with environment and development CSOs, CSOs have complained that these dialogues are convened infrequently and on too-short notice, that preparations (agenda setting) lacked transparency, that the selection of participants was not clear, and that there was no systematic follow-up after the dialogues. German CSOs have also pointed out how important it is for the government to engage with civil society in consultations on how to strengthen the institutions for sustainability, and to ensure that civil society is given an opportunity to comment on all reports on SDG implementation and to discuss the results with the German parliament and government.

Germany is one of the countries reporting to the 2016 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). It has not yet undertaken to report regularly on the status of national implementation, however. Nor has Germany been particularly strong in advocating at the UN for a globally comparable presentation of the national implementation reports. With regard to the German HLPF report, stakeholders – including civil society – were invited to comment, but they were given only a one-week timeframe for the consultation. The process has been criticized for being, rushed, and lacking transparency.

Regarding the German Sustainability Strategy (GSS), from October 2015 to January 2016 the government conducted five dialogue conferences at which CSOs and interested members of the public could put forward ideas and recommendations in different workshops on set topics. It remains unclear, however, whether the results of these workshops have been fed into the GSS. These conferences were hardly sufficient to ensure broad, meaningful, frequent and structured civil society participation in the process.

On 31 May 2016 the government published the zero draft of the German Sustainability Strategy for civil society to annotate. Stakeholders were invited to send their written recommendations on the draft GSS within eight weeks. Additionally, the German Chancellery, together with representatives from other ministries, conducted a formal stakeholder hearing in June. Although these are good opportunities for civil society to comment on SDG implementation and sustainable development in general, it remains uncertain whether inputs will find their way into the revised draft, and if they do, which ones. There is also particular concern regarding the lack of transparency in a process where stakeholders are simply asked to comment individually via email. In general, these dialogue forums and opportunities to comment, lack feedback regarding the usage of civil society's inputs. This, and the lack of capacities, are some of the reasons why CSOs in Germany have started to gauge carefully which of these various unstructured processes they follow and input to.

So far the government has not come up with a proposal on how to engage civil society regularly in monitoring the implementation of the SDGs. Civil society organizations are also discussing amongst themselves how they envision a participatory process and structure. Together with social, environmental, peace and human rights organizations and networks, VENRO has proposed a two-tier participation structure, which should be connected to the chancellery responsible for overseeing GSS/SDG implementation:

- Regular consultation with representatives of relevant networks and associations working on the SDGs;
- Regular dialogue forum for civil society and interested members of the public.

### **Civil society action on monitoring and accountability**

CSO engagement is still strongest in development and environmental NGOs. However, some social welfare organizations and networks have also taken up the topic and are beginning to engage in networking and collaborating on position papers and conferences. VENRO and the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development are collaborating on cross-sectoral CSO action by bringing together organizations, networks and national platforms across sectors to develop shared positions for SDG policy advocacy.

# LIBERIA

*This time this Agenda included everybody and we must work to have [the goals] achieved (...) we are leaving no one behind* **PRESIDENT ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF**

Liberia has undertaken noticeable efforts to ensure that the global enthusiasm in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, aimed at developing a new set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to replace the MDGs, does not vanish from its national agenda. A national implementation plan is currently being developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

The Liberian government's ultimate priority, as articulated in the National Vision, Liberia Rising 2030, is: one people, one nation, united for peace and sustainable development. This is a vision that fits well with the 2030 Agenda.

Liberia has announced that its national development plan will be aligned with international frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda, through the incorporation of the relevant goals and objectives into an updated Liberian plan, which will succeed the current one, known as the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), which ends this year. The government is currently finalizing an overview of the AfT. The outcome of this review will inform the development of the next national plan and hence the plan for implementing the SDGs. The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is leading on this, and is preparing a draft implementation strategy to be discussed with various national stakeholders.



**POPULATION:** 4.19 MILLION (2015)

**CAPITAL CITY:** MONROVIA

**POLITICAL SYSTEM:**

PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC

**GDP:** \$2.035 BILLION (2015)

**GDP GROWTH:** 0 %

**INCOME LEVEL:** LOW (OECD)

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 58.6 YEARS

**LITERACY:** 47.6 %

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**

0.430 (2015)

**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.38 (2015)

The Liberian government stresses that the SDGs will not be implemented as a stand-alone plan. Instead, it has been announced that the government will utilize the existing Liberian development alliance framework to coordinate the implementation of the next national plan. Additionally, the government has said that it will clarify which goals to put most effort into, underlining the importance of keeping a focus, in order to achieve the transformation Liberia needs. However, when asked, the government also recognizes the

need to maintain a balance between the 17 goals and to respect their integrated nature.

## Launch of the 2030 Agenda

In an effort to initiate a national discussion about what the SDGs mean for Liberia, the government officially launched Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development on 26-27 January 2016. The two-day national meeting held in Monrovia set the stage for the domestication and implementation of Agenda 2030 in Liberia for the next 15 years. Participants at the SDG launch included government officials, the UN country team, foreign and bilateral partners, local and international non-governmental organizations, academia, youth, civil society, women's and religious groups, the private sector, and the media.

In her opening comments on that occasion, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf recounted that Liberia had been unable to participate meaningfully in the discussion around the MDGs because the country was in the middle of a civil conflict when the first global development agenda was crafted. Indeed, the Liberian war deprived Liberians of the opportunity to have their voices heard at that time. However, "In spite of this, Liberia began the implementation of the MDGs six years after their adoption, and has a progress rate of 33 per cent", President Sirleaf noted. She also said that the country had played a part in crafting the SDGs, and Liberia should therefore get fully involved so that much could be achieved to improve the lives of the people. Unlike with the MDGs, the president observed that "this time this agenda included everybody and we must work to have [the goals] achieved (...) we are leaving no one behind".

