March 2022

Pieces of a puzzle: further steps on a journey

Second report on the potential for greater use of multi-stakeholder advisory bodies for the 2030 Agenda

Part II
Costa Rica, Ghana, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Uganda, Viet Nam

Global Forum for
National SDG Advisory Bodies

Acknowledgements

About the Global Forum for National SDG Advisory Bodies

The Global Forum is a network that connects the knowledge and experience of multi-stakeholder advisory commissions, councils and similar bodies for sustainable development. These bodies contribute to the national institutional architectures for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By bridging knowledge and interests of various stakeholder groups, multi-stakeholder advisory bodies foster social acceptance and cohesion within society in times of transformation. The demand for their work in facilitating negotiation outcomes cannot be underestimated.

This forum for and by national multi-stakeholder advisory bodies is as heterogeneous as the respective contexts its members are in, which vary accordingly in their institutional development, set-up, mandate and role. Constant exchange in and across working groups creates a rich marketplace of ideas, negotiation mechanisms and effective policy measures that can easily be transferred and tailored to local needs and demands elsewhere. As a demand-driven network, it constantly evolves its focus in collective processes. With its rich pool of collective knowledge, the forum effectively invites stakeholders and governments around the globe to adapt, implement and jointly accelerate the delivery of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

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Abbreviations

AED	Business Alliance for Development/ Alianza Empresarial para el Desarrollo (Costa Rica)
CEPLAN	National Center for Strategic Planning (Peru)
CSCSD	Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (Nigeria)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation, which in the context of this report may include informal organisations working on a broad range of topics, some of which may not be relevant to achieving the SDGs
CSOs Platform	Civil Society Organizations Platform on SDGs (Ghana)
INGO	International NGO
GoC	Government of Costa Rica
GoG	Government of Ghana
GoNe	Government of Nepal
GoNi	Government of Nigeria
GoP	Government of Peru
GoU	Government of Uganda
GoV	Government of Viet Nam
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
MIDEPLAN	Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (Costa Rica)
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment (Viet Nam)
MSP	Multi-Stakeholder Platform
NDP	National Development Plan (South Africa)
NDSF	National Development Stakeholders Forum (South Africa)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation, which in the context of this report is a formal organisation working on topics of direct relevance to the 2030 Agenda
NGO Forum	Uganda National NGO Forum
NPC	National Planning Commission (Nepal)
OSSAP	Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (Nigeria)

Abbreviations

SAWG.................	South African Civil Society Working Group on SDGs (South Africa)
SDGs..................	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP.................	United Nations Development Programme
VNR	Voluntary National Review
2030 Plan	Nigeria Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2020-2030

Preface

Pathways for sustainable development are complex and highly context-dependent. However, multi-stakeholder advisory bodies can support navigating this complexity.

Remaining within the boundaries that our planet provides for us is essential for a healthy and sustainable future. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in September 2015 by all Member States of the United Nations, providing political orientation for activities and priorities for sustainable development in all policy areas. It serves as a framework for international cooperation, presenting a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Through this "Decade of Action", many efforts are being made to pull the same strings at all levels of policy and involving all actors. There continues to be an ambitious and accelerated response to address the current global challenges, and setbacks caused by the pandemic, to achieve transformation through this common vision of a healthy planet with a healthy society.

However, although the overall picture is positive, the commitment to using the 2030 Agenda as a framework for policy varies from country to country, and each country has their own opportunities and challenges with regard to the extent to which they are able to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national strategies and plans. There are also a wide variety of context-specific obstacles on the road towards full integration and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and pathways towards sustainable development are complex and highly context-dependent.

Multi-stakeholder advisory bodies can play a key role in the complex transition towards sustainable societies. These can take very diverse and heterogeneous forms, such as ad hoc commissions, institutionalised and mandated multi-stakeholder councils or collective partnership platforms. For the delivery of the SDGs, multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) advisory bodies can constructively engage with their governments

and create space for action and social acceptance of transformation. Their principles embody a "whole-of-society" approach that aims to build consensus or collective action as a continuous and constructive partner of governments.

In this study, the term MSP-advisory body is used to reflect a broad range of possible forms, structures and mechanisms that have a reciprocal relationship with government partners that are responsible for sustainable development policymaking.

A first study in this 'Pieces of a puzzle' series provided a light-touch assessment of the institutional environment, stakeholder engagement and history, as well as policy processes in four countries that embrace such MSP-advisory body functions. To understand how these bodies can, and may, evolve for accelerated SDG delivery, an overview of their stakeholder landscape and engagement in national sustainable development processes was laid out and assessed.

In this second study, 'Pieces of a Puzzle: Further Steps on a Journey', a further eight countries are profiled. These countries are in different places on their respective journeys to equip themselves with governance structures that integrate stakeholders in their policy pathways towards sustainable development. Governance structures also differ, and while engagement between the government and other stakeholders is discernible in all of the countries, it is not yet taking a permanent form in any, such as would be provided by an MSP-advisory body. However, many of the functions of such a body are to some extent being performed by governmental departments or sector-wide umbrella groups. These reflect how each country is choosing to undertake the challenging and ambitious task of implementing the 2030 Agenda, while navigating

This second part delivers an overview on the journeys of eight countries that equips them with integrated stakeholder structures and institutions.
The eight countries are:
- *Costa Rica*
- *Ghana*
- *Nepal*
- *Nigeria*
- *Peru*
- *South Africa*
- *Uganda*
- *Viet Nam*

Given the multiple crises in the world, the SDGs are more relevant than ever before, ultimately being a foundation for planetary health and security.

significant shocks such as the global pandemic, as well as their own internal socio-economic and political landscapes.

The coronavirus pandemic is changing the way we live, interact and socialise. It has exposed the fundamental weaknesses in our global system, exacerbating existing problems and creating new ones. With the launch of the Decade of Action in January 2020 came a call to accelerate implementation to bolster prospects of achieving all the SDGs. While the pandemic risks eroding some of the gains made towards achieving this goal, the current challenges can be turned into an opportunity by fast-tracking actions towards the 2030 Agenda objectives. Crucially, the response to the pandemic should not be uncoupled from actions on the SDGs. Indeed, amid the pandemic, the SDGs are even more relevant today than ever before.

Introduction: Collecting the puzzle pieces

Due to the interconnected nature of the SDGs, they often require substantial changes in the national institutional architecture and coordination and collaboration across government institutions for integrated policymaking and implementation: a "whole-of-government" approach. This benefits from vertical and horizontal coordination across government institutions, high-level political support and a dedicated and technically proficient unit.

The Voluntary National Review (VNR), as a solid follow-up and review mechanism, has continued to be an additional element to an existing national sustainable development policy cycle and strategy in many countries. The VNR process and outcome can unleash and create new planning dynamics and reports, as well as momentum for concerted and coordinated action for the implementation of the SDGs.

The VNR process has also often been a galvanising moment for developing "whole-of-society" approaches to addressing development priorities. This is because it is the main mechanism being used by countries to report progress on the 2030 Agenda internationally, and in many countries both government and other sectors of society have been motivated to use this as a review point. What has become increasingly apparent is that, while this may be an entry point for greater engagement between government and non-state actors, in every country this is then a dynamic picture, often with a positive trend towards greater engagement, but through a journey that takes different routes and at different speeds according to the context. These routes and speeds may be affected by the nature of country priorities as set out in national plans and VNRs, the political economy and socio-cultural features of the context, the experience to date of engaging across

VNR stakeholder engagement processes are a solid entry point for a journey towards MSP-advisory bodies.

Collecting the puzzle pieces

sectors and the level of trust and reciprocity that has been engendered by positive experiences of the value of collaboration. Sector dynamics, the willingness and ability to collaborate and reach a common view on topics, and the extent to which external shocks such as the pandemic disrupt the economy and society, all also play a role in determining the journey that is unfolding in each country.

The level of engagement at any point then determines the nature of the benefit that can be derived from multi-sector collaboration. In many countries there is a trajectory, from initial low-level engagement for specific, one-off purposes such as collecting data on indicators for a VNR. As trust builds, and the benefits of collaboration become more evident, more engaged levels of collaboration can be seen with a higher degree of potential benefit. These can usefully be conceived in terms of a progression from simple exchanges to highly involved ways of working that can help with significant transformations of complex systems. This is portrayed in the following framework:

1

LEVERAGE / EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS

— **Features**
'Transactional' features such as one-way exchanges of resources, differentiation between actors that make plans and those that implement them advocates for SDG delivery and engages the public

— **Benefits**
each actor can deliver more effectively on their respective agendas

2

COMBINE / INTEGRATE PARTNERSHIPS

— **Features**
'Co-creative' features such as actors from different sectors combining their resources that complement each other and working together to develop plans and implement activities

— **Benefits**
scale and/or more innovative and effective and efficient approaches that enable all actors to meet their own and each other's objectives

3

SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIPS

— **Features**
'Adaptive' in nature with actors from all sectors combining resources, reaching consensus, working synchronously to create levers of change, and learning and adapting activities as they go

— **Benefits**
system transformation that actors from one sector could not achieve on their own

Collecting the puzzle pieces

The nature of collaboration between various stakeholder groups and the potential benefits can be identified from the features of the engagement observed.

Examples of leverage/exchange features would be where a civil society umbrella group provides SDG data to a government department that uses the data in a VNR report, and the benefits will be better quality reports or the ability to cover more indicators. Another instance might be when a government prepares a plan to integrate the SDGs in a national strategy and sends drafts to multiple stakeholder groups for comment, enabling the plan to be adjusted and improved based on their feedback.

As the level of engagement rises, features of combine/integrate partnerships will start to be evident. This can be a chapter of a VNR being co-authored by a multi-stakeholder group and a government department, thereby improving the depth and insight. Another example could be a public sector statistics unit and a civil society umbrella organisation co-designing a measurement system that enables the collection and triangulation of complementary data on an indicator and additional capacity to report. A multi-stakeholder sector working group combining their knowledge of an issue and co-developing a strategy to address specific SDGs using a combination of public and private resources will also fall into this category of partnership. There will be several benefits to this, in both the quality and breadth of implementation.

As the level of trust, collaboration and ambition rises further, features of a system transformation partnership become apparent. This could include a situation where a multi-sector advisory body works with government to reach consensus on a challenging

Collaborations between stakeholder take different forms: from providing an advice and compass function to collective engagement and local implementation.

The level of trust, collaboration and ambition of all actors contributes hugely to the degree of impact on system transformation and social cohesion.

issue that requires significant restructuring of an economic or social sector. There can be significant benefits arising to multiple goals and targets from disruptive change that results in a sustainable development or transformation of a system. Such disruptive changes are controversial and thus they require a facilitation of dialogues and negotiations among a broad mix of diverse stakeholders, also in the interest of social acceptance for transformation. These benefits can be amplified when a multi-stakeholder partnership is given a permanent mandate to participate in policy development relevant to the 2030 Agenda.

When collaboration and permanent multi-stakeholder engagement takes the form of an institutionalised MSP-advisory body, their role can include navigating complex themes and providing a compass to help their government navigate the journey to sustainable development. They can also be a complementary platform for collective engagement, localisation of SDGs, monitoring progress and a trustworthy partner for joint roadmaps on SDG delivery. They create a collaborative ecosystem as well as space for collaborative action necessary to deliver socially accepted sustainable development objectives.

Functions of an MSP-advisory body for sustainable development

— Provides a compass function for transition for national governments and a permanent "whole-of-society" approach, in addition to the "whole-of-government" approach in national institutional architectures for sustainable development
— Reciprocal relationship with government and active in constructive advice in national policy processes for sustainable development
— Builds consensus on transformational topics, geared towards socially acceptable solutions
— Advocates for sustainable development and engages the public on issues of vital importance

1 Global Forum 2021 Pieces of a puzzle ↘ PDF

2 German Council for Sustainable Development, RNE ↘ URL

3 The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development ↘ URL

— Creates spaces for collective engagement, instigates collective action and enables a joint dialogue for SDG delivery. Thereby engaging all stakeholders for sustainable development: pilots dialogue projects and promotes local networks
— Actively reports on advancements and gaps of SDG indicators, as well as supports data collection and measurement of SDGs: provide overview of positive and negative development trends, quality of indicators as well as improving accountability

One example of such a permanent and institutionalised national multi-stakeholder platform is the German Council for Sustainable Development (Rat für Nachhaltige Entwicklung, RNE)[1], with 15 eminent council members, appointed by the German government and tasked with generating contributions to the German Sustainable Development Strategy, specifying concrete areas of action and making sustainability a public issue of vital importance. The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development[2] is a similar MSP-advisory body, serving as an influential forum that brings key societal actors together. The Commission promotes cooperation to achieve sustainable development and strives to integrate the strategic objectives of sustainable development into national policy, administration and social practices. For more examples of their composition and working modes, please see the 2021 Global Forum sister study on pathways for national sustainable development advisory bodies[3].
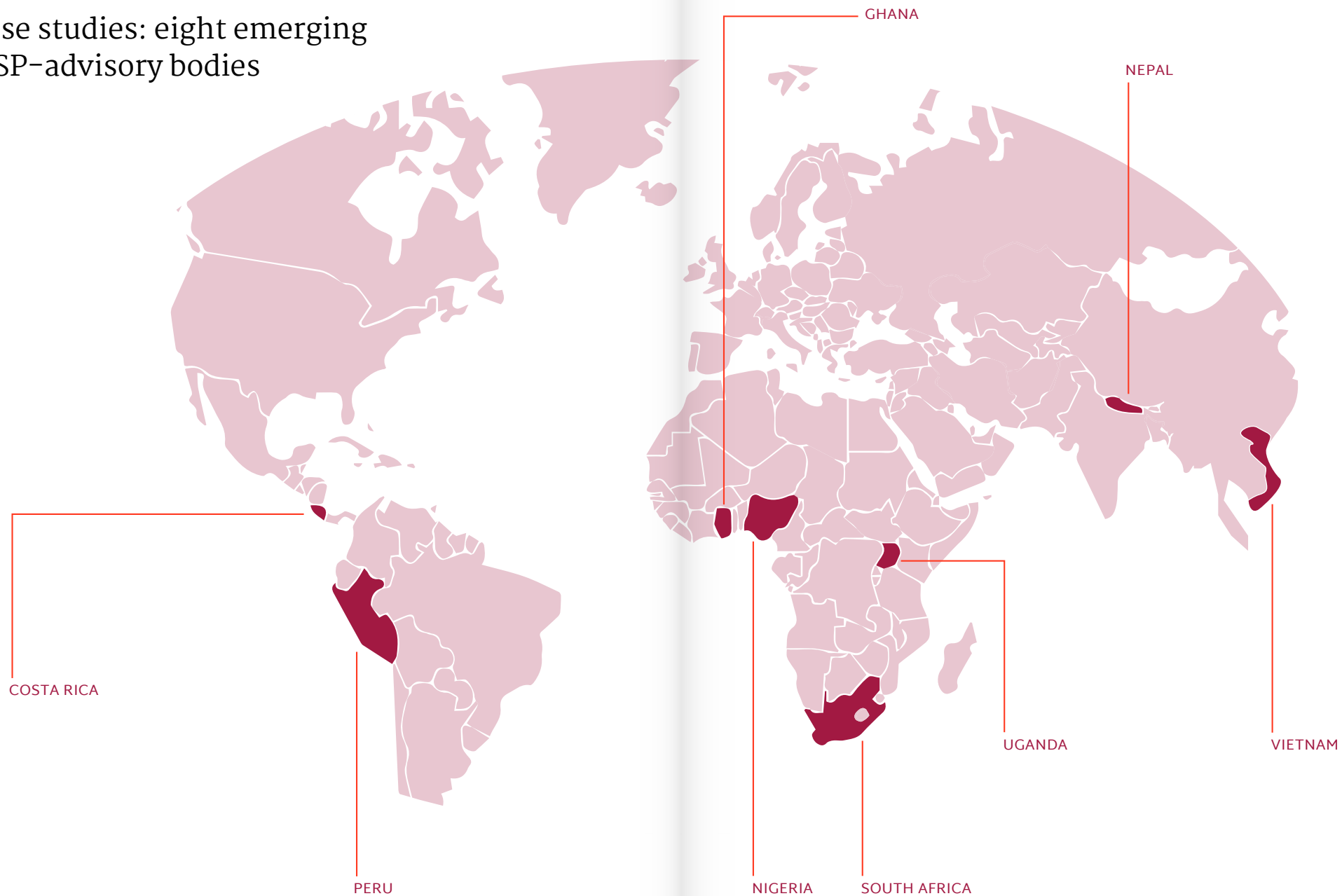
Methodological approach

The purpose of the research was to provide evidence-informed recommendations based on the status of preconditions and stakeholder engagement in eight different countries. Beyond this, the aim is also to understand how the stakeholder engagement is linked to vertical and horizontal coordination in the countries for sustainable development. The research process commenced with desk research of published reports and case studies, and this was then complemented by semi-structured interviews (see Annex II for the questionnaire) with key informants. The research covered the setup of national SDG governance architecture, existing stakeholder engagement processes, the role of national sustainable development strategies, and umbrella organisations engaged in a VNR process or other related activity from various stakeholder groups, such as academia, civil society, youth or business (see Annex I: Sample size).

The study covers eight countries, namely Costa Rica, Ghana, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa[4], Uganda and Viet Nam, which pursue different p athways for stakeholder engagement and for delivering the 2030 Agenda. They were selected as case studies that can inspire and challenge other countries through the steps they have taken to implement the 2030 Agenda. The selection criteria used were the existence of multi-stakeholder engagement processes aiming at a "whole-of-society" approach in their respective VNR drafting processes.

Showcased in the forthcoming chapters, the eight cases all share a national commitment to implementing the SDGs in a "whole-of-government" approach. However, each is at a different stage of its progress towards a whole-of-society approach, whilst each in its own way demonstrating a trend

Case studies: eight emerging MSP-advisory bodies

GHANA

NEPAL

COSTA RICA

PERU

NIGERIA

SOUTH AFRICA

UGANDA

VIETNAM

towards greater engagement of non-state actors over the period since 2016. Furthermore, there are clear differences between the countries when it comes to existing umbrella organisations of the various relevant stakeholder groups. This study sheds further light on the variety of policies, processes and engaged stakeholder groups that can be pieces of a puzzle when striving for more effective and inclusive implementation and reporting of the SDGs.

The specific topics addressed in the research were: the institutions and coordination functions established to deliver the 2030 Agenda at national level, across all components of government, and at sub-national level; the role of national roadmaps for sustainable development for all areas of policymaking; examples of permanent or temporary consultation exercises undertaken by the government with other stakeholders as well as coordination of planning, implementation and reporting across all sectors; how the latter is done, and how successful it has been.

There was also research into the landscape of stakeholders engaged in the 2030 Agenda and how stakeholder groups with an interest in sustainable development are organised in each country and with whom the government has established regular working routines, and then a deeper investigation into some umbrella organisations that have some or all of the functions of an MSP-advisory body.

