**Intergovernmental negotiations for post-2015 development agenda**

**Backgrounder on follow-up and review, May 2015**

This background document includes key points that were raised during the Stock-take session of the intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) in January as well as issues and references related to other follow-up and review processes that could be of relevance in discussions on this part of the post-2015 development agenda process and outcome document.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**1 Key points on follow-up and review raised during the Stock-take session on January 2015**

As was pointed out by Ambassador Donoghue, Co-facilitator, in summing up the discussion at the end of the Stock-take session, this was the first opportunity for Member States to share their thoughts on follow up and review in some detail.

Following presentations from three distinguished speakers, Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza, Chairperson, African Peer Review Mechanism; Dr Marianne Beisheim, German Institute for International and Security Affairs and Pali Lehohla, Statistician-General for South Africa, a number of countries contributed to the discussions. The main points raised, as included in the Co-facilitators summary were:

* Many member states reiterated the importance of an open, transparent and inclusive follow up and review framework for the delivery of the post-2015 development agenda;
* Many emphasised that, for the agenda to have legitimacy, multiple stakeholders must be involved in the review process;
* Some were cautious about the use of terms such as accountability, monitoring etc;
* Some emphasised that no target should be considered met unless met by all relevant income and other groupings;
* Many suggested that the framework for reviewing post 2015 commitments must be universal, voluntary and non-selective. It should be built upon existing review mechanisms and processes. Many highlighted the role of the UN System in following up on the Agenda, as well as that of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF)

Specific statements were made on follow-up and review by a number of countries. Those easily identified are set out below by region.

**Latin America and Caribbean**

**CARICOM** believes that there should be a robust review and follow-up mechanism to support Member States in their efforts to gauge and make progress in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, particularly the SDGs. The review and follow-up are inextricably tied to the core question of what is being measured. It should, therefore, be known from the outset which aspects of the agenda will be reviewed, at what level and in what time frame. Given the universal nature of the agenda, as well as its breadth, there should perhaps be some sort of multi-speed or multi-track approach.

The focus of discussions on review and follow-up will probably be on the extent to which Member States are moving towards the implementation of the goals, targets and indicators for the SDGs, as being at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda. It will, however, be necessary, as was the case with MDG8, to include reviewing the extent to which the necessary resources are being mobilised to support their effective implementation.

For an effective review and follow up, a coherent and synergistic mechanism should be created to link bodies with oversight of implementation at the national level, with those at the regional and international levels. Support for national statistical offices (NSOs), as well as Ministries and Agencies responsible for national development planning will be crucial. Regional Commissions should also be involved.

At the international level ECOSOC and the HLPF, under its auspices, have an important role and the process at this level should be voluntary.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) will be implementing the post-2015 development agenda at the same time as the Samoa Pathway, (agreed at the Third International Conference on SIDS in Apia, Samoa, in September 2014). Their goals are inextricably linked with significant areas of overlap and SIDS should develop indicators to enable them to fulfil the goals of both processes. Likewise the review and follow-up for SIDS should include both processes.

Consideration should be given to the challenges faced by SIDS in relation to data collection and their statistical systems that need to be significantly enhanced if their progress in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda is to be effectively assessed. A review and follow-up mechanism should be created that allows for the monitoring of commitments (including those in relation to the provision of resources) and goals made in relation to other region-specific or issue-specific framework, including the Samoa Pathway.

**Western European and Others**

**Croatia** stressed thenecessity of developing and establishing a strong monitoring and accountability framework. The HLPF, as a universal platform, has all the prerequisites to host such a key oversight mechanism.

Lessons should be learned from already existing, comparable mechanisms, especially the MDG experience in different fields and at all levels, from global to regional and national. All stakeholders should be taken into account within the Post-2015 monitoring framework and a structured mechanism of continuous, periodic review should be established, with a goal of delivering accountability and progress reports on the achievement of goals. Competent UN bodies should be involved in creating a general framework document for the evaluation mechanism, which would facilitate the whole monitoring and evaluation process.