Echoing President Sirleaf's statement that Liberia would remain active in the SDGs, Liberia's development and planning minister, Amara Konneh, said: "Government will no longer orphan the SDGs like it did with

the Millennium Development Goals (...) Government will, instead, treat the SDGs as part of its National Vision and Agenda for Transformation to achieve key goals of the process. The conference ended with a number of tentative recommendations. One entailed plans to set up, or embed within existing institutions, a multi-sectoral body which would be inclusive of all stakeholders. This body would be the Institutional and Accountability Framework for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Liberia. Its key functions would include, among other things:

- Developing a communication strategy for creating awareness of the SDGs, bearing in mind the use of Liberia's local languages, sign languages and Braille for the visually impaired, and using radio, talk shows, drama, workshops and other forms of communication,
- Ensuring that the country will build technical and institutional capacity for generating data and information for use at national and sub-national levels,
- Facilitating and mobilizing resources,
- Monitoring, reviewing, following up and reporting, under country implementation of the SDGs.

Another conclusion drawn from the meeting is that there is a need to scale up dissemination and dialogue on the SDGs.

Finally, it was decided to support, as a matter of urgency, the development and roll-out of a statistical information management system for SDGs, and to identify specific institutions and hold them accountable for the different goals. Several stakeholders also stressed the urgent need to undertake an assessment of Liberia's readiness to use SDG data, and to provide support for the conduct of surveys such as the Household Income and Expenditure Survey and labour force surveys.

## ► WHAT COMES NEXT?

As a manifestation of Liberia's commitment to the goals and aspirations in the 2030 Agenda, a national task force has been set up to implement the SDGs. The task force is still being formed, and when it is fully set up it will be responsible for localizing the 2030 Agenda, by adapting it to the Liberian context. It will also be responsible for ensuring significant progress in the achievement of the sustainable development goals in Liberia. The National Civil Society Council of Liberia has been requested to nominate a person to be a part of the technical working group that will develop the implementation strategy.

The Liberian government has announced that the enthusiasm from the international community and partners for the SDGs provides an incentive and opportunity to achieve the much-needed alignment of various plans and strategies. The first important step will be next year, with the updating of the National Plan. However, multiple challenges have been identified in relation to the domestication of the SDGs in Liberia, one being that the forthcoming national election will call for a good deal of effort and attention from different actors.

The government has announced that its primary source of financing will be domestic resource mobilization, which must be strengthened. The government is planning to take the steps necessary to improve the mobilization of domestic resources in the next budget, in order to secure the revenue to finance the plan. How this will be done has not yet been clarified. Unfortunately, the recent Ebola crisis has undermined Liberia's capacity to mobilize domestic resources. The government in its Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan has acknowledged the significant negative impact of the Ebola outbreak on the country's governance system development plan. Liberia's revenue will decline by about 16%, agricultural sector growth by over 2% and manufacturing by about 5%. All these outlooks indicate that the country's GDP will be significantly affected and that the implementation of the national development plan (the AfT) will be slowed down. This is a real challenge that should be taken into consideration.

### **Civil society engagement**

Liberian civil society organizations are currently working to create a national CSO consortium on the 2030 Agenda. Several organizations have also participated in consultations with the government on setting up a national technical working group on the SDGs. Civil society is working to raise awareness of the SDGs, to advocate for their key SDG priorities, and to monitor and review the work done by the government. National civil society can play a crucial role in helping to make the SDGs a reality. Civil society can be part of a large network of service providers, particularly in terms of delivering welfare services. In addition to the direct provision of services, a key role for civil society in Liberia is the monitoring role, aiming at ensuring transparency and inclusivity.

# SOUTH AFRICA

It is important to recall that South Africa was the co-chair of the Group of 77 (G-77) countries and China during the intergovernmental negotiations for the 2030 Agenda, and hence played an important role. South African civil society was very active and engaged fruitfully with the South African government, particularly the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, throughout the negotiations. Since the adoption of the Agenda, the South African CSO working group has, however, had a limited interaction with the government.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

The South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is mandated to coordinate the implementation, follow-up and review of the SDGs. The follow-up and review will be integrated into the existing national process of monitoring and evaluation (and reporting) on national development indicators.



**POPULATION:** 54, 77 MILLION (2015)  
**CAPITAL CITY:** PRETORIA, CAPE TOWN, AND BLOEMFONTEIN  
**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC  
**GDP:** \$350.1 BILLION (2015)  
**GDP GROWTH:** 1.5 %  
**INCOME LEVEL:** UPPER MIDDLE (OECD)  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 62.3 YEARS  
**LITERACY:** 93.7 (2012)  
**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:** 0.666 (2015)  
**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.63 (2015)

The South African government claims that the implementation of SDGs has started, as most of the SDG targets and indicators are aligned with both South Africa's national development plan (NDP) and the current medium-term implementation framework (MTSF 2014-2019). The government stresses that there is a strong degree of alignment between the SDGs and the national development plan's Vision 2030 and the MTSF. It is currently in a process of further aligning the NDP and MTSF with the SDGs and with the first ten-year implementation plan for Agenda 2063, the African Union's agreed vision and action plan for the development of Africa by 2063.

The government further does not see a need for policy, legal or institutional reforms or alignment: the necessary policies and legal and institutional frameworks are already in place for the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. There will not be prioritization of the SDG goals, since the government believes that the integrated SDGs well mirrors South Africa's development priorities, as encapsulated in the NDP and the MTSF, and which aim to

eliminate poverty and to reduce inequality and unemployment by 2030.

A key challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 is that some of the global indicators have to be interpreted in a national context. Opportunities include the chance to develop a more integrated and harmonized approach to the implementation of the various agendas at all levels, in the context of national priorities. This includes the local government level, where relevant targets will be included in the local economic development strategies and the integrated development plans of local municipalities.

### Financing the 2030 Agenda

Global economic difficulties have impacted negatively on South Africa's largely commodity-based economy. Innovative ways to finance the implementation of the national development plan and the 2030 Agenda are being sought. The implementation of the SDGs is accounted for under the current medium-term strategic framework as part of the implementation of national targets, and will hence be reflected in the budgeting processes.