The research is based on both primary and secondary data. The desk research included VNRs, independent SDG and progress reports, national sustainable development strategies, case studies, websites and other published information on multi-stakeholder platforms and umbrella bodies. This was complemented

The report provides snapshots of permanent and temporary stakeholder engagement processes, thereby identifying room for improvement.

with three to five interviews with key informants per country, with observers selected to offer a perspective from government and civil society, with others from the private sector or development partners added according to the context and availability. Interviews were conducted using a common semi-structured interview guideline with specific questions to cover each topic. The template was adjusted as needed, based on the sector of the observer and any unique characteristics of the country identified during country research.

The findings of the research reflect a series of snapshots of the level of engagement and intent between current governance architecture, national sustainable development policy processes and relevant stakeholder groups. It also outlines the stakeholder landscape of umbrella organisations and suggests possible developments that could be supported to carry out the valuable functions and roles of an MSP-advisory body in the existing puzzle of national institutions and policy processes.

Costa Rica: Strong multi-stakeholder engagement ready to be translated into actions

5 Costa Rica: A National Pact to Advance the SDGs, 2016. ↘ PDF (Spanish)

6 Established under Executive Decree 40203-PLAN-RE-MINAE-MDHIS ↘ URL

7 Costa Rica. Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy. Costa Rica, Building a Shared Vision of Sustainable Development. Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals, June 2017. ↘ PDF

Costa Rica is a front-runner in making a collective commitment to progress the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and has presented two VNRs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). In 2016, it was the first country to formalise a public commitment in the form of a National Pact for the Advancement of the SDGs[5] that envisions the 2030 Agenda as a country agenda. The National Pact recognised the need for a national strategy that secured a multi-stakeholder approach for the implementation of the SDGs, and was signed by the executive, legislative and judicial powers, local governments, civil society, private sector, academia and faith-based organisations. The pact is guided by a multi-stakeholder governance structure to operationalise the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Costa Rica.

Following its mandate to establish the necessary coordination and advisory mechanisms to promote the broadest participation of the public and private sectors in the national process of planning, in 2017 the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy (MIDEPLAN), established a governance structure[6] for the implementation of the SDGs. That same year, Costa Rica produced its first VNR[7]. The governance structure is composed of a High-Level Council of the SDGs, an SDG Technical Secretariat in charge of coordinating the information-gathering process with national institutions, and other actors and members of the SDG Advisory Committee.

Overall, the Government of Costa Rica (GoC) is open to, and actively seeks, the participation of non-state actors in the achievement of national development objectives and the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs are incorporated in the country's key development planning instruments such as: the National Development and

Public Investment Plan 2019–2022: Bicentennial Plan[8]; the National Decarbonization Plan 2018 – 2050[9]; and the Territorial Economic Strategy for an Inclusive and Decarbonized Economy 2020-2050[10].

The SDG Advisory Committee brings together various state and non-state actors that are responsible for gathering information and inputs for the review process. Overall strategic coordination is provided by MIDEPLAN, which acts as an SDG Technical Secretariat for implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Costa Rica. The Advisory Committee includes signatory stakeholders of the 2016 National Pact.

In recognition of the importance of the active involvement of citizens in public policy processes, MIDEPLAN carried out a citizen consultation process, as part of the design of the Bicentennial National Development and Public Investment Plan 2019-2022. Through a virtual forum, the Government identified proposals and incorporated the needs of the population in the main national planning instrument that marks the roadmap to be followed by public institutions towards sustainable development in the medium term. The country also made efforts to create data and monitor the implementation of the SDGs by creating an Institutional Technical Commission at the National Statistics Office (INEC) to monitor SDG indicators.

Even though the strategic coordination of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda falls within MIDEPLAN, the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE) is observed as an important actor leading the implementation of the National Decarbonization Plan 2018 – 2050. The Statistical Department established a statistical work group to support MIDEPLAN.

In addition, the judiciary has made important efforts to align the institutional strategies with the

8 National Development and Public Investment Plan 2019-2022: Bicentennial Plan; the National Decarbonization Plan 2018 – 2050

9 Decarbonization Plan: Commitment of the Bicentennial Government 2018-2050. Government of Costa Rica 2018-2022

10 Estrategia Económica Territorial para una Economía Inclusiva y Descarbonizada 2020-2050, Costa Rica. March 2020

11 Costa Rica. Poder Judicial. Quinto Informe de Avances en la Implementación Agenda 2030 y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) en el Poder Judicial / Coordinado por Oficina de Cooperación y Relaciones Internacionales – 1ª. ed. –San José, C.R.: Departamento de Artes Gráficas, 2021.

Costa Rica is a front-runner in sustainable development and stakeholder engagement, however the COVID-19 pandemic have imposed immense challenges on meeting its objectives.

SDGs by presenting five institutional voluntary reports[11], issuing a Declaration of Institutional Interest of the SDGs, establishing an institutional governance structure including a focal point for the SDGs, and including annual budget actions to promote compliance with the SDG.

Finally, the Parliament of Costa Rica has committed to prioritise actions to ensure that its work contributes to the urgent fulfilment of the development agenda, monitoring compliance with the SDGs in the laws presented, tracing the SDGs in legislation, and building capacity to make sustainable development a key pillar of legislative production, with the aspiration to become a sustainable parliament.

Despite these important efforts, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have imposed greater challenges with immense economic implications for the country, which puts at risk the integrity of the 2030 Agenda and progress towards meeting its objectives. In an effort to generate proposals to deal with the economic and social crisis that the country is experiencing, in 2020, the GoC conducted a national consultation with a range of social and political stakeholders to receive feedback on the development vision. This resulted in the establishment of a Multisectoral Dialogue Table that produced an intersectoral roadmap on priority issues for the country and led a space for national dialogue where 58 agreements were approved on issues of economic reactivation, decent employment, combating poverty and fiscal proposals. The space managed to bring together diverse and heterogeneous sectors at a decisive moment for the country, but the capacity to generate consensus was weak and important limitations are observed in the commitment to advance the agreements undertaken.

12 Engaging non-state actors and local authorities in SDG follow-up and review: Case study Costa Rica, The evolution of VNR opportunities for a more informed dialogue with the private sector. ↘ PDF

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

Key stakeholders in Costa Rica appear to be fully supported by the government with a strong organisation from the private sector[12] and academia. The SDG Advisory Committee brings together various state and non-state actors that are responsible for gathering information and inputs for the review process. Overall strategic coordination is supported by MIDEPLAN in its role as the SDG Technical Secretariat.

Within the Advisory Committee the private sector is represented by the Business Alliance for Development (AED) and acts as the local network of the UN Global Compact in Costa Rica promoting the SDGs, raising awareness and organising training for private sector organisations. The Business Alliance for Development is currently leading a cross-sector data partnership for the SDG working group in order to ensure effective planning and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.

Costa Rica is in a pole-position for a permanent MSP-advisory body through the strong umbrella organisations and their ambitious engagement.

ALIANZA EMPRESARIAL PARA EL DESARROLLO (AED) ↘ URL

is an alliance of 140 mostly large but also small and medium-sized enterprises and suppliers working to promote responsible and sustainable business models in companies. Its purpose is to contribute to a prosperous, inclusive and dignified society, in harmony with the environment, through a conscious, connected and committed business sector. AED is the Local Network of the Global Compact for Costa Rica, a voluntary initiative in which companies commit to align their strategies and operations with ten universally accepted principles derived from United Nations declarations in four thematic areas: human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-corruption. In addition, it has the UN mandate to promote the SDGs in the private sector.

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO CIUDADANO DE CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO (5C) ↘ URL

is a platform for citizen participation that seeks to strengthen the mechanisms of accountability, provision and access to information on climate change. The 5C was established in 2017 by Executive Decree No. 40616. The 5C has focused on three main areas of action: keeping citizens informed on climate change; ensuring public climate change policy is responsive to citizens; and consolidating a social innovation platform to allow exchange between citizen sectors.

CONSEJO NACIONAL DE RECTORES (CONARE) ↘ URL

was created in 1974 to regulate key aspects of coordination for the joint exercising of university autonomy and connecting the academic university system with society. CONARE currently encompasses the University of Costa Rica (UCR); the Technological Institute of Costa Rica (TEC); the National University (UNA); the Distance State University (UNED); and the National Technical University (UTN).

Costa Rica: Strong multi-stakeholder engagement ready to be translated into actions

FUNDACIÓN PARA LA SOSTENI-BILIDAD Y LA EQUIDAD (ALIARSE)
↘URL

contributes to Costa Rica's sustainable development by promoting Public-Private Partnerships for Development (PPPD) in furtherance of SDG 17. ALIARSE promotes PPPDs as an instrument to achieve the SDGs, reinforces their strategic importance in the management of local, national and global development, and encourages knowledge-sharing and the creation of tools and guides for their implementation.

INSTITUTO DE FOMENTO Y ASESORÍA MUNICIPAL (IFAM) ↘URL

was established by the government in 1971 as a way to promote local development and deal with the deterioration and marginalisation of the local governments involved in this task. IFAM has committed to support local governments engaged with the 2030 Agenda and is supporting the consolidation of a Network of Municipalities for the SDGs (Cantones PrODS) aiming to incentivise and recognise municipalities' commitment to sustainable development.

UNIÓN COSTARRI-CENSE DE CÁMARAS Y ASOCIACIONES DEL SECTOR EMPRESARIAL PRIVADO (UCCAEP)
↘URL

is a union of chambers that contribute to the socio-economic development of Costa Rica by promoting progress, competitiveness and responsible business practice within the private sector. It unites the sector and represents it to different national and international bodies on issues of general interest, and promotes the enactment of laws, projects, provisions and measures that strengthen the country's systematic competitiveness and social welfare.

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN COSTA RICA

The signatories of the 2016 National Pact have committed themselves to help achieve the SDGs, to promote resource mobilisation and to strengthen their institutional capacities for developing related policies, plans and programmes. Even though the 2017 VNR[13] was prepared with the support of the signatories of the National Pact, there is a perception that the responsible government institutions faced difficulties in disseminating information on the consultation processes and the VNR structure. But there was an efficient
integration of some key stakeholders in the official mechanism to participate in the SDG strategic planning processes.

In 2020, Costa Rica prepared its second VNR[14] report. The process was led by MIDEPLAN and the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), as the statistical advisory body. The VNR was conceptualised as a multi-stakeholder product developed through a collaborative process that involved a series of consultations with various stakeholders' signatories of the National Pact represented on the national Advisory Committee. The process incorporated an online consultation, virtual regional meetings and the integration of shadow reports. The private sector and business associations played an important role in the development of the report, applying an expanded questionnaire to collect information from organisations in the business sector.

AED assumed a proactive role in institutionalising the long-term commitment of the private sector to SDG implementation. It did so with tools designed specifically to contextualise the creation of shared value and an evidence-driven monitoring system using information and complementary data on the activities of the private sector and their relevance to the SDG indicators. In addition to its active participation in the regular VNR consultations and meetings, AED was asked by the government to support the SDG monitoring efforts with contextual information on the extent to which the business sector and its activities are related to a particular SDG indicator. Representatives of AED and other business associations were included in the official delegation of Costa Rica to the 2020 HLPF.

Costa Rica: Strong multi-stakeholder engagement ready to be translated into actions

Active but heterogenous engagement from local governments is observed, and an initiative under the name of Network of Municipalities for the SDGs (Cantones PrODS) has been established as an incentive for local governments to apply good practices. To date, 32 local governments have integrated the platform created by the SDG Technical Secretariat, the United Nations and the Municipal Development and Advisory Institute (IFAM), which incentivises the exchange of good practices between local governments and promotes mutual collaboration. In 2020, only 27 percent of local governments were aligning the SDGs with their development plans. Through the Cantones PrODS strategy, 45 percent of municipalities are now localising the SDGs and building capacity by accessing an open platform for exchange and mutual support for SDG localisation.

Civil society organisations have created a platform to develop common strategic and policy agendas and have initiated training activities. Nevertheless, the platform experienced challenges to being viewed as a representative umbrella organisation by some key CSOs in the country, and financial constraints have limited their action. Even though the GoC recognises the crucial role of CSOs, the sector is observed as the more disarticulated sector with room for improvement for participation.

On the other hand, the government architecture does not provide space for youth participation which is not organised in a constituted umbrella organisation capable of representing them, and vulnerable groups such as indigenous populations and people with disabilities do not have access to mechanisms that facilitate their participation.

13 First Voluntary National Review. Sustainable Development Goals. Costa Rica, 2017. ↘ PDF

14 Second Voluntary National Review. Sustainable Development Goals. Costa Rica, 2020. ↘ PDF

Costa Rica profits from utilizing its well established umbrella organisations towards joint action and advice.

Finally, even though the participation of the private sector has been crucial and very active in the decision-making and SDG reporting processes, to further consolidate the engagement of the sector, there is a need to strengthen the involvement and commitment of key stakeholders such as the Costa Rican Union of Chambers and Associations of the Private Business Sector (UCCAEP), one of the country's biggest umbrella organisations from the business sector.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

The GoC has been able to engage the private sector, local governments, Parliament and academia in the 2030 Agenda coordination and institutional arrangements, offering a formal mechanism to influence decision-making and participation in the SDG strategic planning processes. In the last few years, MIDEPLAN's SDG Technical Secretariat has consolidated trust and stronger collaborative relationships between key actors, enabling good levels of commitment and

What's next?
- reactivate the High-Level Political Council
- engage youth
- engage vulnerable groups
- demonstrate governmental leadership

participation of key stakeholders in participatory processes. This has created a good basis for collaboration, and the country seems to be ready to further consolidate the engagement of key stakeholders from different sectors.

To strengthen the current multi-stakeholder governance structure for the SDGs, a greater need for explicit leadership and facilitation from the responsible government institutions is required. The High-Level Political Council has not been activated much in recent years, and its role needs to be strengthened, creating momentum in such a way that a strategic political vision is generated. An inter-institutional team responsible for assuming this task needs to be formally and officially established to consolidate a strategic and political body. There is a need to separate the technical leadership and the political-strategic leadership. This can ensure a more strategic government leadership in linking key institutions such as the President's Office, MIDEPLAN, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment (MINAE) and the Statistical Office (INEC).

On the other hand, the SDG Advisory Committee could benefit from strengthening their collaborative capacity, moving beyond purely consultative engagement and transforming the contributions into actual measurable inputs. This can be done by building a roadmap with objectives, steps, timelines and roles to establish a sustained collaboration for the SDG implementation, where each stakeholder agrees on the scope for their collaboration. There is also a need to have greater clarity around the expectations concerning inputs and contributions from stakeholders to the review and development planning process, in order to formalise and to contribute more effectively

to the national SDG implementation processes.

The private sector has been very active, and AED has been an important stakeholder to consolidate companies and businesses participation within the SDG Advisory Committee. AED has been a key actor in motivating engagement and sustainable reporting, providing constructive advice and fostering innovation to jointly address the most critical weaknesses and problems in SDG implementation. To further conso-lidate engagement of key stakeholders in the SDG Advisory Committee, there is a need for greater participation from key umbrella organisations, from CSOs and youth, which can be achieved by strengthening the capacity of these actors

The strong ownership of the national institutions with competencies for local development could be reinforced, allowing consolidation of a common agenda for SDG localisation. There is an opportunity to consolidate a stronger commitment at the local level, by reinforcing the Network of Local Governments committed to the 2030 Agenda initiative.

In order to build a multi-stakeholder approach for the planning of development, there is an urgent need to consolidate a common long-term vision of the country's development, including a roadmap to 2030 that clearly specifies a strategy to guide stake-holders' engagement. COVID-19 impact in the country presents a demand for a stronger commitment from all the sectors, and the 2030 Agenda can provide guidelines to support the decision-making process in order to close the social and economic gaps that Costa Rica is facing and provide basic input for a long-term national strategic development frame-work to achieve the transformation that Costa Rican society desires.

Create a common vision for Costa Rica's pathway and underpin it with a national strategic framework for sustainable development.
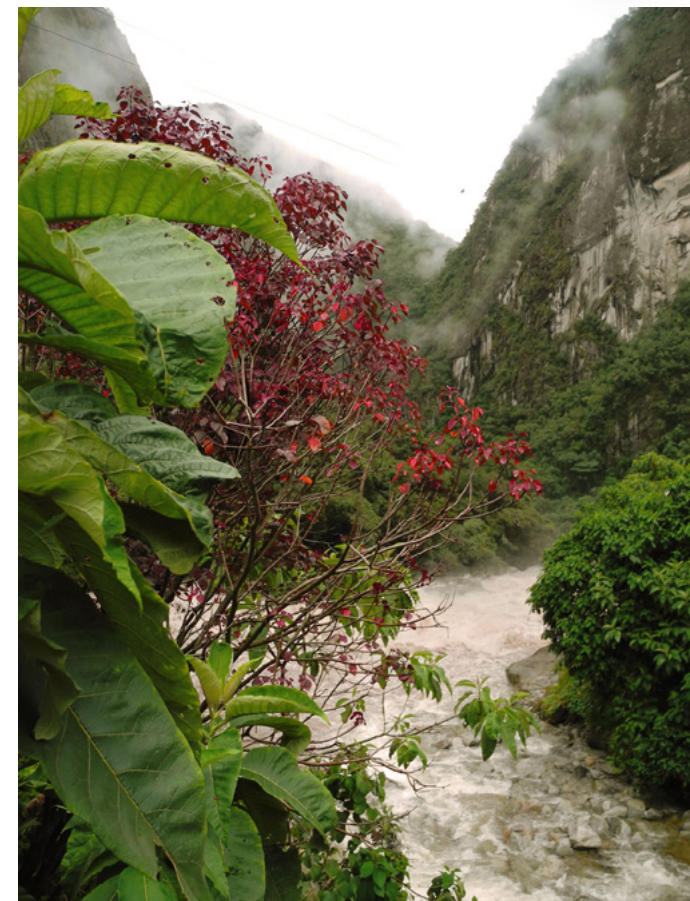
Ghana: National roaring ahead, the local level must follow suit

15 Office of the President. SDGs Advisory Unit Annual Report, 2019 ↘ PDF

16 Ghana 2020 Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and African Union Agenda 2063, National Development Planning Commission ↘ PDF

17 The National Development Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act 479) and the National Development Planning (System) Act, 1994 (Act 480), provide the core legal framework for the establishment of the Commission and the performance of its functions

Ghana has made a commitment, globally and nationally, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is leading the way, with the President playing a global role as co-chair of the UN Secretary-General's Eminent Group of Sustainable Development Goals Advocates. To achieve this, they have put in place flexible institutional structures to deliver the 2030 Agenda and integrate the SDGs into policies and frameworks through a "whole-of-government" approach, and an SDG Advisory Unit[15] was established in 2017 to provide technical, policy and strategic support to the President in his global role.

This is seen as a national commitment to the 2030 Agenda. While the responsibility for coordinating the implementation and tracking of the SDGs is a government mandate, it is also regarded as a shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

A well-structured and robust SDG governance system has been established to coordinate, track and monitor progress on the implementation of the SDGs and their integration into ongoing national development efforts. It comprises a High-Level Ministerial Committee (HLMC), an SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee (SDGs-ICC), and a Technical Committee (TC). This allows high-level collaboration across key ministries and institutions such as the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Finances, Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC)[16], which is the constitutional governmental body mandated[17] to act as the coordinating body of the Decentralised National Development Planning System, and the Secretariat of the SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee. Its mission is derived from its mandate, which is to advise the President of the Republic of Ghana (and Parliament

on request) on national development planning policy and strategy.

