

What's next?

Reflections from emerging countries' civil society on the SDG's and the challenges of implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda



CSN BRICSAM | Keeping an Eye on Inequality in Emerging Powers
Civil Society Networks

Empowering civil society networks in an unequal, multi-polar world



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WHO WE ARE

We are an international coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from seven countries that aims to ensure the voices of poor and marginalized people in our countries are taken into account in global policy-making process:

1. Brazilian Network for the Integration of Peoples (REBRIP - Brazil)
2. Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) Russia
3. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA - India)
4. International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID – Indonesia)
5. Social Resources Institute (SRI – China)
6. South Africa Network on Inequality (SANI at Economic Justice Network – South Africa)
7. Coalición de Acción Internacional para el Desarrollo (CAIDMEX - Mexico)

Through the programme “**Empowering Civil Society Organizations Networks in an Unequal Multi-Polar World**” (ECSN-BRICSAM)¹, we have created an international platform that amplifies the voices of civil society from emerging powers and enables us to take a leadership role in defining a global policy agenda that seeks to mitigate economic disparities and encourage inclusive growth. Our work focuses on:

- **Inequality as a cross-cutting issue** – We aim to make the link between economic inequality and inequality in power and in politics.

We believe recommendations for reducing inequality cannot focus solely on socio-economic measures such as redistributive taxation, social security, public services or minimum wages, but must also address the need for improved governance, with channels for ordinary citizens to hold governments, economic elites and powerful corporations to account and demand transparency in the way political decisions are made. With four main thematic areas, each related to inequality:

- **Economic Development Model** – Our focus is on issues related to concentrations of wealth and political power, development banks/BRICS Bank, tax justice, financial transparency and public budgeting, and economic policy and governance.

- **Access to public services** – In terms of health and inequality we aim to meet the most critical resource, policy, and visibility needs required to improve the health of people in emerging nations. We promote more and better quality resources, effective policies, and greater visibility of civil society in joint work with governments.

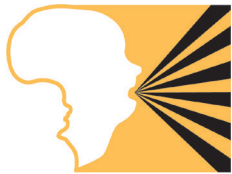
- **Food security and systems** – Using a broad food systems approach, we focus on issues of trade, investment and climate justice.

- **Gender Inequality** – We ensure that gender disparities in wages, employment, and access to services are recognized as a driver of inequality. We also ensure that all work done through the ECSN programme including policy asks, research and advocacy promotes a gender justice agenda and is gender transformative.

From the perspective of our civil society partners from South Africa, China, India, Indonesia and Mexico, we have assembled a collection of reflections on what the sustainable development goals and the post 2015 development agenda mean for emerging economies, and the challenges facing civil society from these countries in terms of implementation and monitoring.

1. For more information about the programme “Empowering Civil Society Organizations Networks in an Unequal Multi-Polar World” (ECSN-BRICSAM), please visit <http://csnbricsam.org/>

THE POST 2015 AGENDA AND THE INCLUSION OF AFRICAN VOICES



african monitor
African voices for Africa's development

SANI



South African Network on Inequality
Empowering Civil Society Organisations in an Unequal Multi-Polar World

Back in October 2012, African Monitor and other African CSOs called for regional consultations on the post 2015 development framework, because we were worried that the global development framework would exclude the voices of ordinary citizens. Since then, African Monitor and other African CSOs has been involved from grassroots level, to national, regional, and all the way to the UN inter-governmental negotiations to ensure that citizens' voices are heard, and their aspirations addressed in the post-2015 SDG agenda.

Voice Africa's Future youth initiative was launched in 2013 to ensure that African youth participate in this processes and that their voices are heard. The initiative has been rolled out in 10 countries (South Africa, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) and provided a platform for youth participation in the post-2015 process.

More than 70,000 youth participated in the process through an innovative mobile technology and were able to make towards the global development agenda in all 10 countries; young people were supported to engage with their governments through the Ministries of International Relations, Planning, and Finance; in order to influence country positions on the SDG's. Furthermore, this initiative engaged UN member states directly during the intergovernmental negotiation process, thus ensuring that youth perspectives influence and inform the post-2015 development agenda.

African Monitor coordinates the Africa CSO Working Group on post 2015. The African CSO Working Group on Post-2015 (AWG) is a platform of

African CSOs that prioritizes realities and aspirations of African citizens in the post 2015 process.