Efforts are currently being made to increase the mobilization of domestic resources to finance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. National civil society has pointed out that it is important for South Africa to

start ring-fencing social spending and to reduce the waste of resources, and also to contain public service wages, in proportion to the increase in public revenues.

### **Civil society participation**

The current strategy to involve non-state actors, including civil society and private sector. Some is through respective national departments have been given responsibility for ensuring that South Africa meets the relevant goals and targets. These ministries hold regular consultations with relevant civil society organizations in their fields of work, with the aim of ensuring proper consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Strong emphasis is put on the participation of civil society organizations in the domestication of the SDG indicators. A National Coordinating Committee (NCC) has been set up by the South African National Statistics Office. The role of the coordinating committee is to give overall policy direction and to report on the implementation of the SDGs. The NCC consists of high-ranking staff from data-providing departments, and representatives from UN agencies and civil society. CSOs are also represented in sectoral working groups, the technical working group and report-writing groups.

National civil society organizations, however, do not see the strategy for effective CSO participation in the implementation of Agenda 2030 being sufficient. Civil society recommends setting up a centralized CSO platform to ensure effective and periodic engagement between the state and CSOs. This could ensure that the voices of grassroots communities are taken into consideration in the implementation processes. The process for aligning and mainstreaming national strategies and priorities should be participatory, and should involve CSOs. Up to now, CSOs have not been invited to participate in these processes. National CSOs do not regard the current system of involving them through line ministries as being effective. The mandated department coordinating the implementation of the SDGs needs to involve CSOs directly to ensure that citizens' voices and aspirations are taken into account.

### **Follow-up and review**

The existing monitoring and evaluation structures and functions will also take into account the goals and targets in the SDGs and Agenda 2063, as part of the national implementation of development targets.

The parliament will have a key role to play, since government departments report to parliament on the implementation of development targets, including the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Departments present their strategic plans and annual performance plans, as well as quarterly and annual progress reports, to the parliamentary portfolio committees.

Finally, civil society continues to stress the need to strengthen CSO participation in national follow-up and review. Only then can citizen's voices be brought into the process.

# SWEDEN

*We want to be one of the best countries in the world when it comes to implementing the goals<sup>1</sup>* **ARDALAN SHEKARABI, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.**

In 2015, Sweden was ranked as the OECD country that has the best starting point for delivering on the 2030 Agenda.<sup>2</sup> The Swedish government has declared it wants to be a leader in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has said that this calls for a broad engagement from different actors.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

The Agenda was officially launched in Sweden on 18 January 2016 at a conference with hundreds of participants from different constituencies and from across the country. Sweden is in the midst of gearing itself up to implement the 2030 Agenda, and is currently in a phase of deliberation and revising various national policy documents with the aim of aligning them with the 2030 Agenda. Aligning the policies to capture fully the complexity and ambition of the 2030 Agenda is proving to be quite a demanding task since multiple strategies are being reviewed and all ministries and many national and local stakeholders are involved. To date, there has also been a strong focus on designing structures, organizing internally and deciding on a division of responsibilities.



**POPULATION:** 9.696 MILLION  
**CAPITAL CITY:** STOCKHOLM  
**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** DEMOCRATIC  
PARLIAMENTARY MONARCHY  
**GDP:** \$571.1 BILLION (2015)  
**GDP GROWTH:** 4.1 % (2015)  
**INCOME LEVEL:** HIGH (OECD)  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 82 YEARS  
**LITERACY:** 100 %  
**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**  
0.916 (2013)  
**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.27 (2014)

### Responsibilities and organization

The Swedish government has stressed that implementing the 2030 Agenda is the responsibility of the whole government, however, two ministers have been given specific responsibilities. The minister for public administration, at the Ministry of Finance, is responsible for national implementation, while the minister for international development cooperation and climate (who is also the deputy prime minister), at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the international aspects. In May 2016 the government was restructured, and since then it has not been clear how the prime minister's office will be taking on the 2030 Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda has boosted cross-departmental collaboration. An **interdepartmental working group** (IDA) on the 2030 Agenda has been set up, together with a smaller one, led by the state secretaries from the two ministries with special responsibility for the

2030 Agenda, and from the Ministry of the Environment and Energy. Cross-departmental collaboration is not a new way of working, but it has proven to be successful and is seen by both the government and CSOs as essential in order to tackle the integrated nature of the Agenda. Swedish CSOs have welcomed this as a step in bringing the national and international dimensions closer together.

The government has appointed an **independent national committee**, consisting of seven individuals representing different sectors, including academia, local communities, the private sector and civil society. It has four key responsibilities: to develop a "gap analysis" of existing Swedish policies and practices and their alignment with the SDGs; to propose an overarching action plan for implementing the Agenda; to consult and engage with various national actors, and to present innovative solutions and tools for communicating on and sharing information about the 2030 Agenda. When announced, the committee received mixed responses from national stakeholders. CSOs initially criticized the composition of the committee for being too focused on national level, at the risk of missing the international perspective, as well as core principles that the Swedish government has pushed for in the negotiations. CSOs have stressed that the basis for

<sup>1</sup> Press release, <http://www.government.se/press-releases/2016/03/government-appoints-delegation-for-swedens-implementation-of-2030-agenda/>, March 2016

<sup>2</sup> Christian Kroll, Sustainable Development Goals: Are the rich countries ready? 2015

the committee's work must be the core principles of the 2030 Agenda, including human rights, peace and security, inequality, gender equality, and the three dimensions of sustainable development. To date, there has been no formal dialogue between the committee and civil society.

### **Policies, tools and new initiatives**

Two policies that are often highlighted in relation to the 2030 Agenda are **Sweden's Policy for Global Development** (PGD) and the **Swedish Feminist Foreign Policy**.

**The Swedish Government has announced that its Policy for Global Development** (PGD) will be one of the key tools for achieving the 2030 Agenda. It has a common objective for all policy areas: to ensure policy coherence and contribute to global development while balancing the conflicts of interest between different policy areas and the PGD's guiding principles. The policy states that three perspectives must permeate every part of every government policy: a rights perspective based on international human rights conventions, poor people's perspective, and gender equality.