The SDGs have been integrated and adopted within Ghana's long-term national development policy framework 2018-2057, also known as Agenda 2057 or Ghana@100, as well as the country's Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework for 2017-2024[18] and its recently drafted update for 2022-2025 period. This integration involved many different stakeholders, as a result of a government commitment to stakeholder participation as an important element in guiding decision-making and supporting it in achieving its strategic sustainable development objectives.

For the development of the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework 2022-2025, the National Development Planning Commission established Cross Sectoral Planning Groups (CSPGs) and public consultations across the country for the preparation of development policies, strategies and plans with participation from the public and private sectors, civil society, academia, the media and professional associations. In addition, the National Development Planning Commission is leading the integration of the SDGs into local development plans with support from 16 Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs). In an effort to ensure a whole-of-government approach, it coordinates the development of action plans by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), and works with the sectors and districts to ensure that monitoring and evaluation arrangements are instituted, and that regular and periodic reviews of programme deliverables are undertaken.

18 National Development Planning Commission 2017. Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework, "An Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All 2017-2024", Volume I

19 Ghana Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, June 2019 ↘ PDF

> *Ghana has made significant efforts in national SDG implementation through establishing a multi-stakeholder platform and an inclusive and open VNR process.*

The Government of Ghana (GoG) has also made significant efforts to deliver the SDGs through an effective multi-stakeholder process and platform. A demonstration of this is the inclusive and open process that was undertaken to develop the 2019 Voluntary National Review (VNR)[19] through a participatory process including a wide range of stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels. The process was coordinated by the SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee under the supervision of the High-Level Ministerial Committee on SDGs.

The consultation process incorporated a series of workshops and consultative meetings with stakeholder groups. Thematic consultations were organised allowing participants to identify critical barriers, opportunities, emerging issues and recommended actions to respond to the identified issues. The outputs from the thematic consultations are reflected in the VNR report and inform strategic interventions for accelerating the implementation of the SDGs at all levels.

A participatory revision and validation of the VNR report was developed at national and sub-national level, engaging stakeholders from youth groups, the media, District Oversight Committees and members of Parliament at a series of workshops. In addition, awareness campaigns and training were developed for targeted groups on the SDGs to engage with selected stakeholders and mobilise support for the implementation of the SDGs.

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

Ghana has a vibrant and very well-organised civil society with the necessary political space to promote public accountability and actively participate in the country's stakeholder engagement processes. CSOs have become direct agents of implementation of development programmes at community and national levels.

Contributions of CSOs are mainly in the areas of public awareness creation; training of local civil society organisations and citizens to monitor progress on the implementation and service-delivery of programmes; advocacy towards increased resource allocation and effective implementation; monitoring and reporting; promotion of innovative interventions; and holding government accountable for inclusivity.

The GoG has subscribed to the value-add of stakeholder participation[20] and appears to fully support key stakeholders. These stakeholders are effectively organised and representative, with the exception of youth, communities and faith-based organisations. CSOs have been mainstreamed into the national development implementation structure, with representation on the various national SDG implementation committees and entities. Through their representation on these national platforms, CSOs in Ghana have had the opportunity to make direct inputs into national policies and contribute to the development of SDG-related frameworks.

The government appointed the Civil Society Organizations Platform on SDGs (CSOs Platform) to have an active role in the SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee and the Technical Committee

A well organised civil society, that appears to be supported by the government.

A solid whole-of-society approach, that enables permanent and institutional representation of CSO perspectives.

responsible for coordination and collaboration across government institutions for integrated policymaking. This has ensured a "whole-of society" approach to ensure that the SDG discourse is not dominated by the government. The CSOs Platform is recognised as the main vehicle for engaging with CSOs working on the SDGs, and the only one featured in the VNR. The institutional arrangements for the SDGs in Ghana successfully incorporate the CSOs Platform as an effective focal point to incorporate the voice of civil society and ensure collective review during national planning processes.

Ghana's national development blueprint reflects a commitment to private sector development as a means for development, recognising the need to create the conditions for the Ghanaian private sector to actively participate in the development of the country.

To ensure a coordinated approach to private sector engagement on the SDGs, the President of Ghana

established a CEOs Advisory Group on the SDGs, made up of Chief Executive Officers of key private sector entities from various industries including oil and gas, mining, manufacturing, banking, consumer services and telecommunications.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGA-NIZATIONS PLATFORM ON SDGS (CSOS PLATFORM) ↘URL

was established in 2015 to coordinate CSOs working on the SDGs under one umbrella. With over 500 members, the CSOs Platform is made up of 18 Sub-Platforms, 17 of which are linked to the SDGs, with a sub-platform on youth issues. There are also currently 16 District Sub-Platforms, engaging with local government authorities on the SDGs. The CSOs Platform has an active role in the SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee and the Technical Committee, and observer status in the High-Level Ministerial Committee.

SDG PHILANTHROPY PLATFORM (SDGPP) ↘URL

is coordinated by the UNDP and, working with the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, has provided catalytic grants to social enterprises and CSOs for innovative, scalable and impactful solutions to bringing safe water to communities classified as "hard-to-reach". It has conducted research which provides progressive policy options for optimal government-philanthropy collaborative models. Additionally, the SDG ecosystem mapping by the Platform has been uploaded to a portal which helps foundations to identify entry points for collaborative pathways on the SDGs. The establishment of Philanthropy and Impact Investment Networks Ghana (PHIING) by SDGPP and its partners has deepened partner-ships among foundations in providing grants and innovative financing to social enterprises that are incubating innovative pilot projects with potential for scaling up.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE FEDERATION (PEF) ↘URL

is a non-profit, non-political, autonomous institution with a membership open to all private businesses and trade associations from both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. The mission of PEF is to service the development needs of the private sector through advocacy for efficient allocation of the country's resources, provision of requisite business development support services and capacity building for a sustainable private sector-led national economic development. PEF aims to influence government policy towards prioritising private sector-driven economic and social development for an improved and consistent investment climate and enabling an environment for globally competitive and thriving private sector operations.

ASSOCIATION OF GHANA INDUSTRIES (AGI-GHANA) ↘URL

has launched a Ghana Young Entrepreneurs' Roundtable (GYER) on the SDGs. The programme seeks to engage, discuss and facilitate public efforts to achieve measurable outcomes towards the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to the SDGs in alignment with global development efforts. The initiative is aimed at building a core group of young business leaders to spearhead the integration of SDGs in private sector growth strategies.

CEOS ADVISORY GROUP ON THE SDGS

was established in Ghana to champion private sector engagement in implementing the SDGs. The Group, comprising prominent business leaders, aims to define a set of practical actions that the private sector can undertake to support the attainment of the SDGs. It has identified Goals 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12 as focus areas for immediate action and set up an SDGs Delivery Fund to finance actions on these Goals sourced from corporate social responsibility resources of the private sector.

Ghana: National roaring ahead, the local level must follow suit

has scaled up its programmes and activities over the past 8 years to cover domains such as education (scholarship for children) and health (sexual and reproductive health). It has also expanded the target scope from children to youth, noting the challenges that especially confront adolescent and young girls. YAG serves as the Secretariat for the 2030 Youth Alliance for Africa, working with and mobilising young people in Ghana and Africa to work in the SDGs' accountability process through the Annual African Youth SDGs Summit. The platform aims to ensure the voice of young people is heard in the VNR process. YAG also belongs to the Coalition of CSOs Platform on the SDGs and the African Youth and Adolescent Network (AfriIYAN).

YOUTH ADVOCATES GHANA (YAG) ↘ URL

INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH (ISSER) OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA ↘ URL

currently serves as the research wing under the College of Humanities, University of Ghana and engages in a variety of policy-relevant research, whose findings are intended to help policymakers on the best policy decisions for national development. ISSER produces annually a flagship document called State of the Ghanaian Economy Report. The report receives contributions from all members of the Economics Division. ISSER, in collaboration with UNDP, also issues the Ghana Human Development Report.

21 CSO Shadow Report on VNR. Progress on the SDGs: Telling the Ghanaian Story Through the Lens of Citizens. Civil Society Platform on the Sustainable Development Goals, June 2019 ↘ PDF

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN GHANA

Ghana presented its first VNR report in July 2019. The 2019 VNR process included a consultation process that incorporated a series of workshops, consultative meetings with stakeholder groups, a participatory revision and validation of the VNR report at national and sub-national level, and an awareness campaign and training for targeted groups to mobilise support for the implementation of the SDGs.

Since its formation, the CSOs Platform has provided opportunities for civil society actors to influence and actively participate in SDG-related activities, including the preparation of the 2018 SDGs Indicator Baseline Report, the SDG indicator monitoring framework, participating in the HLPF as part of the government delegation, and developing the Data Roadmap for the SDGs and the VNR process.

In July 2019, the CSOs Platform prepared a Shadow Report[21] to complement the government's VNR report and to promote mutual accountability on the implementation of the SDGs. Key findings from the Shadow Report were reflected in the government VNR. The report captures CSO contributions to the implementation of the SDGs (mainly SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17), supports advocacy and public awareness on the SDGs, strengthens national interventions on Ghana's SDG process, and highlights the challenges with civil society's coordination, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs. Members of the CSOs Platform, alongside representatives from the private sector and traditional authorities, were included in Ghana's official delegation to the HLPF and were involved in its presentation. They also organised a joint side event.

Ghana's whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has fostered partnerships and stakeholder collaboration, mainly with CSOs and the private sector. In 2021, the country launched the Country Financing Roadmap for the SDGs (CFR) in an effort to develop strategies to bridge the SDG financing gap through public-private collaboration. The CFR

observes the importance of fostering consensus through a multi-stakeholder approach and scaling up public-private collaboration as a means to unlock financing to achieve progress towards meeting the SDG goals. Two innovative funding mechanisms have been set up in the form of an SDG Delivery Fund and a Green Fund, both with the intention to engage the private sector in SDG investments.

Engagement with youth has been enhanced through the CSOs' sub-platform on youth, and academia is playing an active role, with most public and private universities, as well as government-funded research institutions, having active research programmes that are linked directly with the SDGs.

Nevertheless, there is a need to strengthen the participation of communities and cities, boosting the level of awareness and citizens' ownership of the goals. An effective implementation of the SDGs requires adequate capacity at local authority level to engage with local communities and other stakeholders. The CSOs Platform's Shadow Report observes a strong national level of institutional arrangements, but a weak local level of coordination in Ghana. In an effort to address this challenge, 16 District Sub-Platforms have been established for engaging with local government authorities on the SDGs.

Ghana has adopted an inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnership approach to the implementation of the SDGs, backed by sound institutional arrangements and high-level political support. However, these structures that operate at the national level have not been successfully translated to the sub-national level, namely the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs).

The strong multi-stakeholder approach at national level could profit from local engagement and participation for SDG delivery.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

While the pandemic risks eroding some of the gains made towards achieving the SDGs, the GoG's response to the pandemic aims to be linked to actions on the SDGs, recognising that amid the pandemic the SDGs are even more relevant to deal with global health risks and help build more resilient economies. The negative effect of the pandemic on poverty eradication efforts, food security, quality education, inequalities, decent work and economic growth, and climate change is manifestly clear.

The potential for Ghana to achieve the targets of the SDGs is advanced by the good structures that have been put in place for effective implementation coordination, particularly at the national level. Many of the functions of an MSP-advisory body are being performed mainly by the CSOs Platform, convened by the GoG under the SDGs Implementation Coordination Committee, a well-coordinated institutional mechanism that leads the SDG implementation effort.

A united front is presented by CSOs with a strong capacity to mobilise citizens around the goals. However, there seems to be work in progress to strengthen sub-national level engagement and coordination. The CSOs Platform is a strong and representative actor, but its presence at the sub-national level requires strengthening to secure stronger involvement of key, non-state stakeholders. Despite the efforts undertaken, the structures that operate at the national level have not been successfully translated to the sub-national level, namely the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). Although the MMDAs have integrated the SDGs into their local development

plans, they have not done much to promote local ownership or awareness or to actively engage other stakeholders on the implementation of the SDGs. An opportunity is observed to achieve integration by the MMDAs by replicating the national level coordination approaches for the implementation of the SDGs, such as the Implementation Coordination Committee (ICC).

There might be an opportunity to engage in a local prioritisation process of communities for SDGs to address important themes and areas of action, and to advance local networks for SDGs promoting a stronger involvement of citizens in key SDG-related areas. For this, it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of Ghana Statistical Services (GSS) to generate quality data, and to align data collection efforts towards a national and sub-national monitoring and planning process with the 2030 Agenda.

The CSOs Platform has proven to be a robust vehicle for constructive engagement between non-state actors, government and the private sector. Nevertheless, these stakeholders, though critical, are not exhaustive, as other potential partners such as traditional authorities, religious bodies and academia might need to be engaged in a more institutionalised manner.

There is a need to improve capacities and understanding of the country's priorities, policies and aspirations, especially within local authorities. Considering that effective implementation of the SDGs requires adequate capacity at local authority level to engage with local communities and other stakeholders in order to develop transformative action, good policy must measure and foster the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at local level.

While the CSOs Platform has proven to constructively engage non-state actors, government and the private sector, the results will profit from systematic engagement of other stakeholders, such as traditional authorities, religious bodies and academia.

Finally, cities and communities in Ghana play a key role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the delivery of public services at local level, and there is an opportunity to improve capacities and enhance understanding of the country's priorities, policies and aspirations through an MSP-advisory body that can boost transformative action at local level for SDG implementation.

Nepal:
Highly committed to the SDGs and with a promising MSP that can enable more effective collaboration

22 Fifteenth Five-year Plan (2019/20-2024/25)

23 National Review of Sustainable Development Goals. Kathmandu: National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal (2020) ↘ PDF

24 UNESCAP case study (2017 VNR)

Nepal was quick off the mark following the launch of the SDGs in 2016, preparing an approach paper to the SDGs the same year. There remains a strong appetite for the SDGs, and within the government they are seen as a 'pride project'. The latest national plan[22] integrates the SDGs and the Government of Nepal (GoNe) budgets aligned with them. This plan is a major instrument to review how the SDG targets and indicators are being reflected and to what extent Nepal is on track to fulfil its global commitments.

The second VNR in 2020[23] states that key areas for further prioritization include accelerated economic growth, employment and incomes, with investment in human capital, infrastructure and productive capacity. This needs to be combined with sustainable use of resources and adaptation to climate change, and good governance and administrative reforms will remain a priority.

The interviews for this research revealed that there is a risk that the GoNe has excellent policy documents, but these do not get translated into action, and lack of resources is a very significant challenge. A lack of good data is also a notable hindrance to effective implementation.

In its case study after the first VNR in 2017, UNESCAP[24] noted the scale of the task of mainstreaming the SDGs across all planning and budgeting systems, particularly as restructuring of the federal system of governance was ongoing. It added that this would be compounded by technical shortcomings, including database computing limitations and a lack of disaggregated data.

The National Planning Commission (NPC) has a coordinating role with regard to SDG planning and reporting, but this is on an advisory basis. The NPC is,

however, supported by a National Development Action Committee chaired by the Prime Minister, which addresses problems of coordination and project bottlenecks, and has paid special attention to initiatives that influence achievement of the SDGs.

The apex level Steering Committee for Implementation and Monitoring of the SDGs, chaired by the Prime Minister, provides policy direction, facilitates partnerships and oversees the financial, human and technical resources required for implementation of the SDGs. Reporting to the Steering Committee, the SDG Implementation and Monitoring Committee, chaired by the Vice-chair of the NPC, provides guidance to the federal ministries, provincial and local levels. The committee also facilitates inter-ministry coordination in the mobilisation of resources, and is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the achievement of SDG targets on an annual basis and preparing periodic national SDG reports and reports to the Steering Committee.

Below the Implementation and Monitoring Committee are seven thematic committees, each coordinated by a member of the NPC. These committees facilitate the preparation of plans, programmes and budgets as well as following up and monitoring SDG activities. The thematic committees are expected to provide reports to the Implementation and Coordination Committee.

Most provincial governments have set up a planning commission or policy and planning commission chaired by the chief ministers. Localisation, and action by local government, are very important for the implementation of the SDGs in Nepal, but face a number of challenges. Plans are still lacking at the provincial level, although the UNDP has provided

Nepal's governance architecture demonstrates strong committment to the 2030 Agenda.

Local implementation of the SDGs in Nepal still faces a number of challenges.

25 Sustainable Development Goals Progress Assessment Report 2016–2019

support for conducting some baseline surveys and on how to integrate these into the provincial plans, and the NPC is helping provincial and local level officials by providing model planning and monitoring and evaluation guidelines[25].

There is a Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee of the National Assembly in the Federal Parliament, with representation of all the major political parties to provide oversight and national budget scrutiny on the SDGs.

The Central Bureau of Statistics is the country's apex statistical agency for the collection, standardisation and quality assurance of data, but monitoring and evaluation of national projects and initiatives is a basic function of the NPC.

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

The 2020 VNR states that "the government is convinced that all stakeholders have an important role to play, as SDG targets cannot be reached without their active participation and contributions". Led by the NPC, with support from the UNDP and the EU, there are programmes to engage widely across society. The VNR also commits to the consolidation of multi-stakeholder partnerships as a next step.

The NGO Federation of Nepal speaks for many organisations and helps the GoNe reach out to a spectrum of civil society with a joint voice, and the NGO Federation has a seat on the SDG Implementation and Monitoring Committee. The GoNe also reaches out to other major groups and stakeholders such as the SDGs National Network Nepal, women's groups,

Nepal: Highly committed to the SDGs and with a promising MSP that can enable more effective collaboration

Dalit groups, and other members of civil society that were consulted as part of the VNR process.

There are a variety of business groups representing the private sector that were all consulted separately for the VNR. They have not found a compelling case to work through a combined umbrella group on the SDGs. Three of them, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of Nepalese Industries and the Nepal Chambers of Commerce, participate in the SDG Implementation and Monitoring Committee. In addition, the Federation of Nepal Cottage and Small Industries and the National Business Initiative took part in discussions as part of the VNR process. Consultations were also held with representatives from the cooperative sector. Discussions were also carried out separately with the NGO Federation of Nepal.

The Nepal SDGs Forum is a relatively new umbrella organisation, which is already recognised by the GoNe and invited to take part in SDG reporting and planning.

NGO FEDERATION OF NEPAL ↘URL

represents a broad spectrum of civil society from small, grassroots organisations to large INGOs. It was formed in 1991 following civil society involvement in the movement that led to democracy in Nepal. The NGO Federation is very proud of its democratic origins and practices. There are annual elections of officials at District level, with a requirement for a new Executive Committee every three years. The Districts then elect a representative to go the Annual Forum, which elects the Secretariat.