High quality statistics, from relevant statistical institutions and sources, are crucial for efficient monitoring. Such data would provide a solid foundation for the creation of national action plans that would include internal national benchmarks. Such a mechanism should boost integration, quality of implementation and coherence between countries.

**Norway**, in addition to aligning with the joint statement given by Egypt (see below), highlighted the five key components for monitoring and review outlined in the Secretary-General’s synthesis report as providing the basic principles and purposes on which to build, namely:

* A country-led, national component for accountability;
* A regional component for peer reviewing, tailored to regional and sub-regional needs, undertaken by existing mechanisms in a participatory, multi-stakeholder process, to consider national reports, identify regional trends, obstacles, commonalities, best practices and lessons learned and to generate solutions and mutual support and solutions;
* A global component for knowledge-sharing, as a forum for participatory, multi-stakeholder and, importantly, universal review, starting at the launch of the new agenda;
* A thematic component to chart global progress at regular intervals on the sustainable development framework to help to identify challenges and bottlenecks and to mobilize action to address them;
* A component to review the global partnership for sustainable development.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The emphasis should be placed on the need for accountability to the people themselves and on a country-led, national component as the most significant part of a universal review process. Charting global progress and identifying challenges will be crucial and they underline the importance of developing a Global Sustainable Development Report of excellent quality, based on scientific evidence and broad inter-agency collaboration. The need for annual thematic reports should also be explored.

To ensure successful implementation, follow-up and review, targets should be concrete and manageable, with evidence-based indicators, and the UN system should be fit for purpose to support Member States in implementing this new and transformative agenda. The current structure of intergovernmental bodies should be able to accommodate the universal review process, with the Third Conference on Financing for Development strengthening the commitment to the global partnership for sustainable development.

**United Kingdom** sees the post-2015 agenda as a universal framework with action required in all countries, requiring robust monitoring, accountability and review framework. It should be open to all stakeholders at domestic, regional and international levels and be transparent and participatory, providing a clear international picture on progress against all the SDGs, including supporting collective international action and identifying where efforts need to be redoubled if progress is off track.

The principal point of accountability lies at the national level. Follow up and review should be country led, with national and sub-national review mechanisms so that progress against national commitments and targets can be carefully and transparently monitored, and citizens can hold their governments to account. A regional review and learning mechanism could be useful to share learning eg through the UN regional economic commissions. Peer reviews such as the Africa Peer Review mechanism could play a valuable role. There should be a global review mechanism, not least to ensure holding each other to account for the means of implementation (MOI), but also to identify any areas where the collective effort needs to be enhanced. A data revolution should be at the heart of an effective monitoring and review mechanism. Disaggregated data is essential to ensure that nobody is left behind.

**USA** recognized that discussions on this topic will make the agenda ever more effective. The follow up and review system should be open, innovative, and dynamic, with platforms to: share data easily and openly; identify trends or issues that need more considered higher-level attention; and support course-correction in real time and updating as needed. Follow-up systems should focus on outcomes not inputs, be simple enough to be followed and maintained, and be data-driven, flexible, and oriented toward learning.

Revolutionary advances in data and the latest thinking about flexible learning systems should be taken into account, as well as existing monitoring frameworks and recent advances and specialized expertise in data architecture and analysis. A data revolution means unlocking the development power of data from many sources and the USA would support holding dedicated sessions on the data revolution within or follow-up and review to challenge the collective understanding as to what is possible.

The backbone of an effective monitoring framework should be at the national level. Country reports and domestic reviews, based on national implementation strategies and country-specific targets and indicators, should ensure national ownership, broad ownership and participation, and direct accountability of national authorities. At the international level, the monitoring and review process should maintain a longer-term orientation, focused on comparable data, vigorous thematic analysis, identification of gaps and challenges in implementation, and knowledge sharing. On institutional arrangements, the question of institutional architecture remains wide open, which should thought about in innovative terms.