The first annual PGD and Agenda 2030 action plans for all government ministries were recently finalized. Civil society has recognized this as a step in the right direction for adopting a "whole of government" approach. The action plans have not been shared with the public, which, according to national CSOs, makes it difficult to evaluate or follow up on the delivery of plans. In May 2016, the government presented its biannual PGD report to the parliament. The report presents the work the government has done on implementing its PGD and the 2030 Agenda in 2014-2016, and identifies goals to be achieved by 2017.

In 2015, the Swedish government adopted the world's first-ever **Feminist Foreign Policy**. The policy states that Sweden's feminist government has made gender equality a key priority. It sets out an action plan for contributing to gender equality in 2015-2018, linking it to the 2030 Agenda.<sup>3</sup>

### **Integrated agenda and thematic priorities**

The Swedish government stresses its commitment to implementing the entire 2030 Agenda, respecting its integrated and indivisible nature. One ambition that fits well into the Swedish government's priorities for the 2030 Agenda is that of becoming "**the first fossil-free welfare state**", an ambition that ties together the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The government has expressed that the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda will focus on the SDGs where Sweden is currently lagging behind. Specific priorities that have been mentioned are achieving equality, providing education of a high standard, and creating jobs. In a study on SDGs in OECD countries, energy efficiency, terrestrial biome protection, and education were identified as areas where improvement is needed in Sweden.<sup>4</sup> At the global level, Sweden intends to continue working on issues where it has a long-standing engagement and can add value. Priorities include democracy and human rights, peace, gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, decent work, and climate. Since the government's action plan for the 2030 Agenda has not yet been drafted, we have yet to see what these priorities will be in practice.

### **Three thematic initiatives can be linked to Sweden's engagement on the 2030 Agenda:**

- The Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth. The Global Deal is a multi-stakeholder partnership, initiated by Sweden and aiming to achieve decent work and promote inclusive growth, and to contribute to SDG 8.
- Sweden and Fiji have launched an initiative to protect the oceans, and achieve SDG 14. Conserve and sustainably use the ocean, seas and marine resources.
- Sweden is a "pathfinder country" in the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. The partnership focuses on SDG 16.2, to "end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children".

3 Swedish Foreign Service Action Plan for Feminist Foreign Policy, <http://www.government.se/information-material/2015/12/swedish-foreign-service-action-plan-for-feminist-foreign-policy-20152018-including-focus-areas-for-2016/>, 2015

## ► WHAT COMES NEXT?

By November 2016, the national committee on the 2030 Agenda will develop a “gap analysis”. By March 2017 it will present its proposal for an overarching national action plan for the agenda.

A new policy for development cooperation is underway, and the draft policy presents the following core perspectives for Swedish development cooperation: poor people’s perspective, a human rights perspective, environment and climate, conflict prevention, and global gender equality.

The government has also begun to engage with national administrative authorities. A request has been sent from the government to over 80 authorities, asking them to identify what they can do to help put the agenda into practice. Their responses will inform the national action plan for the SDGs.

Sweden intends to update and make use of existing structures, and one of its tools for this is the central budget. It aims to finance the achievement of the 2030 Agenda within the regular budget, while recognizing the need to allocate funds differently. There is currently no financing plan, but the Swedish National Financial Management Authority (ESV) has been asked to produce an overview showing the extent to which the SDGs are aligned with the budget.

The government is discussing how to finance the 2030 Agenda and deliver on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Priorities mentioned are tax, advancing human rights in business, climate finance, policy coherence for development, and ODA. The government has been criticized for recent negative trends, including the increased inflation of ODA, with 28% of Swedish ODA in 2016 being allocated to financing domestic refugee costs. CSOs have also criticized Sweden for not taking firm action to combat tax evasion from developing countries.

In a survey for the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Sweden has promised to take part in the global follow-up and review on the SDGs, and to contribute at least twice to the voluntary reviews requested by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, while also aiming to make national reviews an inclusive process. No method for national review has yet been developed.

### **The role of other stakeholders**

Sweden stresses the importance of involving stakeholders and creating local ownership. There is currently no specific strategy for including stakeholders, but open consultations and collaboration are a regular occurrence. To date, parliamentarians have not been systematically involved, and several parliamentarians have expressed a wish to be more involved.

Swedish CSOs have taken part in the 2030 Agenda process since 2012. In the negotiations leading up to the adoption, there was a regular, constructive dialogue between CSOs and the government. CSOs working on international development and sustainable development continue to work together on the 2030 Agenda in a working group coordinated by CONCORD Sweden, a Swedish CSO platform.

# TANZANIA

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

### Aligning national development strategies with the 2030 Agenda

For Tanzania, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development comes at an interesting time in national politics, with a new government in place, a new five-year national development strategy (2016-2020), a new poverty reduction strategy for Zanzibar (MKUZA 2016-2020), a new United Nations Development Assistance Plan II for Tanzania, and the merger of the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance.



**POPULATION:** 51 MILLION (2015)

**CAPITAL CITY:** DODOMA

**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** UNITARY PRESIDENTIAL  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

**GDP:** \$44.9 BILLION (2015)

**GDP GROWTH:** 7 % (2014)

**INCOME LEVEL:** LOW (OECD)

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 61.7 YEARS

**LITERACY:** 70.6 %

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:** 0.521 (2014)

**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.37 (2013)

Since 2000, Tanzania's development planning process has been guided by the Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025. TDV is a national blueprint for economic transformation to middle-income country status by 2025. In the past, the vision has been reflected in multiple mid-term plans. From 2016 these multiple mid-term plans (national strategy for growth and reduction of poverty, and five-year development plan) have been consolidated into a single five-year national development plan, FYDP-II (2016/17-2020/21), to maximize on synergies.