THE NEPAL SDGS FORUM ↘URL

was established in 2016 as a common platform for networks, civil society, the private sector, cooperatives, media, development partners and other groups that seek to contribute to the SDGs. It is a multi-stakeholder partnership and not registered as an entity. Its aim is to enhance the capacity to plan, implement and monitor the SDGs, and lobby and advocate for the 2030 Agenda through multi-stakeholder events. The Forum works by having relevant organisations take on the role of convenor or co-convenor for an SDG. The NGO Federation is the convenor for SDG 16 as well as providing the Secretariat for the Forum, and has links to the Cooperative Federation and the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI).

FEDERATION OF NEPALESE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (FNCCI) ↘URL

describes itself as "the nationally and internationally recognised umbrella organisation of business in Nepal". The FNCCI is a membership organisation registered as a national representative chamber. Its purpose is to represent its members to the GoNe, and promote socio-economic development of Nepal through private sector-led economic growth. Its functions include reinforcing the business community's commitment to society and campaigning on social issues.

CONFEDERATION OF NEPALESE INDUSTRIES (CNI) ↘URL

is a business membership organisation that focuses on larger companies that see themselves as sector leaders. It campaigns on issues affecting the economy and the need for reform to increase competitiveness. It is well connected internationally.

NEPAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE (NCC) ↘URL

describes itself as "the first Chamber of Commerce in Nepal" and aims to assist in the development of the national economy through the promotion and protection of commerce and industries, covering both private and public sector enterprises. It is involved in trade facilitation, builds national and international trading networks and undertakes policy research related to trade.

FEDERATION OF NEPAL COTTAGE AND SMALL INDUSTRIES

is an umbrella organisation of Micro, Cottage and Small entrepreneurs of Nepal.

NATIONAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE ↘URL

was formed by fourteen major business associations and individual companies as an apolitical and non-profit-making organisation in 2005. Its purpose is "to strengthen the role and capacity of the Nepalese Private Sector to contribute in sustainable peace in Nepal" and it aims to do so by mobilising other private sector umbrella organisations, generating new relevant knowledge and creating demand and advocating for responsible and sustainable business practice in Nepal in public and private organisations.

SDGS NATIONAL NETWORK NEPAL ↘URL

was founded in 2019. A member-based network for individuals, umbrella organisations and organisations, it describes itself as "a common platform of independent civil society major groups, stakeholders and individuals". It includes a wide range of interest groups, listing 26, among them youth, women and girls, LGBTIQ, migrant workers and the scientific community. It also includes religious groups.

Other stakeholders engaged include the cooperative sector, which has been termed one of the three pillars of the economy. The government collaborates extensively with this sector to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development. The cooperatives have their own umbrella organisations and some of these are members of the Nepal SDGs Forum.

Universities have partnered with civil society on the SDGs, such as on monitoring progress and producing reports with valuable insights.

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN NEPAL

CSOs have made a significant contribution to political awareness, social transformation, service delivery and economic development, particularly during the decade-long period of conflict between the government and the fighters of the mass insurgency. Civil society had a vital role in providing services and disaster relief, which established the sector as a vital component in the country and gave the NGO Federation of Nepal high status.

The NGO Federation of Nepal then acted as an intermediary in the Peace Process and is held in very high regard as a result, having supported the political parties to lead the decisive political movement in 2006 for federal democracy in Nepal.

Civil society was consulted for both of Nepal's VNRs in 2017 and 2020. CSOs also decided to proactively contribute to the VNR and make recommendations to the GoNe to highlight their perspectives, concerns and demands for incorporation in the VNR 2020, and also publish their own annual review of the SDGs from their perspective and based on their own consultations.[26]

The GoNe and NPC emphasise the role of the private sector in the implementation of the SDGs, and the government is committed to further enhancing this collaboration. However, some observers note that the private sector itself is not yet very engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and suffers from a lack of awareness and lack of diversity. It has also suffered heavily from the economic impact of the pandemic.

Many CSOs have aligned their programmes with the SDGs, and are working to build awareness and localise the SDGs, hold the government accountable and contribute to relevant goals. CSOs have a major role in service delivery, stepping into many areas that the GoNe cannot reach, such as community schools, community forestry and water user groups.

As civil society plays a major role in the implementation of the SDGS, many CSOs seek more meaningful engagement.

While there is acknowledgment that multi-stakeholder partnerships will be essential for Nepal, it is unclear whether that will turn into concrete action on the 2030 Agenda.

This gives CSOs a special status, as the SDGs cannot be achieved without them.

CSOs also hold consultations and reviews at national, provincial and local levels. There are frequent interactions between the GoNe and civil society, often organised by the NPC, but civil society would like to have more genuine collaboration. Ministers change frequently and have varying experience and priority to collaborate with civil society. This is a major obstacle to constant stakeholder engagement and means that sometimes they have to "knock on the door and remind government that we are here". There is a concern from civil society that the GoNe does not want to cover all aspects of the SDGs comprehensively, such as gender, youth, LGBTQ. Civil society therefore sees a major benefit in broader reporting to include these stakeholder groups and their needs for national policy-making.

It is widely acknowledged that multi-stakeholder partnerships will be essential for Nepal to progress the 2030 Agenda. However there are some questions over the GoNe's appetite for collaboration, which arise from some weaknesses observed in consultation processes. An observer notes that there is a lot of goodwill within the SDG Forum, but whether that turns into concrete action is still to be seen.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

The GoNe has a 25-year vision for transforming Nepal into a high-income country. This is enshrined in law as required by the Constitution of Nepal, to progressively incorporate sustainable development and social,

economic, political and cultural issues. In the eyes of the NGO Federation of Nepal, this Act is a very positive step and a major instrument to review how the SDG targets and indicators are being reflected and to what extent Nepal is on track to fulfil its global commitments[27].

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance is that, while there is a rich ecosystem of strong umbrella organisations, and promising new multi-stakeholder groups that bring together different sectors on the SDGs, the GoNe appears to give collaboration with the private sector a higher priority than with other non-state actors, and civil society in particular. This potentially aligns with the GoNe's priorities in the VNR to focus on economic growth and job creation, but would also appear to be a missed opportunity, given that Nepal is blessed with an unusually rich and active third sector. There could also be significant challenges with further collaboration with the private sector, given the relatively low engagement from that side until now and its weakened position as a result of the pandemic.

However, it could be that the reality is a little different than the published literature suggests, given the extent to which civil society plays a service delivery role for sectors important to the SDGs, in rural and remote areas in particular, where the GoNe has the most challenges. It is also the case that, although the GoNe makes an effort to reach a wide variety of different groups with messages about the SDGs, the heterogenous nature of Nepal with its many languages and ethnic, religious and political diversity makes it difficult to have a straightforward structure for collecting and representing so many different viewpoints. Although the NGO Federation of Nepal plays an important role, in a similar way it might be difficult

27 SDG 16 Plus in Nepalese Context (NGO Federation of Nepal, 2021)

A rich ecosystem of strong umbrella organisations, and promising new multi-stakeholder groups.

A need for institutionalisation of multi-stakeholder engagement to become a permanent source of support as part of the architecture for delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

for any one umbrella organisation to convene the whole of civil society.

The SDG Forum is, however, a sign of serious intent to improve this aspect of multi-stakeholder engagement in the 2030 Agenda in Nepal. This very promising MSP draws together many different sectors and is already recognised by the government. The next step can be to strengthen its capacity to play multiple roles in support of the 2030 Agenda and make even greater efforts to engage every group within Nepal's richly heterogenous society. It can then provide a forum for discussion of the most challenging issues facing the country, as well as provide the GoNe with independent advice and guidance on how to achieve its objectives and play a role as a true 'critical friend' in addressing the many gaps in data such that the gaps in policy and implementation are more evident. Further to this, the multi-stakeholder partnership could helpfully be institutionalised to become a permanent source of support as part of the architecture for delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

Nigeria: Technically highly adept approach that could be improved in practice

Good and secure living standards for all are priorities for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

28 Nigeria Integration of the SDGs into National Development Planning: A Second Voluntary National Review ↘ PDF

29 Nigeria SDGs Implementation Plan 2020-2030 ↘ URL

There is ample evidence that the Government of Nigeria (GoNi) has put in place coordination and planning structures to be able to deliver the 2030 Agenda through a joined-up, "whole-of-government" approach. Compared to many other countries, Nigeria's approach is technically sophisticated and well structured.

The second VNR[28] in 2020 notes that "Nigeria has domesticated the SDGs and linked them to its national development plan, the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan". This plan was a response to an economic recession in 2016, and lasted from 2017-2020. Following the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, a Nigeria Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2020-2030 (2030 Plan) has been developed, which is aimed at guiding the implementation of the SDGs across the country. This chronicles the last five years of progress and is a roadmap that projects the future in terms of what needs to be done by whom and how, with strengthening of national and sub-national institutions for delivery of the SDGs a key priority.[29] This will support the priorities highlighted in the VNR for enabling action in achieving SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 16 and 17, with the President highlighting poverty (SDG 1), corruption and security (SDG 16) in particular. The writers suggest that "with the publication of this Plan, we are convinced that we have now completed the long and meticulous process of institutionalising the SDGs in Nigeria".

The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (known as OSSAP) is a critical element in coordination of action towards achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda in Nigeria. The office was established following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs in September 2015, inherited from the former office

for implementing the Millennium Development Goals. The Minister of this office does not report to any Ministry, but works closely with the Ministry of National Planning and other Federal Ministries to ensure that the SDGs are integrated in their sectoral policies, and plans the SDGs to ensure a whole-of-government approach.

The Presidential Council on SDGs is headed by the President of the Federal Republic and, with all the relevant Cabinet Ministers and State Governors from each of the geopolitical zones. This group provides strategic leadership and guidance for ministries and institutions engaged in the 2030 Agenda, including multi-sector working groups.

There are similar offices to OSSAP in many, but not all, States, in the office of the Governor with a Special Assistant to the Governor on SDGs. OSSAP also interacts with parliamentarians.

For the 2020 VNR, private sector and civil society groups were included in a Core Working Group which also includes staff from OSSAP, which co-chairs with a UNDP representative. Working group members were advised and encouraged to help organise virtual consultations across the country for the VNR, although in practice they did not have the resources to do this. The VNR highlights that the involvement of these stakeholders should be regarded as a process rather than an end, such that there is long-lasting collaboration with relevant non-state actors to "enable them to make ongoing inputs into the review process and provide feedback for further planning".

The engagement of multiple stakeholders through these structures extends well beyond the VNR. The 2030 Plan states that OSSAP facilitated the establishment of separate groups for engaging

Nigeria has established an impressivly sophisticated and well structured "whole-of-government" approach to jointly implement the 2030 Agenda.

The government embraces multi-stakeholder engagement on the SDGs and facilitates it beyond the VNR process.

the private sector, civil society and development partners in order to mobilise the "expertise and financial resources needed for the achievement of the SDGs in Nigeria".

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

Nigeria has a vibrant civil society, media and academia, along with a highly entrepreneurial culture and a large and diverse private sector.

The Nigeria Sustainable Development Goals Implementation Plan 2020–2030 highlights the role of the organised private sector, both as a partner that will help deliver results against targets as well

as a source of additional financing for programme implementation. The Private Sector Advisory Group on SDGs (PSAG) is one of the most vibrant in Africa, also enjoying status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, as part of the private sector partners for the SDGs.

Civil society is mentioned in rather different terms in the 2030 Plan, with a statement that "there is dire need to effectively engage and support the leadership of the Civil Society Organisations Strategy Group on SDGs to coordinate the activities of all civil society organisations within the SDG space in Nigeria". Civil society is organised such that organisations representing different groups and addressing different needs have their own networks and umbrella organisations. Despite the size of the country, there are organisations that draw together these varied groups into one voice on the SDGs. The Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD) in particular can claim to be very representative of civil society in Nigeria, given that it draws its National Steering Committee and Board of Trustees from each of the country's six geopolitical zones. The Federal Government recognises a number of network groups that represent civil society in Nigeria on issues regarding the SDGs, including CSCSD.

International NGOs and UN organisations also play an active role in the VNR process, with representatives from ActionAid, One Campaign on behalf of INGOs, and the UNDP and UNICEF also having staff in the Core Working Group. There are some noticeable omissions from the VNR process, however. While the scientific community and broader academia do participate in CSCSD, they are not mentioned in the VNR. This is perhaps because the scientific community and

A vibrant and diverse stakeholder landscape in a complex and large country requires thorough and inclusive engagement processes.

academia are seen by OSSAP as broadly fitting into civil society but they are treated somewhat separately within that by OSSAP. Youth groups also do not appear to have been consulted directly, and neither do faith-based groups or religious leaders.

The following are some of the key umbrella organisations that play a role:

THE CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSCSD)
↘ URL

is a network of NGOs, civil society and faith-based organisations. It has over 2,000 members, ranging from advocacy organisations and those aiming to empower Nigeria's citizens, human rights organisations, environmental NGOs working on climate change, development NGOs in areas such as health and poverty, disability and elderly people's groups, and organisations promoting peace in Nigeria. It does not include government or private sector. The governance of CSCSD is through a National Steering Committee, which has at least two members from each of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, which average six States each, and a Board of Trustees, also from across the country. There is also an annual General Assembly of all members, where they can express their views. The Steering Committee runs collaborative projects, and every year produces a grassroots spotlight report including a scorecard report on the performance of government, assessing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and how it affects ordinary Nigerians.

Nigeria: Technically highly adept approach that could be improved in practice

THE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS STRATEGY GROUP ON SDGS (CSOG-SDG) was convened by the government in 2019 following advocacy by CSCSD, and mobilises all non-state actors operating within the SDG space in the country. Currently CSCSD provides four members of the 9-person executive, which was elected by a gathering of civil society umbrella organisations and networks in Nigeria involved in the SDGs, facilitated by OSSAP. It also includes a representative of people with disabilities.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR ADVISORY GROUP ON SDGS (PSAG), which is led by the organised private sector itself, is arranged into several clusters. This aligns their corporate social responsibility resources and expertise to support the implementation of the SDGs.

SDSN NIGERIA ↘URL is a consortium of Nigerian universities and other academic tertiary institutions. The network's vision is to be "the vanguard of the national sustainable development efforts and the custodian of science, knowledge and innovation for the sustainable development agenda".

ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES is active across the six geopolitical zones, coordinated by Sightsavers.

The extent of civil society participation in the 2017 VNR was for a few, Abuja-based CSOs to attend events organised by government around the VNR, as the government was not ready to support CSOs' cost of participation from other locations. This led to many CSOs being left out, and it has been suggested that this VNR lacks some legitimacy as a result.

However, every year since 2016, CSCSD has been visiting the United Nations headquarters for the VNR process at the HLPF, using its own resources to do so. In 2019, preparing for the 2020 VNR, CSCSD told the government that it intended to come up with a shadow report which would provide an objective external review of progress. This was a highly strategic action to persuade the government to engage with the group more closely. It was not an attractive proposition for government, and attendance on this basis by civil society at the HLPF may have felt like a risk to the GoNi in terms of exposing issues with implementing the 2030 Agenda.

In December 2019 the government took steps to resolve this issue by forming the Civil Society Organisations Strategy Group on SDGs to work on the VNR.

There are still questions around the quality of representation of civil society in SDG processes. As with civil society, there are also questions about how representative the Private Sector Advisory Group really is. The private sector is supporting neither CSCSD nor civil society in general. The government reflected that on their side they feel they have very cordial exchanges with the organised private sector and the development partners. With civil society, by its nature, they report that they have more contestations.

While there is collaboration between civil society and the GoNi, there is also "a lot of room for more". There is some debate about quite how representative meetings held with the Federal Government are,

given that to some extent it depended on which networks and umbrella organisations are invited to the meetings and whether all invitees have the resources to be able to travel and stay in the capital. Research for this report suggests several dimensions to the challenge of making more progress on getting a higher level of collaboration between civil society and the GoNi, with one interviewee reflecting that "we [the GoNi and donor community] haven't got them [civil society] involved properly and given the chance for them to share their views".

A lack of an assertive civil society 'voice' participating in discussions with the GoNi has also been noted. However, what happens at the federal level also affects the state level, which leads the federal level to be more circumspect at the federal level than at the state level.

What is less contested is that there are certainly limitations in how civil society is actually engaged, beyond validation of plans and reports. In the context of the 2030 Plan, civil society has proposed playing a role in community sensitisation and the SDGs, monitoring their implementation, developing plans and capacity development in the community. CSOs have not yet been called on to play any of these roles, but are hoping that by the time implementation starts, and there is a full implementation plan, this will change.

Without this, accusations of the current engagement by civil society as reported above being 'window dressing' by the government may be true. CSOs must also be able to conduct their functions of holding the government accountable, and this raises a question as to how much civil society can ask for government funding without also being compromised in this function.

Civil society is ready for a bigger role and academia requires more support for participation.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

Nigeria has the structures and processes in place for a very good level of coordination between the GoNi and civil society, but there are fears that collaboration only extends to the validation of government plans and that the opportunity to benefit fully from deeper multi-stakeholder partnerships is not yet being realised.

The Civil Society Organisations Strategy Group on SDGs and the Private Sector Advisory Group on SDGs, convened by the GoNi, have put in place an effective coordination mechanism to link together stakeholders to advocate for the SDGs, coordinate implementation and collect data. All this is being facilitated by the well-placed and technically able OSSAP. This is largely replicated at state level, which bodes well for the sub-national level.

Many of the elements are in place that could make such a partnership feasible in Nigeria. This could help address unease amongst civil society on two fronts. Firstly, despite the good use of technology and significant efforts to align data collection and national and sub-national planning with the 2030 Agenda, it is alleged that many of the plans and policies are not being resourced and implemented because politicians at different levels are interfering with the process. Secondly, it is suggested that the engagement that has happened to date, as exemplified by the 2020 VNR and the SDG Implementation Plan 2020-2030, has only happened because the GoNi feels under pressure to give the appearance of collaboration, but in practice is not involving civil society in early-stage planning, or allocating any resources to civil society to play the roles where it can add most value

Nigeria: Technically highly adept approach that could be improved in practice

to achieving the SDGs.

If the concerns expressed by civil society can be addressed, then Nigeria can make progress on its aspirations through partnerships that improve development outcomes. There are hopeful signs that this may be the case.

The SDG Implementation Plan 2020-2030 states there is a "dire need" to engage civil society in implementation, and civil society is ready and waiting for this role. Senior representatives of civil society are already being invited to join significant initiatives to bring in the voice and capacity of the sector, and these channels are open for more extensive collaboration. Meanwhile, the large-scale private sector is organising itself to align its CSR and other activities to provide

Only few steps away from a permanent and institutionalised Multi-Stakeholder Platform.

more resources towards achieving more progress in basic human needs and education.

It might also be beneficial if development plans were co-created with all stakeholders working in a multi-stakeholder partnership drawing on all of Nigerian people's skills and capacities. These plans, one properly endorsed by the county's democratically elected representatives, could then have budgets allocated by federal and state governments that are commensurate with their ambition, and that enable civil society to play a full role. These budgets should be protected from improper further political interference. The donor community could play a helpful role by ensuring that civil society across the country has the resources to be able to attend meetings with the Federal Government and can also undertake an independent watchdog role.