**Asia and the Pacific**

**Japan** emphasizedthat the global review under the authority of HLPF should include, but should not be limited to, MOI. The global review should be on the state of implementation of overall goals and targets and on the ways to achieve them effectively. The monitoring process within this structure should not be only one way, but both bottom-up and top-down in an interactive manner. The state of implementation should be captured at the country level, or at the local community level, and aggregated at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to be reviewed finally at the global level. Countries and regions should share good practices and lessons and learn from each other to improve implementation.

There is no sense in establishing a new global structure from scratch. Existing frameworks such as African Peer Review Mechanism, OECD/DAC, GPEDC, should be used, learning from respective experiences. International organizations will continue to play important roles in monitoring the goals and targets under their respective mandates. Duplications and further fragmentation in the follow-up mechanism should be avoided and Japan will not support any new mechanism that only imposes additional reporting and financial burden on the member states.

**Palau**, currently chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, recalled the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, which sets out the vision, values and strategic objectives for Pacific regionalism, consistent with the aspirations and objectives of the post-2015 agenda and SDGs, including the outcomes the Samoa Pathway. It also specifies a robust process for high-level priority setting and progress monitoring, thereby providing a broad structure under which Pacific regional organizations and development partners can work.

The Forum Compact encourages signatory countries to examine systematically and improve how national plans and budgets, public financial management systems, development partner coordination, monitoring and evaluation of results, and engagement between governments, parliamentarians, private sector and non-state actors, contribute to overall national and regional sustainable development efforts. Its three key approaches are monitoring development outcomes, in terms of tracking regional progress towards the MDGs; improving development effectiveness through peer reviews, development partner reporting, and making climate change finance more accessible and integrated into existing financial management systems; and strengthening private sector and infrastructure development. It is the Peer Review, whereby Forum member governments and development partners volunteer have their systems and processes reviewed by a team selected from Forum member governments and partners within the region. It aims to strengthen national institutions and capacities to plan more effectively to resource, deliver and monitor priorities of sustainable development and development coordination, including strengthening development partner policies and practice. Thirteen Forum Island countries have undertaken peer reviews to date.

The Pacific Island countries encourage development partners to support the monitoring of the post-2015 agenda through continued open data sharing. The Pacific also has many existing regional monitoring and reporting mechanisms that could contribute to follow up and review of each of the proposed SDGs and the Samoa Pathway.

**Republic of Korea**, in addition to the cross-regional statement, stressed that the post-2015 development agenda, to be truly universal and transformative, should be based on a robust monitoring and review framework. The rapidly changing world, mainly due to the advancement of science and technology, requires such a framework to be more systematic and rigorous.

A Post-2015 review framework should be a voluntary, country-led, participatory, evidence-based and multi-tiered process. The HLPF, under the auspices of ECOSOC, can play a central role in this monitoring and review process.

To be effective and efficient, it is also important to be aligned with existing mechanisms and processes at various levels. They welcome the UN Secretary-General’s Synthesis Report, which recognizes that the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) can help review and strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development. It involves 46 countries, of which 50 percent are LDCs. The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) can be another useful venue to discuss issues of monitoring and review involving all relevant actors. To be evidence-based, a Post-2015 review framework should be grounded in the data revolution.

Korea recognizes the importance of capacity building for reliable data collection and statistics both at the national and international level. An alternative data-production system by civil society and the private sector should also be established to cross-check the credibility of government data. In this sense, we support the suggestion for a “Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data” made by the Secretary-General's Advisory Group.

**Cross-regional groupings**

**Egypt, in a joint statement also on behalf of Liechtenstein, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Switzerland**, stressed the importance of the HLPF as the key forum for a review mechanism, as stated by Ministers in their Ministerial Declaration at the second meeting of the forum in July 2014.