The second national five-year development plan, whose theme is "nurturing industrialization for economic transformation and human development", was launched on 7 June 2016. It was informed by the processes and outcomes of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African

Union's Agenda 2063. However, the second national five-year development plan mainly focused on industrialization for economic transformation and human development, something which makes the integration of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris climate agreement a bit challenging.

### National coordination on SDG implementation, follow-up and monitoring

The Ministry of Finance and Planning is in the driving seat in coordinating the national framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. There have been conscious attempts to make the process inclusive, but they have been hampered by the lack of an institutional framework with a balance of the three dimensions of sustainability (such as a sustainable development commission), which would coordinate and harmonize efforts, and the absence of other non-state actors. More emphasis must be put on including the environmental and social dimensions in the process in a more meaningful way.

More effort and a greater policy alignment are needed to figure out how to best use the second national five-year development plan as the main vehicle for implementing both the 2030 Agenda and the African Agenda 2063, in order to avoid multiple national implementation plans and unnecessary duplication.

With a seat in the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators, the National Bureau of Statistics in Tanzania is driving the process of developing and localizing SDG indicators and measuring them in a local context. The National Bureau of Statistics is keen on embracing the data revolution, including by using modern technology to improve the tracking of development initiatives (such as the SDGs) in Tanzania. Preparatory work is currently being done to set up a national dashboard with statistics for tracking development progress in Tanzania in real time.

While the significant role of local government authorities and national parliaments in implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 have been recognized, their involvement and engagement in this work has not been very satisfactory so far. It is only recently that Tanzania's parliament began to consider setting up a Parliament Caucus Group to oversee sustainable development issues, amongst others. More efforts are needed to ensure that local government authorities and the national parliament are part and parcel of the national implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

A multi-stakeholder platform involving the government of Tanzania, think tanks, academia, civil society, the private sector, the UN system and development partners has been set up, and it meets regularly for national consultations. Tanzanian civil society believes that this platform needs to be made formal, and more inclusive – in its composition, agenda setting and decision making – in an effort to increase ownership of it and to empower different groups of stakeholders to play an active role. Through the platform, the first draft framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has been prepared. The draft framework includes the following aspects: the domestication and localization of the SDGs in Tanzania, communication and dissemination, a research agenda, and ideas on follow-up and monitoring of the Agenda.

### **Policy coherence for sustainable development**

To date, there has been no analysis of the policy framework in Tanzania or how it impacts on sustainable development efforts. This is something that came up at the last national multi-stakeholder consultation meeting, however, where it was proposed to divide the task of analysing the policy framework between the members, based on their areas of expertise and interest. The mapping and allocation exercise is currently ongoing, and the plan is to finish the assessment and analysis before the end of the year.

### **Civil society coordination**

Tanzanian civil society organizations have come together through the National Civil Society Platform on Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 to self-organize and coordinate civil society efforts towards the implementation, and follow-up and monitoring striving to leverage on existing expertise and resources, and reduce unnecessary duplication, and while ensuring inclusivity. The platform uses thematic approach inline with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The platform is now documenting Tanzania CSOs contribution towards the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of both Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 in Tanzania. The platform is recognized by the Government of United Republic of Tanzania; the UN system; and development partners as an official platform for engagement with Tanzania Civil Society Organization on Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

### **Financing the 2030 Agenda**

With the exception of a big push towards domestic resource mobilization by the fifth government of Tanzania, financing of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is still not very clear, although financial commitments need to be secured to enable its effective and efficient implementation in Tanzania.

# TIMOR-LESTE

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

The 2030 Agenda has been formally recognized and adopted in Timor-Leste. The government has announced its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the National Assembly (parliament) has also adopted the SDGs. In order to deliver on the commitment, the Prime Minister's Office has set up an SDG Working Group with representatives from all ministries. At present, the working group has no participants from civil society.

The prime minister has also recently published a report indicating some priorities for the next steps in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The report says that the government will be using some of the G7+ indicators from the 2015 technical meeting on SDGs implementation and monitoring, which took place in Nairobi in December 2015.<sup>1</sup> The report also envisages a consultation with village leaders, CSOs and donor



**POPULATION:** 1.2 MILLION (2015)

**CAPITAL CITY:** DILI

**POLITICAL SYSTEM:**

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

**GDP:** \$2.62 BILLION

**GDP GROWTH:** 4.3 % (2015)

**INCOME LEVEL:**

LOWER MIDDLE (OECD)

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 67.7 YEARS

**LITERACY:** 67.5 %

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**

0.595 (2014)

**GINI COEFFICIENT:** N/A

countries. In addition, the prime minister has taken the initiative of consulting with other stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and religious leaders, and the first such consultation was held on 9 June.

And of course, as in all countries, there are many pre-SDG government policies, activities and initiatives which should help in achieving the SDGs, for example in education (the new basic curriculum, which includes permaculture gardens for schools, is excellent), health, agriculture (the Ministry of Agriculture has a Zero Hunger Programme) and gender equality. There is heavy investment in infrastructure (although see the Commentary below.)

Timor-Leste has made very impressive progress towards peace and stability, especially considering that in 2006 communal violence was so severe that 15% of the population was displaced. (Timor-Leste was particularly active in pro-

promoting SDG 16.) Compared to many countries, there is a good deal of freedom of speech and assembly.

Unfortunately, the picture is not all rosy. Timor-Leste faces several challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Timor-Leste's status as a lower middle-income country derives almost entirely from very large (though declining) per capita petrochemical revenues, and gives a dramatically misleading image of the true situation of many of the population. For example, Timor-Leste is fourth highest on the 2015 Global Hunger Index, with 57.7% children under the age of five stunted and 26.9% of the population undernourished.