An MSP that existed alongside the coordination being done by OSSAP could also play an independent advisory role, enhance the ability to bring a multi-stakeholder perspective to sustainable development policies, and help to identify and highlight gaps and challenges. This could also provide useful input to guide decisions on where best to channel resources in order to improve development outcomes. This would support GoNi priorities, as stated in the VNR, to address poverty, build an inclusive economy and improve its citizens' health and well-being, education and gender equality.

Peru: Collaborating well but less so specifically on the SDGs

30 Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible y Políticas de Estado del Acuerdo Nacional. Acuerdo Nacional. Primera edición, diciembre 2017

31 Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo Nacional (PEDN), Peru 2021

32 Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo Nacional al 2050 Propuesta (documento de trabajo). Noviembre 2021

Strategic strength to deliver the SDGs in Peru.

The Government of Peru (GoP) sees the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to form an inclusive national consensus and roadmap towards sustainable development and, since 2016, has launched important efforts to re-orient strategic planning around the SDGs. In order to align the 35 State Policies[30] with the SDGs and build a long-term national plan to 2030, the government presented "Visión del Peru al 2030". This process guided the government in identifying and prioritising sustainable development gaps to address in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Finally, to align key policy priorities[31] and outcomes with the SDGs retroactively, in 2019, the GoP approved a long-term vision towards 2050. The 2030 Agenda and the SDG framework were used as reference points to help build a domestic consensus around the future vision for the country – Peru 2050.

Peru 2050 guides the continuous improvement of policies and plans that steer the actions of the government, civil society, academia, companies and international cooperation, in order to achieve a decent life for all people through inclusive and sustainable development. Despite these efforts, aligning development policy instruments with the SDG framework is a work in progress in Peru, and the country is currently in the process of formulating a Strategic Plan for National Development (PEDN)[32], which is observed as the main tool for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country's national, provincial and departmental development plans.

The efforts to integrate the SDGs into existing governance and policy frameworks have been led by the National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN), the specialised technical body in charge of governing, guiding and coordinating the National Strategic Planning

System, and the focal point for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Peru.

The Ministry of Economy and Finances (MEF), the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI)[33] and the Ministry of Environment (MINAM) also have important roles in the implementation of development priorities, while the National Center for Strategic Planning takes the lead in reviewing the long-term vision (Peru al 2050) and national development plan through an SDG lens, at the same time ensuring that sectoral and sub-national plans and policies align within these parameters. The Ministry of Economy and Finance has updated the integrated financial management system to allow for tagging programmes and budget lines to SDG targets. The country also has a National Strategy for Climate Change, implemented by the Ministry of Environment. The National Institute of Statistics and Informatics has been playing a key role in mapping and expanding the availability of SDG-relevant data, while facilitating an SDG platform for citizen accountability. Nevertheless, the country's capacity to secure data availability during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic has been weak, revealing important impacts on the monitoring and reporting processes that support decision-making in the country.

In order to build political consensus across national stakeholders, a government coordination mechanism has been established called the National Agreement (Acuerdo National). Since 2002, this has been the main platform to support collaboration and build consensus across national stakeholders from civil society, the business sector, unions, religious organisations and political parties. The National Agreement is integrated by a National Forum[34], a Coordination

33 INEI. Peru: Línea Base de los Principales Indicadores Disponibles de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), 2018. Noviembre 2018

34 Established in 2002 by Supreme Decree Nº 105-2002-PCM

Committee and working thematic groups. The National Forum is the tripartite space for dialogue and consensus building. Led by the President of Peru, it integrates the government at its three levels (national, regional and local), political parties with representation in the Congress, and civil society organisations with national presence.

Despite these efforts, important barriers remain for effective SDG-oriented public policies, including addressing the response to the pandemic through the lens of the SDGs. The country's current context has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, marked by historical social and economic inequalities, and a very fragmentated society. In addition to the pandemic crisis, Peru faces a democratic instability crisis, which has led to four different Chiefs of State assuming the presidency in a short period of less than four years. And the country is still in the process of finding its institutional stability since its last presidential elections in 2021. This is also observed in other key institutions such as CEPLAN, which recently confronted changes in its leadership that may have an impact on the continuity of the planning processes of development in the country. This political context presents important challenges to securing the stability and strength of the participatory processes put in place to engage stakeholders in national planning processes.

Peru has a strong dialogue platform to build consensus across stakeholders, themes and political parties.

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

The GoP recognises that the country's development processes require the participation of the main civil society organisations, experts and academia, representatives of the various political forces, the private sector, and coordination between different levels of government. CSOs are observed as the stronger key stakeholder actively participating in development planning processes.

Stakeholders in Peru recognise that the consultation process allows for them to articulate their interests, expectations and sector contribution. It also generates a commitment to achieve common goals. Achieving agreement on the country's vision of the future, within the framework of the National Agreement,

35 Established in 2001 through Supreme Decree 001-2001-PROMUDEH

36 Memoria III Foro de la sociedad civil sobre la Agenda 2030. Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo, ANC. 2019

Peru has strong key umbrella organisations, actively participating in development planning processes, as well as relevant independent advisory bodies.

implies that actors from the public sector and non-state actors agree on a shared future and actively participate in the strategies designed. When it comes to advisory bodies, the Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha Contra la Pobreza (MCLCP)[35] is regarded as a strong civil society umbrella organisation at both local and national levels that brings together society and government representatives from national, regional and municipal level.

The Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo (ANC) is a key partner of the Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha Contra la Pobreza (MCLCP), and is very active in the different working groups. It is an important representative of the MCLCP in the National Agreement consultation spaces, and its role promoting the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the country has been crucial[36]. Since 2018, the ANC has coordinated Peruvian civil society organisations through the Civil Society Group "Peru Agenda 2030", which has a permanent connection to CEPLAN. In addition, the Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo has promoted important activities such as the III Civil Society Forum, a mechanism to direct actions for the achievement of the SDGs and produce a publication about "Civil Society Peruanizing the 2030 Agenda", compiling the contributions from various spaces of civil society for monitoring the goals.

ACUERDO NACIONAL (AN) ↘URL

is the set of State Policies elaborated and approved on the basis of dialogue and consensus building, after a process of workshops and consultations at the national level, in order to define a course for the sustainable development of the country. The 35 State Policies propose the changes needed in social, political and economic aspects to achieve the common good, and they are grouped into four objectives: democracy and rule of law; development with equity and social justice; promotion of competitiveness of the country; and affirmation of an efficient, transparent and decentralised state. AN collaborates closely with national institutions and the UNDP in order to align State Policies with the 2030 Agenda in order to accelerate the processes leading to the achievement of the SDGs.

MESA DE CONCERTA- CIÓN PARA LA LUCHA CONTRA LA POBREZA (MCLCP) ↘URL

was established in 2001 to create a space of dialogue and consensus with the participation of civil society organisations and state institutions to adopt agreements and coordinate actions that allow an effective fight against poverty in the country. MCLCP aims to reach agreement on social policies from a human development perspective, with an equity and gender approach, and achieve greater efficiency in the execution of programmes that fight poverty. It also aims to institutionalise citizen participation in the design, decision-making and oversight of the state's social policy, and maximise transparency and integrity in the management of anti-poverty programs. MCLCP has the conviction that a joint effort is required from public and social, economic and political actors to carry out the task of overcoming poverty. To make it possible, the need arises to resort to dialogue and agreement, rather than confrontation and imposed solution, and a commitment to democracy, citizen participation and decentralisation.

ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL DE CENTROS DE INVES- TIGACIÓN, PROMOCIÓN SOCIAL Y DESARROLLO (ANC) ↘URL

was established in 1984 as a union body that brings together Peruvian NGOs with the aim of strengthening performance in their role as development agents, with high capacity to develop proposals, build partnerships and influence public policies in the country in favour of human development. Their work focuses on providing legal advice, capacity building, services and political advocacy to secure efficient use of soil and water resources, the development of appropriate technologies, participation of women, the defence of human rights, preservation and care of the environment, land use planning, and the organisation of risk management systems and decentralisation processes.

CONFERENCIA NACIONAL DE DESARROLLO SOCIAL (CONADES) ↘URL

comprises stakeholders from civil society, faith-based organisations, trade union and grassroots organisations, who meet to develop proposals for public policies aimed at putting the economy and the state at the service of the people. A conference has been held every year since its formation, with a specific thematic issue, with the purpose of accumulating knowledge, programmatic proposals and making connections with social movements.

PERU SOSTENIBLE ↘URL

is a network of companies that seeks to: connect with the different actors and the latest trends in sustainability; support companies to become agents of change that promote sustainable development; and make visible the best business practices in sustainability to promote sustainable development in Peru.

Peru: Collaborating well but less so specifically on the SDGs

THE MILLENNIALS MOVEMENT

is a youth-led civil society organisation based in Peru that promotes the involvement of citizens and various social actors in the sustainable development of their community through programmes and interventions that provide them with opportunities to educate themselves, discuss ideas with their peers and take action. Their organisational objectives are aligned with the scope of the 2030 Agenda, creating citizen awareness, implementing activities and monitoring processes

CONSORCIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN ECONÓMICA Y SOCIAL (CIES)
↘URL

is an association of 49 prestigious Peruvian institutions dedicated to research and teaching in economic, environmental and social sciences. It is supported by the Canadian Technical Cooperation and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Its mission is to contribute to Peru's development by raising the level of national debate on key economic, social and environmental policy options. It also aims to strengthen the Peruvian academic community to produce and disseminate useful knowledge for analysts and decision-makers in the public sector, civil society, the media, private enterprise and international cooperation.

RED DE MUNICIPALIDADES URBANAS Y RURALES DEL PERU (REMUPRE)
↘URL

is a union representative organisation of the municipalities of Peru, especially rural ones, whose objective is to strengthen municipal management and promote democratic and decentralised governance, in order to provide an adequate service to citizens and contribute to social welfare – the supreme goal of the existence of the state.

CONFEDERACIÓN NACIONAL DE INSTITUCIONES EMPRESARIALES PRIVADAS (CONFIEP)
↘URL

is an institution that represents 22 associations of small, medium and large companies from eight economic sectors: international trade; national trade; building; financial intermediation and stock market; manufacturing industries, mining, oil and energy; fishing and aqua industry; general, tourist and communication services; public services and social services.

ASAMBLEA NACIONAL DE GOBIERNOS REGIONALES
↘URL

is a plural organisation promoting good governance practices, transparency and the fight against corruption, which effectively supports regional integration initiatives and develops proposals to advance the decentralisation of the country. It works in alliance with associations from other levels of government, agreeing and articulating sectoral and territorial policies, consolidating itself as a space for reflection and dialogue for the improvement of regional management and intra- and intergovernmental coordination.

Peru: Collaborating well but less so specifically on the SDGs

37 Informe Nacional Voluntario sobre la Implementación de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. Peru, 2017

38 Gobierno del Perú. Informe Nacional: Perú a mayo 2020 La Protección de la Vida en la Emergencia y Después. II Informe Nacional Voluntario sobre la implementación de la Agenda 2030 para el desarrollo sostenible. Centro Nacional de Planeamiento Estratégico (CEPLAN)

Even though the Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha contra la Pobreza (MCLCP) serves as a space for interaction and agreement between the government of Peru and CSOs, the relationship with the National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) is observed as weak by several key actors from CSOs, who consider that a dialogue with the Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha contra la Pobreza (MCLCP) does not necessarily ensure the inclusion of all relevant civil society voices regarding the 2030 Agenda. In order to close this gap, the Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo (ANC) through its 2030 Agenda Group seeks to convene representative instances of civil society in different areas such as

education, work, gender, environment, health and vulnerable populations, in order to provide other perspectives and contribute to a critical analysis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Even though the National Agreement has strong convening power and has shown neutrality and capacities to summon the different stakeholders, there is still a need observed to strengthen participation of some key stakeholders in the space in order to secure proper engagement. Political parties' participation tends to be affected during electoral periods, which have a tendency to diminish their commitment and participation in the different dialogue and consensus-building spaces facilitated by the National Agreement.

Local-government umbrella organisations are present in the country, and these could play a more active role in order to secure broader impact and SDG localisation at local levels.

While the existing frameworks have a strong convening power, a balanced and inclusive stakeholder engagement strategy should be pursued.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

The GoP is actively seeking to align national policies and strategies with the 2030 Agenda and its goals. The National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) has been oriented towards the strengthening of a common vision for the country's development. To achieve this, it is making significant efforts to provide technical assistance and accompany the entities at the different levels of government to integrate the SDGs into their institutional planning processes. However, although this requires a continuous effort for strong coordination with key regional stakeholders, CEPLAN has entered into little consultation, and in

some cases only one-way informative spaces, with civil society and the private sector, universities, research centres and regional consultation tables.

The role of the Mesa de Concertación de Lucha Contra la Pobreza (MCLCP) in the concerted monitoring of public policies is widely recognised, strengthening citizen ownership in the achievement of the SDGs. Likewise, the governance agreements sponsored by MCLCP in the regional and territorial electoral processes provide valuable elements for the process of updating policies and plans at the territorial level and their implementation and monitoring. In this sense, the role of Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo (ANC) as a key member of the space has demonstrated its ability to consolidate greater cooperation from civil society and the government of Peru. The ANC has a proven commitment and track record for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Peru and is observed to be a key actor with a crucial role in MCLCP.

Peru has pushed to incorporate the SDGs into national, sectoral and sub-national plans, and has put in place a government consultation mechanism in the form of a National Agreement that secures stakeholders' engagement in planning processes. Nevertheless, SDG mainstreaming across government action is still uneven, with less progress at sub-national level and among several line ministries. In addition, the engagement process in Peru is mostly conducted by CEPLAN, and the process has been slow with limited participation. For example, the latest long-term vision took two years to be approved, which to some observers and key stakeholders is a sign of a weak level of commitment towards the 2030 Agenda. The country's democratic instability impacted leaderships

Inclusion of sub-national level decision-making in SDG delivery amends existing "whole-of-government" ambitions.

Given the complex context situation, Peru is committed to deliver the SDGs, but there seems to be little space for establishing a new multi-stakeholder coordination architecture for sustainable development.

39 Gobierno del Perú. Informe Nacional: Perú a mayo 2020 La Protección de la Vida en la Emergencia y Después. II Informe Nacional Voluntario sobre la implementación de la Agenda 2030 para el desarrollo sostenible. Centro Nacional de Planeamiento Estratégico (CEPLAN)

in key institutions, such as CEPLAN, diminishing its capacity to confront the socio-economic crisis intensified due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and weakening the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance is that the GoP and other key stakeholders recognise the National Agreement and MCLCP as the two official platforms for multi-stakeholder engagement in Peru and highlight the importance of using available institutional channels to strengthen coordination and dialogue among the different stakeholders in the country. There seems to be little space for the establishment of new coordination architecture for sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda in the country, even if the existing one has not always worked as expected in the past. In a complex political context, Peru still observed a strong commitment and level of organisation as well as favourable levels of engagement of the different sectors, and the country could benefit from securing a broader level of participation of key actors committed to the 2030 Agenda in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and address key development priorities[39] such as securing the protection of life through access to health and food for everyone, developing value chains to strengthen the economic situation and strengthening the country's institutional and democratic stability.

South Africa: Promising preconditions calling for recognition and a roadmap

Authorship of this chapter:
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40 The methodology used to write this chapter included document review, key informant interviews, consultation with key stakeholders, and an exchange session with the German Council for Sustainable Development and the Kenyan SDGs Forum. Interviews were conducted with 13 resource persons from government, labour, civil society, business, academia, Chapter 9 institutions and international development partners. In addition, a report was tabled on feedback sessions to the key stakeholder. The information has been reviewed by officials from the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, civil society, business and chapter 9 institutions, as well as international partners.

41 National Planning Commission (2020) SAWG on SDGs: Overview of National Coordination Mechanism on Sustainable Development. Presentation to SAWG workshop

South Africa, through its 2019 Voluntary National Review (VNR), has identified priority themes that require intervention and introduced a new institutional architecture. The critical interventions include ensuring availability and use of disaggregated data; addressing corruption; improving employment opportunities for the most vulnerable and discriminated sectors in society; strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships; eliminating gender inequalities and gender-based violence; and gauging the impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution. These critical interventions are applied by means of sectoral policies and programmes.

The South Africa VNR report 2019 noted that the government had created new national coordination mechanisms for both internal and external coordination to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in monitoring the achievement of the SDGs and evaluating related policies, and in improving alignment and coherence between national and sub-national development, as well as with regional and global plans. The national coordination mechanism has been approved by Cabinet to strengthen the implementation of development policies and to review progress on the SDGs and other agendas, such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Southern African Development Community's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme.[41]

This national coordination mechanism comprises the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development Agendas and the National Development Stakeholders Forum (NDSF). The NDSF is a multi-stakeholder body, in the context of which African Monitor and partners have been engaging the government and critical stakeholders towards its institutionalisation. The government, led by the

Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and by Statistics South Africa, has envisaged that the Forum would facilitate synergies and links between state and non-state actors working on the SDGs in South Africa, i.e. better communication, dialogue and interaction between government and the relevant stakeholders from the various sectors of South African society (business, CSOs, academia and Chapter 9 institutions). Consequently, the government's vision was that the platform would provide a space for building consensuses, collaboration, coordination and monitoring of progress on the SDGs targets and those of other development agendas, including the SADC agreements and Agenda 2063.

The stakeholder participation in national policy-making is guided by the National Policy Development Framework (NPDF), which Cabinet approved in 2020. The NPDF prescribes robust stakeholder participation in the policymaking processes. The framework responds to the aspiration and challenges identified by the National Development Plan (NDP), addresses policy incoherence and improves policy coordination and content-related issues. The NPDF notes that the South African constitution espouses one of the principles and values: "people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking." However, the report identifies "limited stakeholder engagement during the policymaking process" as one of the country's critical challenges. Therefore, the involvement of the public in policymaking is a constitutional obligation that government institutions must respect and institutio-nalise. Accordingly, consultation with stakeholders

The time is now, to provide a mandate for a national SDG platform to build consensus and foster collaboration across stakeholders.

42 Ibid

43 It is to be recalled that South Africa had adopted its first National Framework for Sustainable Development (NFSD) in 2008, aimed at promoting the effective stewardship of South Africa's natural, social and economic resources. The National Strategy for Sustainable Development and Action Plan – also known as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) 1 (2009–2014) – builds on the NFSD to provide a high-level roadmap for strategic sustainable development.

should commence as early as possible before a decision is taken on policy direction, including when identifying and conceptualising a policy issue; the framework requires the national policymakers to develop a detailed communication and stakeholder strategy that will consider vulnerable groups, rural conditions, the timing for consultation and other factors that might be barriers to active participation.[42]

South Africa has integrated the National Strategy for Sustainable Development[43] and the Action Plan into the new NDP; therefore, it does not have a standalone roadmap for sustainable development. However, the UNDP and the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation reports released in 2021

have shown 74 percent convergence and alignment between the Sustainable Development Goals and new development plans.[44] The NDP is implemented through the Medium Terms Strategic Framework and sectoral policies.

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

The South African government's development agendas emphasise the importance of multi-stakeholder platforms as expressed in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 1, the NDP and the Medium Terms Strategic Framework.[45] In addition, the South African VNR Report 2019 affirms the government's commitment to a multi-stakeholder approach, which "has laid the foundation for building strong alliances and collaboration for the SDGs implementation between the governments and its social partners".

