

The Review Cycle & the Multi-Stakeholder Approach

March 29th 2017

Although the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the most important SDGs implementation review instance, the review and follow-up process should not be confined to that scenario. From this perspective, the National Voluntary Reviews must be followed-up after being presented at the global level to assure the accomplishment of the commitments made. This is what we named The Review Cycle.

The 2030 Agenda has established a set of common principles to guide the follow-up and review processes at all levels, among them “They will maintain a longer-term orientation, identify achievements, challenges, gaps and critical success factors and support countries in making informed policy choices. They will help to mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, support the identification of solutions and best practices and promote the coordination and effectiveness of the international development system” and “They will be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders” (§ 74).

Although in the HLPF 2016 we saw that CSOs were commentators of the National Voluntary Reviews, highlighting best practices and challenges for implementation, in most of the cases, the reviews were not built with the participation of these

organizations; which may evidence that civil society participation can be relevant only as a mere political request for the Forum’s operation. As the [Spotlight Report 2016](#) affirms, “(...) monitoring of outputs or outcomes alone is by no means sufficient. Rather, policies and policy changes (and not just outcomes) in the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda should be scrutinized.”

Also, the international architecture for follow-up and review must be strengthened and open to a multi-stakeholder participation. Regional Forums must help create tools and promote dialogue for follow-up and review for the entire review cycle, where civil society and other development actors have an important role in producing inputs and improving policies for the 2030 Agenda implementation.

Although the 2030 Agenda encourages a higher political recognizing than other past development agendas, reviewing the advances on implementation under a whole-of-society approach is a pending challenge, which is key to keep the HLPF and other regional forums relevant and action-oriented, aligned with one of their main objectives: to offer political and technical guidance. More than 20% of the member States are reporting in the HLPF 2017; so it is the right time to open the dialogue to propose actions towards strengthening VNRs review mechanisms and multi-stakeholder participation through all the review cycle.

Key questions to be addressed during the session:

- What do Governments and non-state actors require in political and institutional terms to build in the VNRs under a participatory approach?
- How can the VNRs be strengthened to become a national accountability tool?
- How can the implementation of national actions be followed-up to overcome the challenges identified by each country at its own VNR?
- What should the next steps towards the regional review forums be to integrate them as part of the review cycle?
- What are the early lessons to be taken into account to assure the application of the follow-up and review processes principles set by the 2030 Agenda in the future?