The 2016 general state budget does not at all fit in with SDG priorities. The budget is USD 1.56 billion (partly from declining oil and gas royalties, but increasingly from the "Petroleum Fund" – in other words, the country's savings). This may seem very substantial for just 1.2 million people, but the bulk of the budget is being spent on a small number of very large infrastructural projects, e.g. an effort to establish a gas processing facility on the south coast, and an effort to build a major container port. The idea put forward by the government is that these investments in infrastructure will generate income for the country in the future, but no clear business case has been made for them, and many observers question their viability. Additionally, as a result of investments like these, education gets just 8% of the 2016 budget (compared

<sup>1</sup> Press release from G7+ technical meeting on SDGs implementation and monitoring, <http://www.g7plus.org/en/press-release/g7-held-technical-meeting-implementing-and-monitoring-sdgs-nairobi-kenya>, 8 December 2015

to a global norm of 20% for education), health 4.2%, agriculture 2%, and water and sanitation 1.2%. The education and health budgets were actually cut, so that, for example, elements of the exciting new basic curriculum, such as permaculture gardens, have never in fact been introduced.

Timor-Leste has progressive policies and laws on gender equality, e.g. full equality for women under the Constitution, 30% of candidates proposed by political parties in the National Assembly elections must be women, and since 2010 there has been a law on domestic violence. In reality, however, the situation of women is changing very slowly. Only 2% of village chiefs are women, even though they are much more important in ordinary life than National Assembly members.<sup>2</sup> Research by Plan International in 2015 shows that many rural people do not even know that domestic violence is illegal, and it also shows that police are reluctant to enforce the law. Asia Foundation research in 2016 shows that extremely high levels of violence against women – amongst the world’s worst – continue in Timor-Leste.

## ► WHAT COMES NEXT?

At the time of writing it is not clear how the government proposes to address the SDGs. One paper has been published: entitled “Implementing the SDGs”, it speaks of “aligning the SDGs with the (2011) Strategic Development Plan” and cites the very limited list of indicators decided upon by the G7+ nations at their Nairobi conference (copied below). Such an approach would leave huge gaps by excluding targets for education, health, sustainable food production, gender equality, deforestation, marine resources, and so on.

There have been some recent indications, however, that the government may propose a more comprehensive approach with a strong emphasis at first on education, health, nutrition, gender equality and agriculture, in addition to infrastructure.

The government’s paper on “Implementing the SDGs” focuses on how to make the wider public more aware of the SDGs. This would be welcomed by civil society, as there is currently very little knowledge of the SDGs in the country, even amongst CSOs, who have therefore not made any great effort to inform the public about them. There have been some initiatives, however. For example, Plan International, PERMATIL and La’o Hamutuk held a major Civil Society Round Table on 30 June 2016, to raise awareness among CSOs about the SDGs and their significance, and to make recommendations to government and civil society.

It is believed that the next critical point for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Timor-Leste will be the 2017 general state budget. The discussions on this are starting now, with publication in November. Will it change the current investment pattern, allocating substantial investment to achieving the SDGs, and not just infrastructure?

<sup>2</sup> Plan’s Women’s and Girls’ Participation in Local Governance Program, working with Timorese women’s CSOs, has dramatically increased the number of women who will stand in the elections for village chief in 2017 in its target district. Plan belongs to a campaign by a large women’s CSO, “I’m 100% Ready”, which has the same aim nationwide. The participation programme is funded by the Folke Bernadotte Academy, Plan Sweden and Plan Sponsors.

# TUNISIA

In Tunisia, it is the government that is responsible for implementing the SDGs. The Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the National Commission for Sustainable Development are leading the work on SDG implementation under the auspices of the government.

## ► IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA TO DATE

In December 2015 the Tunisian National Development Plan 2016-2020 was finalized, and in January 2016 the government started work on implementing the SDGs. In an “orientation document” it published reflections on the 2016-2020 national development plan, which focuses on all aspects of sustainable development, particularly in the chapter entitled “Green economy: a guarantee of sustainable development”.

Progress on implementing the 2030 Agenda, however, has so far been slow. In Tunisia, the Arab Spring resulted in a transition to democratic governance, but only two years have passed since the first free presidential election and the adoption of the new constitution.



**POPULATION:** 11.154 MILLION (2014)

**CAPITAL CITY:** TUNIS

**POLITICAL SYSTEM:** PARLIAMENTARY REPUBLIC

**GDP:** 43.6 BILLION USD (2015)

**GDP GROWTH:** 0.8 % (2015)

**INCOME LEVEL:** UPPER MIDDLE

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 75.9 YEARS

**LITERACY:** 81.8 %

**2015 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX:**

0,721 (2014)

**GINI COEFFICIENT:** 0.36 (2014)

The changing political landscape makes the implementation of the 2030 Agenda even more challenging. Because of other ongoing political changes and struggles, the government has not classified the SDGs as a priority, announcing instead that security, employment, and economic growth are its most pressing concerns. They include only two of the 17 SDGs: Goal 8, to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, and Goal 10, to reduce inequality within and among countries.

The National Commission for Sustainable Development (CNDD) is the main body in Tunisia when it comes to working out the overall approach to sustainable development, drawing up strategic guidelines in this area and ensuring the implementation of various programmes, in particular the 2030 Agenda. The CNDD was initially set up to develop and imple-

ment a strategy and to draw up a national action plan: this has resulted in National Agenda 21, the National Action Plan for the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Twenty-First Century.

The CNDD works as a forum for consultation and coordination between different national stakeholders through its various activities, which aim to reconcile economic and social development, encourage the rational use of natural resources, and promote a harmonic relationship between humans and the planet.

Since the adoption of the SDGs and the creation of the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, the role of the CNDD has been to work on SDG implementation, and in particular to deliver on the following tasks: Developing a programme of priority actions for sustainable development for the national development plan;

- Monitoring the implementation of three particular UN conventions: the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- Developing indicators of sustainable development;
- Developing guidelines on sustainability in some sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, industry and energy;
- Conducting strategic studies: on trade and the environment, the environment and employment, assessing the cost of environmental degradation, environmental performance, assessing the cost of water degradation, and sustainable water management in Tunisia.