An efficient review mechanism should be voluntary and therefore, owned and embraced by developed and developing countries. It should be state-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants and focus on the assessment of progress, achievements and challenges faced by both developed and developing countries, including contributions of relevant UN entities, including the regional level. The review should be conducted in a constructive spirit, based on, for example, access to best practices, policy advice, sharing of experiences, and should provide a follow-up mechanism at the national level. It should also provide a platform for partnerships by identifying the necessary MOI, taking into account capacity-building and financing needs, facilitating the sharing of best practices and technology and other support to be provided by a wide range of actors to improve governments’ performances on sustainable development. Its approach should be differentiated, ie it will focus on universal goals, particularly the SDGs, applicable to all countries, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. It should ensure coherence between national, regional and global levels. Its basis should be robust data drawn from national progress reports with data and information from existing reporting mechanisms that should be used where possible, while recognizing the need for capacity building for improved data collection. It should take into account lessons learned from existing intergovernmental review mechanisms and be inclusive and participatory by including adequate arrangements for transparency and broad participation, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.

Lessons learned from the reviews taking place in the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC should feed into the high-level review and stocktaking at global level taking place in the context of the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly every four years.

**Note:** A workshop was convened by the Permanent Missions of these countries on 30 April on building an effective review mechanism for post-2015 development agenda. For report [see link](http://ngosbeyond2014.org/articles/2015/5/7/post-2015-development-agenda-session-on-follow-up-and-review.html).

**2 High-level Political Forum**

The theme for the second meeting of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) for its session in July 2014 was ‘Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals.” At the end of the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review, Ministers issued a Declaration. For further information [see link](http://ngosbeyond2014.org/articles/2014/7/25/ministerial-declaration-of-the-2014-high-level-segment-of-ec.html). The next meeting of the HLPF will be held from Friday 26 June to Wednesday 8 July, with the ministerial segment from Monday 6 July to Wednesday 8 July. It will debate the theme “Strengthening integration, implementation and review – the HLPF after 2015.” As it will betaking place at the time when the post-2015 development agenda will be reaching its final state, the HLPF will be able to move forward the discussions on reviewing progress on the SDGs and overall post-2015 development agenda and its own role in this regard.

For background on the High-level Political Forum [see link](http://ngosbeyond2014.org/articles/2013/4/9/high-level-political-forum.html).

**3 Other review mechanisms**

The progress in the achievement of the MDGs was reviewed in 2005 and again in 2010. The review in 2005 led to the adoption of the World Summit Outcome[[3]](#footnote-3) and the introduction in 2007 of MDG Target 5B on universal access to reproductive health. The next review took place in 2010 with the adoption of Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action was followed-up and reviewed in 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014. A survey of progress made to date was carried out in 2004 and again in 2014, which resulted in the Framework for Actions for the follow-up of the ICPD Beyond 2014 (also known as the Global Review Report).[[5]](#footnote-5) It includes data from 176 member states, alongside inputs from civil society and comprehensive academic research. The Secretary General’s Summary Report Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)[[6]](#footnote-6)

Meanwhile, review processes were also carried out for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including in 2015 as part of its 20th Anniversary.

**Marianne Haslegrave May 2015**

**Commat**

**Annex 1**

**A/69/700**

**The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet**

**Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda**

1. Delivering our agenda: a shared responsibility

**C. Gauging our progress: monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

145. If we are to succeed, the new agenda must become part of the contract between people, including civil society and responsible business and their Governments — national and local. Parliaments must be strengthened to deepen democracy and carry out their constitutional mandates of oversight. All companies must pay their taxes, respect labour standards, human rights and the environment. Empowered civil society actors, through action and advocacy, must rally to the cause and contribute to a sustainable, equitable and prosperous future.

146. We must now embrace a culture of shared responsibility, one based on agreed universal norms, global commitments, shared rules and evidence, collective action and benchmarking for progress. The new paradigm of accountability that we seek is not one of conditionality, neither North to South, nor South to North, but rather one of all actors — Governments, international institutions, private sector actors and organizations of civil society — and in all countries, the people themselves. This is the real test of people-centred, planet-sensitive development.

147. Such a model can only be built on national ownership, broad participation and full transparency. To be effective, it must be aligned with the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and its new goals. To be efficient, it must be streamlined and employ existing mechanisms and processes. To be evidence-based, it must be grounded in the data revolution, and on the indicators and data that emerge therefrom. To be truly universal, it must apply to all actors — in both the public and the private sectors, at both the national and international levels. It must include opportunities for mutual review, and for mutual support at the regional and global levels.