From 2012 to date the Africa CSO Working Group has influenced key continental policy making processes related to the sustainable development goals, financing for development and accountability agendas, among others. Key AU Member States, African Permanent Representatives based in Addis Ababa, the Africa Group (made up of Permanent Representatives based at the United Nations), policy makers at the national level, and most recently statistical offices at the national level. The work of the AWG ensures that African citizens inform and influence continental and global policy agendas that they would not have otherwise been able to influence. The strong network of African CSO's established has also provided a platform for African CSO's to effectively collaborate on advocacy on post 2015 and related agenda.

With regard to the post 2015, the Africa CSO Working Group has made the following significant strides since its inception in 2012.

- **Increased CSOs access to policy makers at the national, regional and global levels.** The Africa CSO Working Group work increased African CSOs access and engagement to regional (UNECA, NEPAD and African Union) and global (United Nations) policy makers. This enhanced CSO advocacy and direct engagement on issues of importance to Africa

- **Supported African negotiators during post 2015 and Finance for Development engagements.**

Most of the technical documents we have developed and shared with the Africa Group of negotiators in New York have been well received and used in the post 2015 process.

- **Provided catalytic information, and intelligence that strengthened CSOs and policy makers' engagement on post 2015 national, regional and global levels.** This has resulted in more and better engagement between CSOs and the relevant ministries in charge of post 2015 in various African countries. It has also strengthened capacity of African CSOs to source and use information on post 2015.

- **Coordinated African CSOs input during the HLP process.** In the work of the UN High Level Panel on post-2015 in 2012/2013, co-chaired by Liberia's President Sirleaf Johnson, AWG was chief coordinator for the global CSO engagement held in Liberia; and supported HE Sirleaf Johnson and her Secretariat to conduct consultations in Africa and integrate citizen perspectives into the HLP's recommendations for the post-2015 development agenda.

- **Ensuring AWG transformative issues are prioritized in the post 2015 process.** A common position was developed collaboratively by members of AWG, which defined 8 transformative issues (in June 2014) that would address the needs and aspirations of African citizens². To date AWG was able to influence both the Common Africa Position and the Open Working Group report based on these transformative focuses.

In spite of the above, several challenges were encountered in our work. The key one includes ensuring participation of African CSOs during the negotiations at the United Nations level. With limited space for CSOs in the post 2015 process in general and at the UN level in particular, the participation of the Africa CSO Working Group was limited to key sessions. In some cases, CSO spaces were dominated by International NGOs. However we were able to creatively spread our limited resources and ensure that we are represented in all the key SDG sessions. Starting with Secretary General- high level panel consultations, the open working group processes, intergovernmental ne-

gotiations as well as the Third finance for development processes the Civil society space has been limited, it was increasingly dominated by narratives from Northern NGOs.

It has been a challenge to truly reflect south narrative as well as grass roots voices. The Southern CSOs voices were limited to their capitals, which at times were being influenced from north. While regional and global platforms were far removed from the grassroots communities and were dominated by few well-resourced groups Proportional representation between South and northern-based NGO in platforms such major groups is important. Now, as we move onto the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 goals and 169 targets – the intention is to truly transform our world. The Sustainable Development Goals look beyond social development and service delivery by promoting economic transformation and environmental sustainability. However, transformation will not happen unless the commitment made at the global level is translated to national development programs through the domestication and localization of the SDG's. We expect southern civil society group's case to be at the center of this process. They have defined what they want to see; now they must be given space to participate and to play an active role in implementation at local and national levels.

The Southern CSOs need the space in the implementation processes, and the follow-up and review processes needs to be strengthened from local, regional and global levels. African CSOs will be the decisive drivers of the post 2015 agenda, therefore empowering them to be active citizens will ensure their sustained ownership and commitment. In order for the agenda to be truly transformational, people should drive the follow-up and monitoring process. People, especially the youth, should be drawn towards the process. One of the ways in which this can be done is by educating people about the agenda and making them understand how the implementation of the post-2015 agenda impacts their daily lives.