South Africa is considered to have an enabling environment for permanent and institutionalised multi-stakeholder engagement for three main reasons. Firstly, the NDSF is seen as coming at an opportune time, as there is a need for multi-stakeholder engagement on the SDGs in the country because the current socio-economic climate calls for such approaches. Additionally, such an MSP-advisory body is seen as both filling a gap in governance where a multi-stakeholder platform for the SDGs does not exist and extending the reach of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, which is differently placed to other departments in the South African government. Therefore, the proposed Forum is perceived as a step in the correct direction towards

44 UNDP, 2021: Report on Mapping of the National Development Plan (NDP, Vision 2030) to the UN SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063

45 Lorren K. Haywood, 2018, Natural Resources and the Environment, Council of Scientific and industrial Research (CSIR)

South Africa is in the pole position to utilize its well organised stakeholder groups for a national SDG forum.

opening up the government so that all citizens will have a say in development planning and implementation. Secondly, the Forum is seen as aligned with the "whole-of-society" approach, which is viewed as critical to moving the South African development agenda forward. Lastly, South Africa is perceived to have an enabling institutional environment, including a strong constitutional and legislative framework that endorses the culture of multi-stakeholder approaches to engagement, well-established civil society sectors, as well as a strong business sector and Chapter 9 institutions. South Africa also has a history of social compacts and dialogue between government, business and CSOs, for example through the National Economic Development and Labour Council.

There are five key groups of actors which have been identified as central in implementing the SDGs in South Africa; these are government, business, civil society, academic and research institutions, as well as international agencies (Haywood et al., 2019, VNR 2019).

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY WORKING GROUP ON SDGS (SAWG)

mobilises South African civil society around effective SDG implementation, ensuring that those most in need are prioritised in the mainstreaming of goals in the country's national, provincial and local government strategic plans. The SAWG is also the co-convenor of the annual Open SDGs Symposium and community dialogues. In addition, SAWG is supported by a network of umbrella organisations, including the National Alliance for NGOs, the South African Council of Civil Society Organisations, the National Informal Settlements Organisations of South Africa, the South African Congress of NPOs and the South African National Civics Association. This coalition has been involved in processes facilitated by the SAWG. It has also been involved in the national voluntary review process organised by Statistics SA to monitor and implement the SDGs.

THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK SOUTH AFRICA ↘ URL

AND

THE NATIONAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE (NBI) ↘ URL

have mobilised the business sector as an active partner in implementing the SDGs. They play an essential role in shaping a sustainable future by ensuring that their members adhere to sustainable development principles and implement corporate social investment frameworks and strategies. They have facilitated participation in the VNR process, and the Global Compact Network has additionally supported the establishment of the NDSF

46 ↘ URL

47 ↘ URL

TRADE UNIONS, COORDINATED BY THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU) ↘ URL

have been active partners in implementing the SDGs in South Africa and a close ally of CSOs, as well as a key partner of the SAWG. The trade unions have made contributions to the civil society VNR report and COSATU has supported the establishment of the NDSF.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SDG HUB ↘ URL

mobilises academics and acts as a national resource: a meta platform supports SDG implementation by enabling access to relevant, valuable and reliable knowledge resources, providing policy advice, promoting dialogue and building capacity. In addition, the Hub hosts the South African SDG Policy Support Initiative and collaborates closely with the South African network of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)[46]. Another key player is the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice[47], which works with academics and whose flagship project is the Social Justice M-Plan, a social justice accelerator programme aimed at fostering applied integrated research and related activities to catalyse the process of ending poverty and equalising opportunities by 2030 in support of the National Development Plan (NDP), the Agenda 2063 and the UN SDGs. It also seeks to foster social accountability and social cohesion, mobilise corporate and civil society resources to fund socio-economic inclusion and foster civic responsibility.

CHAPTER 9 INSTITUTIONS

As state institutions supporting the constitutional democracy, Chapter 9 institutions are critical partners. The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE)[48] and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)[49] have been particularly active in SDG implementation and have both supported the NDSF. The CGE was established in Chapter 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa to promote the respect, as well as the protection and development, of gender equality. Similarly, the SAHRC has been established to protect, promote and monitor the achievement of human rights. They are critical to establishing the NDSF with partners through accountability and oversight functions.

The United Nations system in South Africa works with the South African Government to promote the implementation of the SDGs. UNDP South Africa plays a lead role in working with all national stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda in South Africa. The UNDP has partnered with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to localise and mainstream the SDGs in the country's programmes and continues to support the SAWG in its advocacy and accountability role.

48 ↘ URL

49 ↘ URL

50 Ibid

51 National Development Agency, Enhancing Civil Society Participation in the South African Development Agenda: The Role of Civil Society Organisations. Parktown: The National Development Agency, 2016

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN SOUTH AFRICA

In many cases, relationships already exist between the relevant stakeholders to address the development priorities highlighted in both the SDGs and the NDP.[50] However, the relationships between government and business and between business and civil society are generally considered weak. A 2016 National Development Agency report also noted that more could be done to harmonise the working relationship between CSOs and the private sector to ensure that the sectors contribute value towards social development in the country.[51]

Some of the challenges identified in the stakeholder landscape are related to political and governance complexities, ensuring sincere engagement and building trust between governments and various stakeholders. The view was that, for the Forum to be effective, the government will need to facilitate a credible and genuine engagement process. Therefore, the building of state capacity is seen as a priority. Other concerns raised by the stakeholders centred on representation and elite capture in engagement processes, which could be addressed through having the appropriate member selection criteria and a transparent selection process. The concern is that the people who participate in multi-stakeholder platforms in the country are those with closer proximity to power. The lack of capacity to meaningfully participate among specific stakeholders, especially civil society, was also a challenge highlighted that should be addressed. The view is that CSOs are barely operating because of funding challenges, which impacts their role as interlocutors. The situation is worse among advocacy and oversight organisations because current funding instruments do not fully cover them.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

The need for concerted action to achieve the SDGs has become increasingly urgent and apparent in South Africa. It is key that the government takes care of coordination across ministries and transformation themes and provides platforms for stakeholders to perform their functions: CSOs playing their advocacy and grassroots-linked and experience-based knowledge-sharing role; private sector providing its ingenuity and resources; academia and research institutes playing their research and knowledge-generation role; and Chapter 9 institutions performing their oversight role. Because of this realisation, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation initiated the National Coordination Mechanism, which includes the National Development Stakeholders Forum (NDSF), to foster partnerships and to coordinate the reporting on the progress towards the SDGs.

The South African Government has identified permanent and institutionalised multi-stakeholder engagement as key to accelerating the delivery of the SDGs. Accordingly, the MSP-advisory body, which is being institutionalised in the form of the NDSF, is a key component in the new SDG coordination mechanism architecture. Therefore, the process has commenced establishing the South African NDSF, which will adopt a multi-stakeholder approach and thus include government, members of civil society, the labour movement, private sector, academia and Chapter 9 institutions.

The government was inspired to initiate the process to set up the national coordination mechanism in South Africa by coordinating the implementation of the SDGs through an interdepartmental approach. The challenge was that there was no central coordination of SDGs in the country, and departments were working in silos. The inclusion of the NDSF within the coordination mechanism, on the other hand, was motivated by the need to coordinate the inputs and efforts of non-state actors in the SDGs. The aim was to create a link between government and non-governmental stakeholders, to build consensus and to communicate in a unified voice. A further aim was to have a shared understanding and knowledge about the implementation of the SDGs and how to track their progress in South Africa.

The leading departments envisaged that non-state actors such as business, labour, CSOs and academia would then drive the formation and implementation of the NDSF in a coordinated effort. As a result, the government would participate and provide the necessary support to the platform but not drive the process.

The leading departments on the process envisaged that the Forum would facilitate synergies and links between government and other actors working on the SDGs in South Africa, i.e. better communication, dialogue and interaction between government and relevant stakeholders from the various sectors of South African society (business, CSOs, academia and Chapter 9 institutions). Consequently, the government's vision was that the platform would provide a space for building consensus, collaboration, coordination and monitoring of progress on the SDG targets and those of other development agendas, including the SADC agreements and Agenda 2063.

The leading departments have kick-started the process and obtained the political buy-in by getting

To do list:
- equip the forum with a concrete mandate
- equip the forum with capacities
- initiate local and national multi-stakeholder dialogues

→ harvest constructive recommendations for wicked sustainable development problems

the national coordination framework approved by the South African Cabinet, part of which is the NDSF. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, as the department responsible for the national coordinating mechanism on SDGs in South Africa, aims to facilitate integration and partnerships among various local and international stakeholders and development programmes and commitments. Civil society, labour, business, academia and Chapter 9 institutions should continue to work with government to steer the institutionalisation of the NDSF in the immediate future.

It is in the responsibility of the government to provide an enabling environment for a reciprocal relationship of the NDSF's and the government agencies themselves. For such a relationship, the purpose, objectives and mandate, for the NDSF must be agreed on in a joint manner and along an existing SDG policy process in South Africa. The establishment could be anchored in SDG 17, specifically, targets 17.16 and 17.17 are aimed at improving and promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Supplementary activities of the NDSF can add value through citizen-centredness, inclusivity, reflective learning and active participation, and sustained action towards socio-economic transformation. It also holds the potential to empower and strengthen the agency of local communities and amplify grassroots voices. Within the NDSF, the various stakeholders may share and direct their activities towards the achievement of the SDGs. The platform will serve as a facilitator for co-creation and collaborative action, consensus building, and creating synergies and linkages between the various stakeholders. In addition, the platform can also include monitoring of SDG implementation to facilitate accountability and ensure that fundamental

Transformation requires consens-building and social acceptance by all societal actors. Hence, institutionalised participation is Key to success.

52 Presidential Climate Commission ↘ URL

changes are taking place on the ground. In this respect, the platform can also empower citizens to monitor what is due to them and hold the government accountable.

In South Africa, stakeholder groups have formed solid umbrella structures. As elsewhere, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have affected their options for exchange and collaboration in the past years. As with the ongoing Presidential Climate Commission[52], the NDSF as a stakeholder forum will be coordinated by the DPME and national Planning Commission. Given that both government departments come under the Presidential office, the Forum would extremely profit from a Presidential mandate and close and enduring elationships with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. The platform has conducted initial steps towards an MSP-advisory body and can be considered as being in a pole position for institutionalised stakeholder engagement on crucial topics for delivery of the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063, as well as nicely complementing the Presidential Climate Commission and its contribution to South Africa's roadmap for the Paris Agreement.
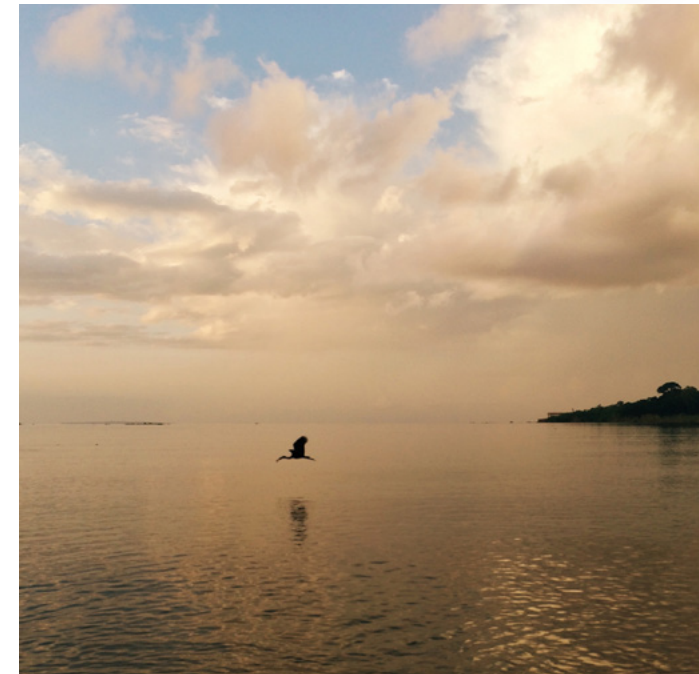
Uganda:
Strong commitment to the SDGs with opportunities for civil society to play a fuller role

53 Roadmap for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Uganda (SDGs 2020/21 – 2024/25) August 2021

54 Review Report on Uganda's Readiness for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda (2016)

55 Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2020)

The Government of Uganda (GoU) is committed to a "whole of government" approach to the 2030 Agenda and its approach is informed by 2030 Agenda cross-cutting themes such as leaving no one behind, policy integration, and partnerships as a means of implementation. An SDG Roadmap has been developed[53] to align the 2030 Agenda with national plans, and guide implementation at national and local government levels and the establishment of an SDG reporting system. This was also a response to a 2016 review of the GoU's readiness for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which prioritised the need to modify existing institutional and coordination frameworks.[54] The wider planning context for this was a second National Development Plan,the NDPII, which according to the 2020 VNR[55] was 70 percent aligned to the SDGs,

and a National Coordination Policy which guided the coordination of work on the SDGs.

The National Development Plan lays out Uganda's priorities in three broad categories: Environment, Governance and Industry. Others are around community mobilisation, mindset and human capital development. The VNR picks up these themes, identifying the need to strengthen collaboration, localisation, technology and innovation, and build a leadership culture for the SDG agenda at all levels.

In October 2019, the Cabinet approved the establishment of a dedicated SDG Secretariat that works in collaboration with the Department of Strategic Coordination and Implementation, and the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation in the Office of Prime Minister. The SDG Secretariat is tasked with operationalising a National SDG Task Force, an Implementation Steering Committee and a Policy Coordination Committee set out in the Coordination Framework and Roadmap.

The SDG Secretariat has multiple roles in addition to coordination. It conducts research and tracks the implementation of the SDGs, coordinating monitoring and assessment of implementation and progress of the 2030 Agenda, and being a hub for SDG information and data for the Government and other stakeholders. It also provides technical support, advice and expertise to both the public sector and also technical working groups and non-state actors. It is tasked with building strategic partnerships with the private sector on financing and innovation for the SDGs.

The VNR reports that political and technical leadership by the Office of the Prime Minister has "spearheaded processes of drafting and revisions leading to the completion of the Roadmap [and]

> *The government is highly committed to a whole-of-government approach with an SDG Roadmap and an SDG Secretariat.*

Institutional delivery on the SDGs". There is a Parliamentary Forum on SDGs that interacts directly with the senior government SDG policy coordination committee. This ensures that Members of Parliament are engaged in financing decisions and policy validation.

The sub-national level, and in particular the local level below the District administration, is where organisation for, and implementation of, the 2030 Agenda is weakest in Uganda. The SDG Secretariat is supporting local leaders and government officers with technical training as well as orientation on what the SDGs are and how they can be in position to integrate these SDGs into local development plans.

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

The 2016 review report mentioned "challenges of weak multi-sectoral implementation planning, coordination gaps, data and reporting inadequacies, weak public-private partnership and limited financial resources" and that "the Government therefore acknowledges that it alone cannot deliver this ambitious Agenda without the involvement of all stakeholders everywhere". The Roadmap states that "the work of non-state actors is complementary to government initiatives, and should be aligned to national development priorities".

A key role of the SDG Secretariat is as a coordination function, organising consultative meetings, and providing a platform for discussion and stakeholder engagement in a structured manner. The SDG Secretariat is perceived to be an excellent initiative and recognised for the work it does with stakeholders. It has been

so critical to engaging stakeholders with the GoU's processes for achieving the SDGs that there is a view that it would be better if the SDG Secretariat were semi-autonomous from government, so it was not subject to political pressure.

The CSO SDG Core Reference Group is a member of an SDG task force that is part of the GoU's structures for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Hosted by the Uganda National NGO Forum (the NGO Forum), the Group is the main vehicle that the GoU uses for engaging with civil society. The Secretariat says that sometimes it can work with separate individuals or institutions, but that the Reference Group is a point that brings them together. The VNR notes that the Group meets quarterly and coordinates closely with government institutions that are involved in SDG work.

THE CSO SDG CORE REFERENCE GROUP ↘ PDF

has worked together to implement the 2030 Agenda over the last five years. It is not a registered organisation, but a coalition of organisations working on the SDGs, and it brings together over 100 member organisations at national and local level that include women, youth, people with disabilities, faith organisations, cultural organisations and mainstream CSOs. The Uganda NGO Forum convenes the Group and represents it in the SDG Secretariat and the office of the Prime Minister. While having a role in a government SDG task force, it also undertakes independent action, such as the rejoinder to the 2020 VNR Report published by the Group. It has a broad base, with around half the 82 organisations that participated in the rejoinder having either 'network' or 'forum' in their name. A few indicate that they are a National Association, and the rest are either local or international individual NGOs.

THE SDG PRIVATE SECTOR PLATFORM

brings on board the private sector players supporting implementation of the SDGs. The Platform has four pillars, one of which is a Knowledge Hub that includes academic institutions. The Secretariat is also targeting unions under the Sector Platform. It has been observed that the private sector was left behind in the previous VNR process but is included in the roadmap to provide funding and other contributions towards achieving the SDGs. The Platform is chaired by the office of the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the UNDP (as a UN initiative) and the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda, as a representative of the private sector.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR FOUNDATION UGANDA (PSFU) ↘ URL

is Uganda's umbrella body for the private sector made up of 230 Business Associations, corporate bodies and the major public sector agencies that support private sector growth. It undertakes work in areas relevant to the SDGs among its many roles.

UGANDA NATIONAL NGO FORUM (THE NGO FORUM) ↘ URL

is a platform organisation, recognised by Government, providing services to its members, which are currently around 600 NGOs and include the lead organisations representing civil society in Uganda. The Forum implements programmes with its members, especially at a regional level, in areas such as civic spaces and governance monitoring, civil society strengthening, civic education and rights, policy advocacy and state engagement; these interventions are intended to influence governance and development processes in the country. There are Regional and District level networks, where implementation is focused. Some of the Forum's programmes are funded by third parties, and there are others where different member organisations offer to contribute financially.

THE UGANDA GENDER CONSORTIUM ON SDGS (UGCS) is reported to be very strong and active in the relevant thematic working group, and leading on how to apply a gender lens to the SDGs. UGCS was formed in 2017 by women's organisations with a core mandate to support the process of domestication and implementation of the global SDG agenda in a gender-responsive way.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (NCPD) has coordinated other disabled persons' organisations to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities. Youth organisations are also thought be very important and playing a helpful role.

DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OF INDIGENOUS VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS (DENIVA) ↘URL describes itself as providing a platform for collective reflection, action and voice to voluntary local associations to advocate for people-centred, accountable and sustainable development in Uganda.

The SDG Roadmap states that "youth-led organizations need to be encouraged and empowered to participate in translating the 2030 Agenda into local, national and regional policy". One interview revealed that the "youth factor", as Uganda has over 70 percent young people, is highly relevant. The Forum on SDGs suggests that there could be a reference group where young people are able to create innovative ways of making a contribution to the different SDGs that affect them.