148. In recent months, participants in United Nations consultations have emphasized the need for a voluntary, State-led, participatory, evidence-based and multitiered process to monitor progress.

149. Thus, a universal review process constructed on these principles could be initiated at the national level, which would inform the national, regional and global level reviews. At all levels, review discussions should be public, participatory, broadly accessible and based on facts, data, scientific findings and evidence-based evaluations. The principal components might include:

(a) **A country-led, national component for accountability**: in the overall review process, this national segment, as that closest to the people, should be the most significant. It would be built on existing national and local mechanisms and processes, with broad, multi-stakeholder participation, including the presentation of national and local governments, parliaments, civil society, science, academia and business. It would establish benchmarks, review the national policy framework, chart progress, learn lessons, consider solutions, follow up and report thereon. To that end, a Government report, a national stakeholder report, with contributions from national non-governmental actors, and a report compiling existing information and data from United Nations agencies and international financial institutions, all based upon globally harmonized formats, would constitute the main written inputs on individual country progress;

(b) **A regional component for peer reviewing, tailored to regional and subregional needs, undertaken by existing mechanisms in a participatory, multi- stakeholder process, to consider national reports, identify regional trends, obstacles, commonalities, best practices and lessons learned and to generate solutions and mutual support and solutions**: regional reviews would incorporate and build on the experiences and successes of mechanisms such as the regional economic commissions, the Africa Peer Review Mechanism process, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the Economic Commission for Europe environmental performance reviews and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee peer reviews;

(c) **A global component for knowledge-sharing, as a forum for participatory, multi-stakeholder and, importantly, universal review, starting at the launch of the new agenda**: this would be convened annually under the auspices of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. It would provide a periodic occasion for individual countries to voluntarily present national reviews of progress, to discuss lessons learned in each country’s implementation of the agenda and the opportunity to review both short-term outputs and long-term outcomes related to attaining the goals. Member States should consider multi-annual reviews under the political forum in a five-year cycle;

(d) **A thematic component to chart global progress at regular intervals on the sustainable development framework to help to identify challenges and bottlenecks and to mobilize action to address them**: while such thematic reviews could be carried out under the auspices of the high-level political forum, they would rely on relevant coordination and review “platforms”. These could include existing specialized or functional commissions, councils or committees that convene United Nations and other multilateral entities, relevant treaty body reviews and outcomes, as well as Member States, partners from civil society, science, academia and the private sector that could monitor and advance each respective thematic area. Existing partnerships could also be linked to such platforms in order to ensure efficient and effective action and accountability. To support and complement the process, and to ensure continuous gauging of progress, the United Nations would provide annual global thematic reports, aggregating available data, together with the global sustainable development report mandated by Rio+20;

(e) **A component to review the global partnership for sustainable development**: the essential element of partnership and its mobilization of the means necessary for implementation must also be kept under active review. As they prepare for the third Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Member States should seize the opportunity to consider how existing structures and processes can help review and strengthen the global partnership for sustainable development, including the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. An important additional role for the review process under this component will be to address the respective conference tracks targeting the special conditions and needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

150. The current structure of our intergovernmental bodies can accommodate the universal review process described above. The establishment of the high-level political forum, which meets under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, as well as the United Nations Environment Assembly, were important institutional innovations emerging from Rio+20. And the reform of the Council has been another important step forward.

1. The other parts of the post-2015 development agenda comprise the declaration; the sustainable development goals, targets (and indicators); and the means of implementation [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Annex 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/1080111/16138141/1327048490690/A_60_L1.pdf?token=1KU1YJaieXxqGfB6tNy%2FQNONqBE%3D> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/outcome\_documentN1051260.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. http://icpdbeyond2014.org/about/view/29-global-review-report [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. http://icpdbeyond2014.org/uploads/browser/files/sg\_report\_on\_icpd\_operational\_review\_final.unedited.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-6)