2. Bridging social, economic and political inequalities, transforming production and consumption patterns, governance centered on active and responsible citizenship, achieve gender equality, protect women's human rights and empower all women and girls, science, technology, knowledge and learning, sustainable financing for development, peaceful and secure societies and climate change. These are anchored on promoting ownership, accountability and rights

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND BUT HOW? OPINIONS FROM CHINESE CIVIL SOCIETY



As MDGs' counterpart for the term of 2015-2030, SDGs has shared the same historical experience: till now there haven't any clear response heard in China. What's disappointing is, as an important stakeholder in the development agenda, China's NGO communities are still orienting themselves as an alternative role at the national level, assuming their main function as to compensate something that the government cannot approach or to provide social services that the government cannot cover; while referring to the engagement in the international issues, they have been accustomed to agree that the government is the only formal representative to speak out in international platforms. Based on these, this article stands out to show suggestions from a minority NGO group who has been always paying attention to the evolution of SDGs. However, even for these minority NGOs, they didn't get any opportunity to be directly involved in the post-2015 multi-party consulting process initiated by UN since 2010 either.

1. The lights and shadows

As we have noticed, the main decision makers of SDGs proposed to involve the contribution of private corporations to build a global data framework and help less developed countries "access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data." If this can be realized, SDGs will be very possible to become a true human development plan with extensive participation. For the indicators system based on 17 goals and 169 targets, if it was raised in 2000, it might be a disaster to collect and utilize data. While today, and in the next 15 years, with the background of cloud counting, big data and vigorous economical growth in a global villa-

ge, it is quite possible for SDGs to make substantial breakthrough in transparency, accessibility and participation. The future technology development will be beyond our current limited imagination, and able to transfer the paper-based people-centered development into operable reality. Without people's participation, especially women and youth far away from the core power, the politics, economy and social pattern controlled by middle-aged and old male will always continue to acquiesce power-centered growth as the mainstream value.

Still there is a pity. Though the indicators of SDGs are very comprehensive, and has emphasized peace, the issue closely related to every country, it doesn't mention the "Hate Education" behind peace. If we review the globally spreading terrorist attacks existing since the era of MDGs, we may better understand what Sen.A. raised in his book *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*: single identity is dangerous, which makes you build distrust with many other people when you build a trust relationship with a certain people. It is just this single identity that formed Eurocentrism, Asian Values, Fundamentalism, etc. Sen. A. said: "the illusion of single identity satisfied the violent aim of the conflict planners, and it is elaborately cultivated and designed by the violence-oriented leaders."

So, for the sake of fighting the single identity that spreading globally in the past 15 years, what we should pay attention to in the next 15 years is to enable our children to know and understand the importance of free choice and independent thinking in their early childhood, and help them to develop and grow the corresponding capacity.

For sure we also need to take actions on this, instead of continuing to repeat the old way. After all, even though every child in the world received overall education, it doesn't mean that they wouldn't devote in terrorism or take violent attacks on person "different from" them.

2. Challenges of Implementation in China

Chinese political system is quite effective in carrying out large-scale resource mobilization in a short time, so once the government gets a clear developing plan, it is easy to pass the distinct instruction from top to bottom, which can be proved by the notable and generally recognized achievements in the fields of poverty-alleviation and health that MDGs had covered in the past. If we take an instance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (see Fig.1), at the level of physiological and safety, the Chinese intervening ways were really effective.

The 169 indicators of SDGs, if analyzed in the way of human's needs, have covered all the levels in Maslow's pyramid. But compared to MDGs, more indicators of SDGs have remained in the upper levels of the pyramid, and are closely related to human's complete rights. This means, if China wants to keep a position of emerging developing country in the next 15 years, it must adjust the current developing model. For the certain needs of Esteem and Self-actualization are more individualized, and in this stage, the society has completed the initial differentiation and formed diverse groups with multifarious values, so it is impossible to implement the uniformed resource input.

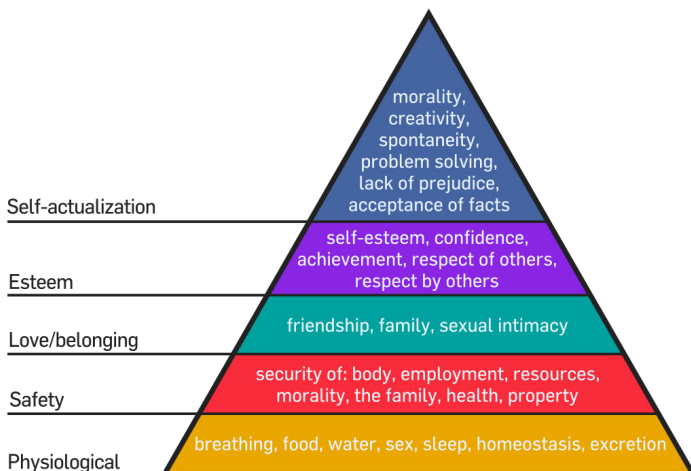


Figure 1. An interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Consequently, the current challenge is: which way should we take to respond to people and realize their different needs on human rights, democracy and good governance? In the clarification of SDGs, emphasizing the responsibilities of all States, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status.