Academia is said to have a surprisingly weak role considering it conducts research relevant to the 2030 Agenda. There is hope that the roadmap will bring academia on board more strongly. It states that "the work of non-state actors is complementary to government initiatives, and should be aligned to national development priorities". Academia, as "think tanks and institutions for research and knowledge generation", is mentioned in the SDG Roadmap as having a role important to the implementation of the SDGs as well as monitoring progress and informing relevant strategies and innovations.

The role of the media in SDG implementation is proposed in the SDG Roadmap as raising awareness about the global goals, focusing on issues of sustainable development for the national media, and building and supporting a learning community.

Underpinning delivery of SDG services with academic know-how can do the trick.

56 Interview for the report

57 CSO Rejoinder on Uganda's VNR Report June 2020

58 Progress on the Implementation of the 2020 Uganda Voluntary National Review Report Commitments, Uganda NGO Forum, 2020

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN UGANDA

Between 2015-18 there were challenges for CSOs in engaging with the GoU. CSOs produced shadow reports on progress at the HLPF and fulfilled a 'watchdog' function. The NGO Forum ran a 'leave no one behind' campaign during the Millennium Development Goals period and this was very influential, particularly by linking CSO and government activities at local level. Then from 2019, civil society was brought on board by the Government to help develop the SDG Roadmap and for the 2020 VNR. This has been very successful, with civil society reporting that there was an impressive participatory process to develop the roadmap.

The following success factors have been observed for this effective collaboration on the SDG Roadmap[56]:

— The existence of the Secretariat. This is a very big factor, as it can coordinate and listen to different stakeholders and bring them on board.

— The fact that there are technical people at the Secretarat who understand the roles that different players play – civil society, private sector, but also the government bodies and ministries – and how they can consult with each other extensively.

— There was a first draft that was shared by convening all civil society virtually and using different technical working groups to assess and put forward their submissions.

— Leadership of the Minister responsible, who was able to ensure there was political will by presenting the Road map to Cabinet for endorsement.

— The willingness of different non-government partners and the UN alike to fund some of the processes, so that groups such as the private sector and youth were able to buy in.

Benefits of multi-stakeholder engagement could extend beyond coordination and civil society is ready to play its role.

While civil society has warmly welcomed being able to work more closely with the GoU, it still publishes its commentary on key reports in what it calls 'rejoinders'. A recent rejoinder expresses[57] civil society commitment to continuing to partner with "like-minded stakeholders and Government agencies, especially at the local government level" and introduces a range of actions that civil society will do to promote the 2030 Agenda and work with the Secretariat to track and report progress on the SDGs. It also sets out issues where there is not yet full agreement between civil society and government in Uganda.

However, both civil society and the SDG Secretariat say that the private sector's contribution remains the biggest gap. There is a concern that the various initiatives aren't well coordinated and can be confusing to their target groups. Civil society has called for a strengthening of the public–private partnership model across sectors aligned with the SDGs. The NGO Forum has stated that "building a shared purpose with the private sector on the SDGs will enhance localisations, domestic resource mobilisation, sustainability and ownership of the development agenda by communities"[58].

The puzzle for multi–stakeholder governance

There is an excellent structure for collaboration on planning for the 2030 Agenda, for service delivery in areas vital to the SDGs, and on tracking progress. Civil society feels it is able to point out where there are challenges and can provide feedback to the government, and that the government does listen, especially as

the Secretariat is seen very much as a partner of civil society in making sure that it achieves what is being realised. Civil society is also able to point to areas where there are challenges, for example SDG funding. An observer has pointed out that "this is happening because government gave us a platform".

The Secretariat provides an effective coordination mechanism to link together stakeholders to advocate for the SDGs, coordinate implementation and collect data. If this could be extended to the sub-national level the situation would be even better. However, the benefits of multi-stakeholder working extend far beyond coordination, and there is nothing in place that enables independent working on the 2030 Agenda between civil society, the private sector and all the other non-state actors. Such a forum would enable these actors to avoid siloed working and to co-create activities and speak with one voice on contentious and challenging issues. Many of the elements are in place that could make such a partnership feasible, such as the CSO SDG Core Reference group and the Private Sector Foundation Uganda.

Yet the puzzle is that there is a fear among civil society that the space for it to fulfil its full purpose is getting smaller and so it cannot speak out for all vulnerable and disadvantaged people or hold the GoU fully to account for some of its actions. Uganda is one of several African countries which have legislated to restrict some of the activities of CSOs and philanthropic organisations based on their area of work. Evidence suggests that the GoU considers human rights and public accountability-focused NGOs hostile.[59]

In a report on the VNR, the NGO Forum makes the point that "in order to have a vibrant civil society sector, there is a need to have progressive laws

59 THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN UGANDA Analysing Options For How To Engage (report for the Uganda National NGO Forum and the Africa Philanthropy Network) ↘ PDF

60 Progress on the Implementation of the 2020 Uganda Voluntary National Review Report Commitments, Uganda NGO Forum, 2020

61 The NGO Blueprint Uganda National NGO Forum Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

Civil society is ready to meaningfully complement existing action of the government.

SDG implementation in Uganda could particularly benefit from the creation of an independent multi-stakeholder partnership, where stakeholders can discuss contentious issues freely.

that guarantee civic engagement and oversight of government programming"[60]. In its recent strategy it expresses concern around whether the opposite is the case in Uganda, saying that "the raids on NGOs offices, the freezing of NGO bank accounts, the illegal detentions of human rights defenders and the multiple reporting obligations to various government entities all point to regression rather than expansion in civic space"[61].

While this may not harm SDG implementation in the short term, as NGOs and other CSOs that provide services such as water, sanitation and health services are free to do their work, ultimately this is a challenging environment to fully implement the SDGs at national and local level, especially for some grassroots CSOs which are already quite weak. It would be a serious missed opportunity if the exceptional interest and passion for the SDGs expressed by many stakeholders in Uganda was not able to be fully exploited.

An MSP-advisory body that is not facilitated by the Secretariat, or a more independent role for the Secretariat itself, could enhance the ability to bring a multi-stakeholder perspective to these issues that can be contentious and require a mechanism to build consensus. This could also help Uganda to navigate through its current challenges and enable it to fully utilise the excellent structures and processes that have been put in place to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda, with civil society in particular able to contribute more fully to a "whole-of-society" approach. Uganda's priorities will particularly benefit from the creation of a multi-stakeholder partnership, where all the non-state actors are free to contribute and find ways of supporting the GoU to achieve its ambitions.

Viet Nam:
An SDG success story that could benefit from enhanced stakeholder engagement

Viet Nam is committed to the SDGs and has a priority on infrastructure for the poor as prerequisite for achieving all other goals of the 2030 Agenda.

62 ↘ URL

63 Viet Nam's Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (2018)

In a summary prepared for the 2018 HLPF[62], the Government of Viet Nam (GoV) stated that "the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are in line with the long-term development strategy of Viet Nam". The SDGs were nationalised in the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for SDGs (SDG NAP) in May 2017. This is a roadmap to implement the SDGs up to 2030, led by the Prime Minister. It sets out how the SDGs have been nationalised into policies, and proposals for implementation from the different Ministries. SDG National Reports are drafted to evaluate the progress of the five-year implementation of the SDGs and to track progress towards achieving them by 2030.

The 2018 VNR states that priorities for the country are SDGs 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 13, with SDG 9 (infrastructure) being a top priority, especially in poor areas, with a focus on provision and security of water. Action is needed in areas such as mobilisation of stakeholders and resources (particularly from the private sector), greater cooperation between the GoV and business and other sectors, and enhanced institutional setup, policy frameworks and mainstreaming of the SDGs into development policies and strategies. The National Council for Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Improvement was established in 2005 as a core element of the GoV's approach to sustainable development. Chaired by the Vice-Prime Minister, it has a number of committees on themes relevant to the 2030 Agenda, and is described in the VNR[63] as playing an advisory and consultative role to the Prime Minister in the implementation of sustainable development initiatives. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is the lead agency for implementing the 2030 Agenda and National Action

Plan and the focal point for coordination. There are also task forces chaired by the Vice Minister, Ministry of Planning and Investment covering different sectors at the national level. The MPI also gets a lot of comments, data and updated reports from the UN agencies because they work very widely in Viet Nam with many programmes and projects.

While the MPI is working hard on the SDGs, it is not clear that this agenda has the same level of commitment in other Ministries. Engagement with the Office of the Prime Minister and non-state actors is good, and there are good policies for achieving the SDGs, but the system has limitations when it comes to implementation by line Ministries. Ministries sometimes lack a clear roadmap as to how they will achieve the objectives they have set for themselves, and are not achieving their goals.

According to the VNR, the Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs was founded to enhance coordination among "ministries, sectors, agencies and organizations" to implement the National Action Plan and SDGs. This group appears to lack ownership by any GoV, or other, institution and it is not clear how effective a body it is, or exactly what it adds to what the MPI is doing, and it appears to be more of a 'paper'[64] construct than real.

The VNR also talks about the important role played by forums and conferences in enhancing coordination among stakeholders. In addition, the network of local and international NGOs, socio-political and socio-professional organisations has conducted activities to implement SDGs and made direct contributions to the VNR.

The Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs could be key for an encompassing SDG delivery.

64 The constitution of the socialist republic of Viet Nam (2013) Unofficial Translation from Vietnamese by International IDEA

Landscape of SDG umbrella organisations

The MPI has started to be more open about the contribution that civil society makes.

The VNR states that it was prepared following "intensive and extensive consultations as well as constructive participation from numerous stakeholders", and lists contributors as socio-political organisations such as the Women's Union and Youth Union, socio-professional organisations, UN agencies, development partners, local and international NGOs, representatives of the business community, research institutes and scientists. Consultations on the VNR through workshops, documents and comments were led by the MPI, but also a range of other groups.

In the VNR, the structures associated with the ruling Party are described as 'mass organisations' and 'socio-political and socio-professional organisations'. Some of these organisations are constitutionally mandated. Article 9 of the constitution of Viet Nam states that "the Viet Nam Fatherland Front is a political alliance and a voluntary union of political organisations, socio-political organisations, social organisations and individuals representing their social classes and strata, ethnicities, religions, and overseas Vietnamese"[64]. The organisation is described as "the political base of people's power". It is intended to have a significant role in society, promoting "national solidarity" and "unity of mind in political and spiritual matters". Many of the GoV's social programmes are conducted through the Fatherland Front, which is intended to supervise the activity of government organisations. Because it is based around mass participation and popular mobilisation, the Fatherland Front is seen

Viet Nam: An SDG success story that could benefit from enhanced stakeholder engagement

as a representative of the people.[65]

Mass organisations and umbrella organisations sit under the Fatherland Front. The VNR states that the National Assembly, Viet Nam Fatherland Front and social organisations play an important role in monitoring implementation. The official umbrella organisation for science and technology, Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) is indeed consulting with its members, but the value of what it collects is limited by the fact that it is not independent from the government. This is also the case for the Farmers' Association, Women's Union and Youth Union.

The VNR also mentions the National Conference on Sustainable Development, Business Forum on Sustainable Development and Viet Nam Development Partnership Forum (VDPF), a policy dialogue forum between the GoV and development partners. The UN has formed an SDG Technical Working Group to aid the UN's cooperation with the GoV in implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Viet Nam is frontrunner in engaging the private sector for sustainable development.

65 ↘ PDF

66 Report in preparation communicated by an interview partner to the author

67 VBCSD poster

68 CIS Program Introduction (VBCSD.VN website)

The GoV places a high value on engaging and mobilising the private sector. The private sector is becoming increasingly active in supporting the SDGs and a survey of companies recently found that it is increasingly moving from a bolt-on CSR approach to having sustainability integrated within business plans.[66] However, there is also concern that the GoV is not making full use of the private sector.

The MPI also receives very rich information from the 'no one left behind group,' as the national statistics are not sufficient for it to carry out monitoring and reporting. This group includes the NGOs with a focus on SDG implementation in Viet Nam working very specifically at the local level, so there are many practical ideas and recommendations for the government.

VIET NAM BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (VBCSD) ↘ URL was established by the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) with the approval of the Government in 2010. VBCSD describes itself as a business-oriented organisation whose mission is to promote the "active role and enthusiastic support of the business community" in the implementation of sustainable development. It works with a range of partners in addition to the VCCI, including the Network of Press on Sustainable Development, the National Council on Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Enhancement, and local authorities.[67] The Council runs a number of programmes with other partners, with the Program on Assessment and Announcement of Sustainable Businesses in Viet Nam with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labor being one of the most successful at promoting and recognising responsible business through a Corporate Sustainability Index.[68]

THE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (MSD) ↘URL describes itself as a Vietnamese NGO with a mission to improve the environment for development of CSOs and to promote the rights of marginalised people and communities, especially children, young people, women and people with disabilities. MSD is leading two alliances working on SDGs, which are networks called Action for CSO Development Alliance (CSA Viet Nam) and Leave No One Behind Partnership Viet Nam (LNOB Viet Nam), and coordinate the development of independent reports from CSOs. MSD is a legal entity, and is registered as a scientific and technology organisation, as registering as an NGO has not been recognised as a legal option in Viet Nam. MSD works with more than 300 local CSOs to advocate for laws and legal frameworks relating to protecting rights of groups, especially children, youth, women and people with disabilities. MSD had its own process of engaging with the Millennium Development Goals in 2013. Subsequently it took part in consultations on the National Action Plan after the announcement of the SDGs, and then contributed to the 2018 VNR. After that it was recognised by the government, especially the MPI, and began to be invited to engage more often. It also participates in a number of regional networks (e.g. ASEAN) and global partnerships of Viet Nam.

Adressing contested themes and mediate conflicting interests is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

69 Research interview for this report

THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT JOURNEY IN VIET NAM

From a situation where there has been little active collaboration between the GoV and civil society actors on the 2030 Agenda, there have recently been some very positive moves towards a greater contribution from a wider variety of stakeholders being welcomed and embraced. There are organisations such as MSD and the members of Leave No One Behind Partnership Viet Nam that are committed to making children and youth, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities more visible and to collecting their voice in data. They have explained[69] that "this is our strength and also our commitment... if the government can recognise and can empower us, we can play a very good role in contributing to the process. Of course, even if they don't recognise [us we will] still play our roles. But of course, it's better when we have a more enabling environment and recognition". They would be very keen to have a more ongoing and permanent engagement role in constructively supporting the government on the delivery of the SDGs, and bringing all stakeholders on board.

Progress has been made with respect to the GoV's monitoring of the SDGs and providing a voice to some disadvantaged or under-represented people. It is observed that the MPI has become very open-minded about using non-official data in the report, saying that this is a significant step forward for the GoV in consideration of the contributions from non-state actors.

However, topics such as land rights, labour and the environment are much more contested than data on issues such as education and children's welfare. Sometimes there are practical issues that limit the extent of collaboration. For example, when NGOs are working at the local level, directly with the community, they say they need very detailed information. The GoV side highly appreciates their comment but explains that the SDGs are very broad and if they only focus

on one aspect of them it is not appropriate for what they are developing at a national level. Similarly, when they are developing reports, NGOs also like to incorporate as much information and data on SDGs as possible, but the GoV agency cannot collect all the information requested, because they lack the resources to do so.

Resources are a challenge for organisations from civil society providing inputs to the GoV on a voluntary basis, which limits what they can do. International organisations such as donors and the UN, including GIZ, only work with and fund government, and this

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70 CIVICUS 2006 report ↘ PDF

71 One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 Between The Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam And The United Nations in Viet Nam

creates further challenges for civil society. It would be helpful if the GoV could provide some funding for the collection of data on SDG indicators from non-state actors, and also if the statistics office would provide guidelines to help them achieve the desired standards for this data.

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance

The puzzle for multi-stakeholder governance in Viet Nam is that there has been, and continues to be, impressive progress on the SDGs, but that this could potentially be even greater were non-state actors able to enhance their engagement and meaningfully complement the successes achieved by the government through an advisory as well as service delivery function.

Civicus[70] has described civil society in Viet Nam as "very broad-based" with many people being members of organisations that loosely fit the description of a CSO. Not many CSOs are truly independent of government influence, and some are only engaging people superficially, such as mass movements that automatically collect members through their public sector employment. These organisations are party-sponsored, and membership does not necessarily imply activity or participation. However, some do have very strong grassroots links and are becoming become increasingly independent.

The GoV has made collaboration with non-state actors a priority. In the 2017 Strategic Plan[71] it is stated that "in spite of progress, there is an urgent need to expand grassroots participation in governance,

Collaboration with non-state actors has become a priority for the government and will be key to achieve the SDGs.

including for women and vulnerable and marginalized groups such as children, migrants and ethnic, gender and sexual minorities". It is also noted that "a safe and enabling environment is needed for people to engage in public dialogue on the need for accessible service delivery and more effective, participatory governance, as well as to participate in service provision partnerships". The VNR underlines this priority to mobilise all stakeholders' participation in sustainable development efforts and increase collaboration between the Government and what it refers to as "the business sector and domestic organisations".

With an active and engaged private sector, and an increasingly more independent civil society, one way that Viet Nam could achieve its objectives of increased collaboration is by either strengthening the Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs or by developing a multi-stakeholder partnership independent of government that can play a wider set of roles in advising and helping the government to access the full range of non-state actor contributions. Strengthening the Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs would enable Viet Nam to benefit from greater coordination of the activities of the GoV and non-state actors, which would be a logical next step from its recent achievements in opening up the VNR to utilise external data. However, to achieve the VNR goals of mobilising all stakeholders' participation in sustainable development, there would be significant benefits from going further than this to enable direct collaboration between non-state actors through a multi-stakeholder partnership. Many of the roles that such a partnership can have are not currently being played by any institution in Viet Nam.

Pathways ahead for Viet Nams ambitions: strengthen the Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs or establish a multi-stakeholder platform for SDGs.
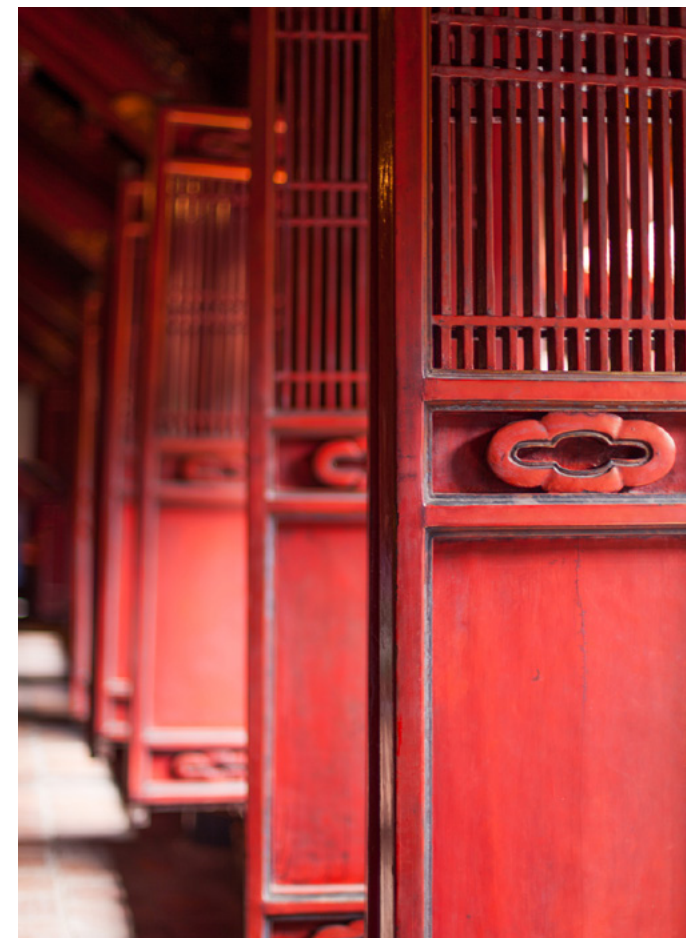
Conclusion

This study reveals that permanent multi-stakeholder engagement takes manifold shapes, encounters different challenges, yet is still able to add value to national and local SDG implementation and reporting processes. The present study comprises a snapshot of eight countries on the journey they are taking towards sustainable development. It also reveals how the path they have taken since 2016 with regard to permanent and institutionalised engagement between government and relevant non-state actors has brought them to their current position and gives some sense of where they will go next. These case studies also include some reflections on the direction of travel that is discernible.