## **Stakeholder participation**

The Tunisian government has stressed that “without a real partnership with all stakeholders we can’t achieve the goals”, and it has promised to involve CSOs throughout the process. However, up to now this has not been the reality on the ground, and the slowness of the work done by the government, the government’s priorities and administrative difficulties all seem to challenge CSO involvement in the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

The new Tunisian constitution, which was adopted in 2014, provides for the creation of a body on sustainable development and the rights of future generations. Unfortunately, the parliament has not yet begun discussing the law to establish this body. Civil society and some political parties have started lobbying for this law to be introduced, and have begun to build a coalition to pressurize the parliament and government into publishing a draft of the law as soon as possible. The coalition has also asked to be included in the process of drafting comments and suggestions for amendments, to make it a more inclusive and sustainable law.

At parliamentary level, one deputy has launched a parliamentary initiative on sustainable development, which will now work on the implementation of the SDGs. It has been announced that a national conference entitled “The Role of Parliamentarians in Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” will be held soon, for the purpose of engaging the parliament in the work on the 2030 Agenda.

## **Civil society collaboration and concerns**

National civil society recognizes that it has a key role to play and important contributions to make to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Civil society also believes in the value of a partnership between different national stakeholders. National CSOs have made two attempts to form a national civil society consortium to work together on the 2030 Agenda. They have not been successful, however, and no national consortium has yet been created, but the discussions amongst CSOs continue. CSOs agree that, once in place, the consortium must include an external partnership with the government and other national stakeholders.

Tunisian CSOs believe they have an important role to play in implementing the 2030 Agenda, both as consultants and as change makers on the ground. Many organizations have said that they would like to engage in the national high-level meetings, and to contribute to the discussions and decision-making with ideas, proposals and suggestions. There are multiple challenges facing CSOs, however. For one, many national organizations are in need of funding, in order to be able to engage in awareness-raising campaigns, projects and activities aimed at contributing to the success of the 2030 Agenda.

National civil society recommends that the government should organize outreach activities for the purpose of mobilizing citizens on the SDGs. Tunisian CSOs have also stressed that it is important for the Tunisian government to collaborate with other countries, including those in the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda. Finally, they stress the critical importance of allocating sufficient funding to enable them to work on implementing the SDGs.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter we, the civil society group on the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda, present recommendations for next steps to be taken by both governments and civil society in the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda. The recommendations are based on the findings in our review of the High-Level Group (HLG), the national case studies, and our analysis of what needs to be done to make the 2030 Agenda 2030 a reality.

We hope that our recommendations prove to be useful and generate ideas, discussions and actions among governments and civil society.

We present 12 recommendations: 10 for governments and 2 for civil society.

# 10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS

## INCLUSIVE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

The success of the 2030 Agenda lies in its timely implementation. For this to happen, governments must involve all actors, right from the planning stage and throughout the whole process.

The national case studies show that, where inclusive civil society participation is concerned, the situation varies across the nine countries. All countries have committed to engaging civil society in their work on the 2030 Agenda, yet the case studies show that most of these countries have not yet formalized or introduced clear mechanisms for doing so. Nevertheless, several potentially promising initiatives for civil society engagement have been highlighted in the national case studies. In Tanzania, an informal multi-stakeholder platform involving government, civil society and other stakeholders has been set up. To launch the 2030 Agenda in Liberia, early this year the government hosted a conference in which a range of stakeholders were involved, and where President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf clearly stressed the Liberian government's commitment to including stakeholders in the work to achieve the SDGs.

**1** Formalize stakeholder engagement to ensure the effective, inclusive and meaningful participation of all people, including civil society and other stakeholders, in the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. To make this possible, governments must fully respect civil and political rights, including freedom of speech and assembly, media freedom, full transparency, and the right to access information.

**2** Give guidance to all stakeholders, including the private sector, and, in line with their responsibilities, hold them accountable for delivering on the 2030 Agenda and upholding international standards and guidelines on human rights and environmental sustainability.

## POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY COHERENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Most of the nine governments in the HLG have been quite active in aligning existing policies with the requirements of the 2030 Agenda. More work remains to be done, however, as most existing national policies are not ambitious or coherent enough to contribute to the full achievement of the SDGs. So far, there seems to be a general focus in the nine countries on reducing poverty and promoting economic growth, and in some countries on basic environmental protection policies. The case studies from the four African countries, for instance – Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania and Tunisia – show that it can be difficult to align Agenda 2030 with the regional Africa 2063 strategy, as in some cases they have competing interests.

The national case studies also reveal a lack of policy coherence for sustainable development, meaning that far from all policies currently support sustainable development, while some even conflict with it.

**3** Make sure that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is led at the highest possible level, and that a “whole of government approach” is ensured, providing a clear allocation of responsibilities, a division of labour and a working system of checks and balances. The approach must ensure sufficient financial and human capacity to enable each sector to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It must also offer opportunities for engagement and enable leadership at the sub-national level, and it indicate a clear division of labour between the national and subnational levels.

**4** Align all policies to support SDG implementation, balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development. It is essential to put in place coordinating committees, at the level of both government and parliament, with a mandate to check all legislation and policies for their SDG compatibility.

## FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA

Putting the 2030 Agenda into practice will be possible only if the political commitment is translated into an allocation of resources, both financial and non-financial, for its implementation, follow-up and monitoring. This includes respecting and delivering on the commitments to finance sustainable development that governments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Unfortunately, the national case studies show that none of the nine countries has yet put in place a clear strategy showing how it proposes to finance the sustainable development goals.

Several of the governments say that the SDGs will simply be financed within their existing national budgets, but they do not clarify what this would imply. No new initiatives relating to the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have been announced in any of the nine countries. The Liberian government mentions that it will focus on increasing the mobilization of domestic resources, while the government in Timor-Leste has highlighted the importance of receiving support from international donors.

**5** Map the financial resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda in the various national contexts and further its achievement globally. Based on those mappings, develop an ambitious and transparent financing strategy which will allow other stakeholders to review their commitments.