It is of note that, while each country is at a different point in their journey, there is in most of these profiles evidence that the future aspiration and practice for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be that of greater and more meaningful engagement between sectors and fruitful collaboration. Even where the context has been particularly challenging and there appears to be little sign of forward movement, there are no examples of countries that are retreating from a greater level of engagement to a lesser one.

— Costa Rica is a front-runner in making a collective commitment to progress the 2030 Agenda. The government of Costa Rica, under the lead of the Planning Ministry as the Technical Secretariat, has been able to engage the private sector, local governments, Parliament and academia in the 2030 Agenda coordination and institutional arrangements, offering a formal mechanism to influence decision-making and participation in the strategic planning processes for achieving

the SDGs. However, the engagements observed so far have features of 'combine/integrate' collaboration, and the private sector umbrella organisation, AED, is observed to be a key stakeholder in advancing the private sector commitment towards achieving the SDGs. Nevertheless, engagement with other key stakeholders seems to be weak, and there is a need to strengthen organisation and engagement capacities, mainly from CSOs. In the last few years, trust has been built along with a stronger collaborative relationship between key actors enabling good levels of commitment, and participation of key stakeholders in participatory processes. This can be observed as a good basis for collaboration, and the establishment of an MSP-advisory body could further consolidate the engagement of key stakeholders from different sectors, strengthen the current multi-stakeholder governance structure for the SDGs and enhance the required leadership to advance concrete actions towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and its goals.

— Ghana has made a commitment, globally and nationally, to achieve the SDGs, and a well-structured and robust governance system has been established to coordinate, track and monitor progress on the implementation of the SDGs and their integration into ongoing national development efforts. National efforts could benefit from a stronger focus at the local level, and the structures that operate at the national level could successfully be translated to the sub-national level in order to promote local awareness and ownership, and to actively engage key local

stakeholders such as local governments, cities and communities on the implementation of the SDGs. The engagements mainly have features of 'combine/integrate' partnering, with some 'system transformation' features emerging. The country's vibrant and very well-organised civil society under the leadership of the CSOs Platform on SDGs has proven to be a robust vehicle for constructive engagement between non-state actors, government and the private sector, and for integrating efforts through the government's robust three-tier structure for coordinating SDG implementation. An independent MSP-advisory body could play a key role in strengthening sub-national level engagement and coordination with key stakeholders.

— Nepal has a strong appetite for the SDGs, with the latest national plan integrating them and government budgets also aligned. There is a significant challenge, however, in the scale of the task of mainstreaming the SDGs across all planning and budgeting systems at national and sub-national level, particularly as restructuring of the federal system of governance is a major ongoing project. The National Planning Commission (NPC) has a coordinating role with regard to SDG planning and reporting. The NPC engages with many of the umbrella organisations in Nepal's flourishing civil society and with a variety of business groups representing the private sector. Engagement currently has features of 'combine/integrate' collaboration, but a very promising MSP called the SDG Forum is starting to draw together actors from many different sectors,

and is recognised by the government, which can take Nepal to another level of multi-stakeholder working. The next step can be to strengthen the SDG Forum's capacity to play multiple roles in support of the 2030 Agenda and make even greater efforts to engage every group within Nepal's richly heterogenous society, thus enabling the country to experience the benefits of 'system transformation' partnering.

— Nigeria has put in place coordination and planning structures to be able to deliver the 2030 Agenda through a joined up, whole-of-government approach. The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (known as OSSAP) is a critical element in coordination of action towards achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda in Nigeria. This well-placed and technically able federal-level unit is replicated within many States, which bodes well for the sub-national level. Working closely with OSSAP, the Civil Society Coalition on Sustainable Development (CSCSD) and the Private Sector Advisory Group on SDGs link together stakeholders to advocate for the SDGs, coordinate implementation and collect data. However, the engagements so far are largely at the level of 'leverage/exchange' working, so there are opportunities for a greater level of consultation and co-creation of national plans by non-state actors. An MSP that existed alongside the coordination being done by OSSAP could also play an independent advisory role, enhance the ability to bring a multi-stakeholder perspective to sustainable development policies, and help to identify and highlight gaps and challenges.

— Peru has been able to implement the 2030 Agenda as a key instrument to form an inclusive national consensus and roadmap towards sustainable development, and efforts to integrate the SDGs into existing governance and policy frameworks are observed. The government's official mechanism for stakeholder engagement, the National Agreement, has been able to convene different stakeholders into consultation and planning processes, but its focus is mainly at the national level, limiting its capacity to convene different voices and needs from local organisations. The exchanges seem to have mainly 'leverage/exchange' partnering features, characterised by one-way exchanges with limited interactions, but 'combine/integrate' features of collaboration are observed for some specific engagement processes. In a complex political context marked by the institutional instability that has caused Peru to have four different presidents since 2016, and have led to changes in the National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) as the focal point of the 2030 Agenda, there seems to be little space in the country for the establishment of new coordination architectures for sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda for the moment.

— South Africa has it all – a government committed to the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, a well-established apex body landscape of stakeholders, as well as national policy processes in which they can engage. Given the immense challenge of transformation and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country, advancements of the institutional architecture for SDG delivery need

Conclusion

to be put back in focus rather soon. The National Development Stakeholder Forum has taken up its work and fosters local and national stakeholder engagement, supported by the National Ministry of Planning and Development. Despite its work and engagement, it still lacks the official mandate and institutional support from all parts of government. Transformation in South Africa requires a concerted effort of all stakeholders for implementation, monitoring and collaboration across all levels.

— Uganda is committed to a whole-of-government approach to the 2030 Agenda and its approach is informed by 2030 Agenda cross-cutting themes such as leaving no one behind, policy integration, and partnerships as a means of implementation. An effective SDG Secretariat has been established to coordinate implementation of the 2030 Agenda with government. It also tracks progress, organises consultative meetings and provides a platform for discussion and structured stakeholder engagement, enabling Uganda to get the benefits that arise from collaboration between government and non-state actors through 'combine/integrate' partnership working. An independent MSP-advisory body could enhance the ability to bring a multi-stakeholder perspective to contentious issues and help Uganda to navigate through its current challenges, with sufficient space for civil society in particular to be able to contribute fully to a whole-of-society approach.

— Viet Nam has nationalised the SDGs in a National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is the lead implementation agency, but some other Ministries lack a clear roadmap as to how they will achieve the objectives they have set for themselves, and are not always achieving their goals. An Inter-Sectoral Working Group on SDGs was founded to enhance coordination among all actors in Viet Nam, but it is not clear how effective this body is, or exactly what it adds to what the MPI is doing. However there are promising examples of 'leverage/exchange' collaboration starting to happen, and Viet Nam's impressive progress on the SDGs could potentially be even greater were non-state actors able to enhance their engagement, and the government has made collaboration with non-state actors a priority.

In all eight case study countries, significant changes are still necessary to fulfil all of the functions that an MSP-advisory body can play. In many cases this requires strengthening existing systems and processes, in particular at sub-national level. Many countries have a significant way to go before they can collect data on all of the indicators and report fully on progress. In at least one country this means there is no data for a third of the targets and more than half of the indicators. Financing the 2030 Agenda is also a very significant difficulty in all of these countries.

Multi-stakeholder bodies in the analysed countries are already playing an important role in all these areas, and in addition can foster social acceptance for transformation, thereby also playing an important role in awareness raising and anchoring transformational

change within society. In all these roles they are a crucial and complementary component to national government architectures for SDG delivery, as was found in the first four country profiles published.

The findings of the research are intended to shed light on some of these puzzle pieces, in order to understand where and how MSP-advisory bodies can successfully contribute to the national picture of institutions and processes for stakeholder engagement for the delivery of the SDGs. This study has also illuminated some of the challenges that arise as stakeholder engagement increases on the journey

Senior political support puts multi-stakeholder engagement on the fast lane.

to effective multi-stakeholder working. There are often difficult choices to be made between a range of paths that each have their benefits and risks.

One such challenge is the extent to which an MSP or MSP-advisory body should sit within or be separate from the government. There are examples in the research of where an SDG Secretariat or similar public sector body is playing an important convening and coordination role for non-state actors, but at some point, questions arise about how independent such a body can be. However, there are also great benefits from having senior political support, access and convening power that can come from being placed at the heart of government, as the research also suggests. The answer can be to have a strong mandate from the state or be institutionalised as semi-autonomous from government and able to benefit from political support without also being subject to unhelpful political pressure. In this way, an MSP-advisory body can aspire to being a true 'critical friend' to government, able to work closely with counterparts in government whilst also being free to make clear when other sectors disagree with the government in a highly constructive way.

The research also suggests that such independence might be difficult to achieve, as many stakeholders are very constrained by a lack of funds and there are limits to what they can do on a voluntary basis. However, a further challenge may arise with a state-funded body, in that this might create a risk that civil society actors who perform a valuable watchdog function are co-opted by a government such that they now fear to speak out in case this harms funding. A protected funding line might therefore be needed, perhaps supported by long-term development partners, or enacted through legislation.

Conclusion

A further challenge observable in several countries is that the umbrella organisations that have the most access to their government counterparts and are likely to be effective contributors to MSPs and MSP-advisory bodies are often staffed by people with strong ties to those who staff the central or federal ministries that drive national planning and policy making. This is combined with a geographical challenge, since these organisations are sensibly headquartered in national capitals near the seat of power. This can make the MSP-advisory body struggle to be fully inclusive of a wide variety of interests in a large country, and those who are least advantaged in particular.

What remains evident is that there is no "one size fits all" approach for the journey towards creating a legitimate, inclusive and permanent multi-stakeholder structure in support of the 2030 Agenda. The findings of the research shed further light on some of these puzzle pieces and how countries are progressing a whole-of-society approach. The research also clearly suggests the value of such an approach and should give heart to those who are working to realise the benefits of having an MSP-advisory body in their country to jointly enhance delivery of the SDGs, while also celebrating the steps that have been made to date on this journey.

Well-functioning and equipped umbrella organisations are a key pre-requisite for institutionalised multi-stakeholder platforms.

Multi-stakeholder platforms come in multiple forms but always provide for support and complementary functions in national governance settings.

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Global Forum for
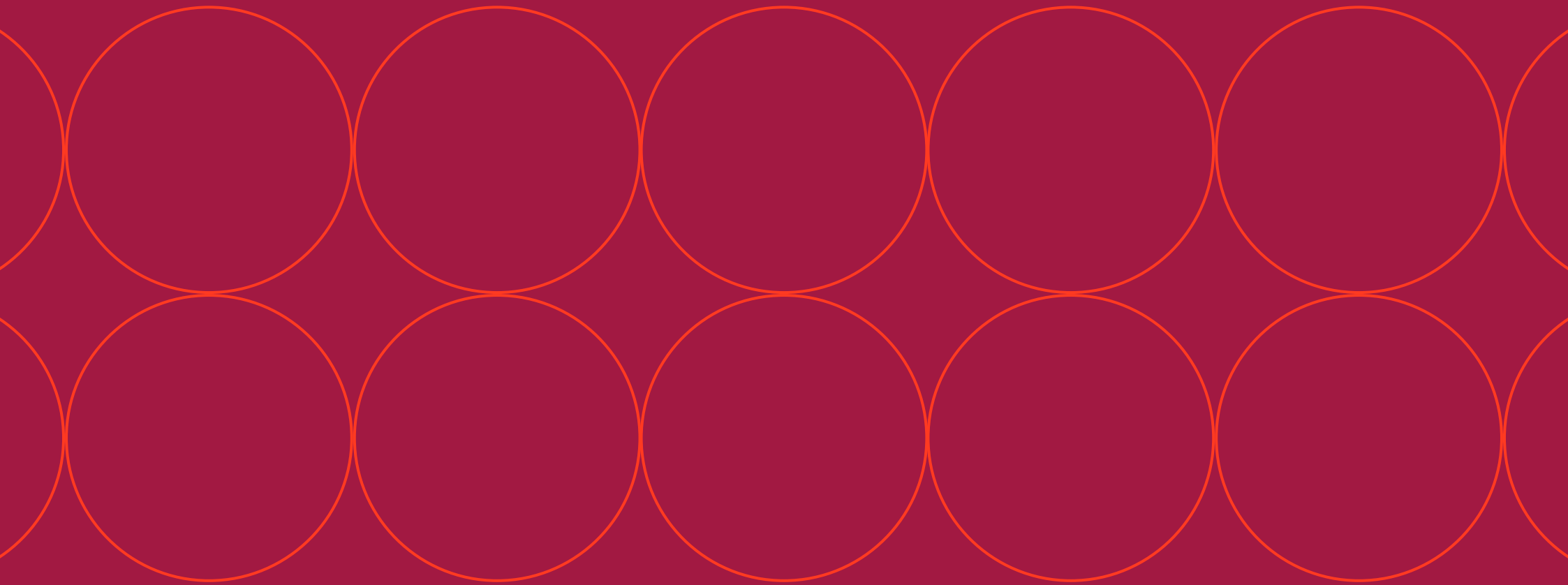
National SDG
Advisory Bodies

To learn more about the Global Forum
for National SDG Advisory Bodies
and read the study on different pathways
for national sustainable development
advisory bodies and their respective success
factors (2021) click here.

Here you'll also find the first part
of this edition

Annex

COUNTRY	NO. OF INTERVIEWS						
COSTA RICA	2 GOVERNMENT	1 PRIVATE SECTOR	1 INTERN. COMMUNITY				
GHANA	2 GOVERNMENT	1 CSO	1 INTERN. COMMUNITY				
NEPAL	1 GOVERNMENT	1 CSO	1 INTERN. COMMUNITY				
NIGERIA	1 GOVERNMENT	2 CSO	1 INTERN. COMMUNITY				
PERU	2 GOVERNMENT	1 CSO	1 INTERN. COMMUNITY				
SOUTH AFRICA*	5 GOVERNMENT	5 CSO	2 PRIVATE SECTOR	1 LABOUR	3 ACADEMIA	2 CHAPTER 9	2 INTERN. COMMUNITY
UGANDA	1 GOVERNMENT	3 CSO					
VIET NAM	1 GOVERNMENT	2 CSO					

* This chapter was delivered by different authors: Yared Tsegay and Dineo Seabe, African Monitor, South Africa

THEORY OF CHANGE	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
(1) Understanding the content of national policymaking: Is there an MSP-body involved in developing a national roadmap for sustainable development (VNR, Agenda 2030 Strategy, or other national guiding documents)?	**a)** How successful would you rank the holistic nature (integrating economic, social and environmental policies) of this roadmap for SDG implementation? **b)** Which ministry / coordination unit is in lead (within the government) to implement the roadmap and to hold others accountable for implementation? For how long is the responsibility assigned to this unit/ministry?
(2) Understanding the "whole-of-government" approach: What institutions and coordination functions are established to deliver the 2030 Agenda at national level and across all government segments?	**a)** Have you observed substantial changes within the government for cross-ministerial coordination? **b)** Have you observed inclusion of local government levels in national sustainable development processes? **c)** Is there a supportive role of the parliament for sustainable development and the national governance structure?
(3) Understanding the "whole-of-society" approach: How is stakeholder participation ensured in national policymaking?	**a)** How did your government ensure stakeholder participation in sustainable development? **b)** How permanent or ad-hoc are engagement processes in national sustainable development policymaking? **c)** What stakeholder group(s) would need to be elevated for more engagement/visibility for sustainable development?

Annex: Questionnaire for the research

THEORY OF CHANGE	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
4 How relevant are national roadmaps for sustainable development for all areas of policymaking in your country?	**a)** How relevant are these national processes for implementation of SDGs? How often are they relevant in your daily work? **b)** What political topics are heavily debated / most contested in your country? (Contested among whom?)
5 Is a strong culture of negotiation observable in your country?	**a)** How strongly is a culture of negotiation embedded in your daily work routines? **b)** What processes (bottom-up or top-down) usually lead to decision-making on contested topics and issues? **c)** ONLY IF APPLICABLE: How is the relationship between stakeholders with opposing views in your organisation? **d)** How do you perceive collective problem-solving and reach agreement on priorities to be addressed?
6 How well are stakeholder groups organised in your country and what capacity do they have?	**a)** Is there an umbrella organisation for civil society actors for sustainable development? **b)** Is there an umbrella organisation / network for sustainable development research institutions? **c)** Is there an umbrella organisation for business actors that engage in sustainable development? **d)** Are there youth networks for sustainable development / climate change in your country? **e)** Are there strong worker unions that are also engaged in sustainable development? **f)** Are there religious networks for sustainable development? **g)** What other platforms and forums exist with a collective voice for sustainable development? **h)** How well are they equipped with financial and human capacities?

THEORY OF CHANGE	RESEARCH QUESTIONS
(7) What do you know about the founding and working routines of the MSP-Advisory Body?	**a)** What role did the government play in its formation? **b)** What mandate does it have? Does it fulfil its mandate? **c)** How does it interact with other organisations for sustainable development in your country? **d)** Does the MSP-Advisory Body have equal representation of all important stakeholders? **e)** Does it integrate sub-national insights and expertise in its work?
(8) How is the relationship of the MSP-Advisory Body with the government responsible for sustainable development policymaking?	**a)** How reciprocal or unilateral is the relationship between the MSP-Advisory Body and the government? **b)** How much of the relationship is visible to a wider public? How much interaction takes place behind the curtains? **c)** Is there an individual person (within the MSP-Advisory Body and/or the government) that stands out in terms of commitment, visions and actions?
(9) How is the operational setup and equipment of the MSP-Advisory Body?	**a)** What have been the key products and work results of the MSP-Advisory Body in the past year? **b)** How does it structure the work and work programme (working groups, conferences, dialogues)? **c)** What are good practice pilot projects you have implemented and that are ready for scaling up or implementation elsewhere? **d)** What is the legal status of the MSP-Advisory Body? **e)** How is the MSP-Advisory Body funded? How sufficient is this funding and how does it affect the fulfilment of its mandate?
(10) What would be an ultimate improvement for the daily work routines of this MSP-Advisory Body or any other platform to provide for continuous stakeholder engagement for transformation?	