**6** Take practical steps to strengthen national regulation and international cooperation aimed at combating illicit financial flows, tax evasion and corruption. To this end, HLG members should work jointly to actively push for the establishment of a fully representative institutional arrangement for international tax matters, and support the establishment of a new intergovernmental body for cooperation on tax matters, under UN auspices. Finally, they should commit to increasing financial transparency through public country-by-country reporting of corporate tax information, and public beneficial ownership registries.

## STRONG INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

This report reveals that, in some of the countries, the idea of creating new or additional structures seems to inspire fear or resistance. Several countries claim that there is no need to change current structures.

Experience tells us that it is crucial to institutionalize sustainable development in order for the three dimensions of sustainability to work together, and to prevent the unintentional prioritizing of one dimension over the others. The demonstration of political commitment should therefore go hand in hand with the institutionalization of sustainable development.

This report demonstrates that some good steps have been taken to institutionalize the agenda at the national levels. Colombia, for example, has managed to give a practical demonstration of the significant role a sustainable development commission can play. Timor-Leste has established an interdepartmental working group with representatives from all ministries, while Sweden has set up a national committee for the 2030 Agenda with seven individual members from different stakeholder groups.

Furthermore, the role of the national parliaments is key for oversight, long-term ownership and accountability. We therefore welcome the fact that Germany has set up a parliamentary committee to oversee sustainable development, even if it does need to be strengthened in order to fulfil this role.

**7** Put in place national institutional mechanisms that draw together and coordinate the three dimensions of sustainability, and that include representatives from government, civil society and other stakeholders.

**8** Create national parliamentary Agenda 2030 oversight committees, to ensure an effective checks and balances system, and hence stronger accountability mechanisms.

## INCLUSIVE, TRANSPARENT AND COMPREHENSIVE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

Without inclusive, transparent and comprehensive follow-up and review, and strong accountability frameworks, the 2030 Agenda is in danger of being nothing but an empty promise. Other key principles of the Agenda are to “leave no one behind”, for the follow-up and review to be “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people”, and for it to “support reporting by all relevant stakeholders” (2030 Agenda, para. 74).

At the global level, the voluntary national reviews will be the main official tool for monitoring progress and reviewing the Agenda, but these global reports will not be enough to ensure that the follow-up and review are regular, transparent and comprehensive. Of the members of the High-Level Group, only Germany and Colombia have volunteered to report to the 2016 High-Level Political Forum.

Each country must make a commitment to going further than the global reporting requires them to. The case studies nevertheless show that none of the nine countries has set up national mechanisms for follow-up or review of the 2030 Agenda. High-Level Group members have a key role to play by showing their own commitment to making their national follow-up and reviews truly inclusive, transparent and comprehensive. They can also play a critical role in pushing for this at the regional and global levels.

**9** In the spirit of “leaving no one behind”, the members of the High-Level Group should ensure that follow-up and review in their respective countries are open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people, and they should support reporting by civil society and other relevant stakeholders.

**10** All the members of the High-Level Group should commit to regular (at least biannual) reviews of national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which should involve contributions from civil society, national parliaments and other stakeholders.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

All actors must contribute if we are to reach the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. Civil society will be crucial: it is clear that if civil society is active at the national level, with the means and space to act, it will play a vital role in reaching the SDGs. It is the responsibility of governments to reach these goals, and to respect and promote civil and political rights. It is civil society's responsibility, however, to contribute to this effort and to be accountable for its actions in doing so. One of its key roles will be to act as a watchdog, making sure that governments fulfil their commitments to the SDGs.

**The findings of this report show that civil society's contribution at the national level will be vital in all countries of the world.**

However, a look at the nine countries in the High-Level Group shows that their degree of engagement varies, and that not all members of civil society are able to urge their governments to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, because they face legislative and other obstacles introduced by those same governments.

The complex and integrated nature of the agenda requires civil society to work together across thematic areas as well as across local and national borders. The civil society group on the High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda is one successful example of how civil society organizations can come together, strengthen each other and speak together in a strong voice. The current situation in Brazil, as described in the case study, is therefore our shared concern, and we will watch what happens, supporting our colleagues there in keep the space they have fought for over so many years.

### WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT CIVIL SOCIETY:

**1** Work in solidarity, by collaborating and building alliances across thematic areas and borders. Civil society worldwide must support CSOs in those countries where civil and political freedoms are restricted.

**2** The members of civil society who are working on the 2030 Agenda must take responsibility for ensuring that the grassroots are kept informed and are able to contribute in a meaningful way. This means building strong collaboration between CSOs at the national level, making sure that organized civil society is well connected to the grass roots, in a relationship that is built on mutual support and the exchange of information and ideas.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- APC-Colombia** – Presidential Agency for International Cooperation
- ABONG** – Brazilian Association of NGOs
- AfT** – Agenda for Transformation (Liberia)
- BMUB** – German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety
- BMZ** – German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
- CSD** – United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development
- CSO** – Civil society organization
- CSO HLG** – Civil society organizations' High-Level Group
- ECOSOC** – United Nations Economic and Social Council
- G-77** – The Group of 77: a loose coalition of countries that negotiate jointly in the United Nations
- GSS** – German Sustainability Strategy
- HLG** – High-Level Group on the 2030 Agenda
- HLPF** – United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
- IAEG-SDGs** – Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (United Nations)
- MDGs** – Millennium Development Goals
- MTSF** – Medium-Term Strategic Framework (South Africa)
- NCC** – National Coordinating Committee (South Africa)
- NDP** – National Development Plan (South Africa)
- NSS** – National Sustainability Strategy (Germany)
- ODA** – Official Development Assistance
- OGP** – Open Government Partnership
- PCSD** – Parliamentary Council for Sustainable Development (Germany)
- PGD** – Swedish Policy for Global Development
- Rio+20** – United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012
- SDGs** – Sustainable Development Goals
- SSCSD** – State Secretary Committee on Sustainable Development (Germany)
- TDV** – Tanzania Development Vision 2025



# THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