There is one thing we should know first: the formation of a reasonable developing model should be based on some characteristics such as a country's history, culture, resources and advantage, ethnic composition and, etc. and should proceed in an orderly way and step by step, instead of copying others' successful experiences in a disrupted way. And on the other hand, the expectation of participating in the making process of the policy related to them is a natural need for contemporary Chinese people. Furthermore, it's also necessary to involve more participating subjects to improve the old top-down developing approach and clarify different needs, thus to respond to people with different values. Therefore, when we analyze the indicators of SDGs in national level, there should be space of participation for NGOs; it is better than we only provide some inessential and informal discussions after the policy has been implemented.

Whether NGO can realize the participation in the indicator analyzing of SDGs in national level, and whether the participation of NGO can be formally evolved to a necessary process in policy making, implementation and evaluation in the next 15 years, will be the challenge for SDGs to "land" on China effectively.

3. What the Civil Society Could Do

In current stage, both the space for NGOs to participate in SDGs and their own willingness are relatively small and weak. What's more, there are the obstacles on funds and language, for there is no local foundation that is willing to sponsor NGOs to go in for relative policy advocacy work, and funding from foreign foundations will bring risks for the development of the organization; funding from the

public? NGOs lack of qualification. So, the series of work of participating in the SDGs become a risky work that both lacks of proper funding support and is possible to bring negative influence to the organization's development. But this doesn't mean we shouldn't give any response to the localization and further promotion of SDGs and wait until the government completes the adjustment of developing model and send an invitation to civil societies.

Currently, for the 17 goals set by SDGs, China's NGOs have carried out long-term work and got very abundant experience on them. If being invited to work together under the indicator system of SDGs, and cooperate on some cutting issues such as women farmers; resilience and climate change; sustainable agriculture and forest, it's possible for China's NGOs to provide some typical cases and reflect the demands of different stakeholders as a compensation of the official statistical data, which will draw a complete proceeding map for China's edition of SDGs.

Maybe in the civil society of other countries, these works are only some most basic and marginalized work that can't shake the policy core. But who knows, as we described above, every country has its own developing approach and is in different developing stage, so there should be different priorities and different tipping points. Our suggestions on the concrete work of SDGs is that, a crucial starting point is to set up a NGO working team to respond to SDGs issues comprehensively and to coordinate the promotion work in different fields. Otherwise, we can only regret here in the article, for it's impossible for us to speak out on behalf of the civil society in China, as they are scattered in every corner.

REVIEWING THE SDG DOCUMENT: HITS AND MISSES



WADA NA TODO ABHIYAN

Holding the Government Accountable to its Promise to
End Poverty, Social Exclusion & Discrimination

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are in place- approved by 193 countries, encompassing 17 goals, comprising 169 targets, to be achieved over a period of 15 years. An important denominator is the demand to consider no goal achieved, till it is achieved for all. The goals relate to poverty, inequalities, hunger, health, education, gender equality, water, energy and sanitation, decent work and employment, economic growth, resilient infrastructure and safe sustainable cities, action to combat climate change, sustainable development, access to justice and peaceful and inclusive institutions.

An ambitious but not wholly reassuring document
The SDGs are part an ambitious document which has tried to take into account many of the continuing problems and contemporary issues that characterize the development process. While the process for formulating the MDGs, which precede the SDGs, was not inclusive and did not include a human rights framework, the process of the framing of SDGs has been a significant improvement with country specific consultations across many themes, reaching out to diverse groups and multiple stakeholders.

There are standalone goals on inequality, gender, hunger and food security, water and sanitation and climate change which are very welcome.

Inequality, a key concern for Wada Na Todo Abhiyan³, is especially significant in the Indian context. Despite welcome targets such as enhancing representation of developing countries in decision making in international economic and financial institutions and emphasizing on effective, credi-

ble, accountable and legitimate institutions (10.6) – and highlighting the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries (10.a); and encouraging ODA (overseas development assistance) to LDCs, African countries, SIDS, and LLDCs - the SDGs (10.b) do not wholly present a reassuring framework.

Closer scrutiny of inequality targets needed

Within the inequality targets, there are aspects which deserve more scrutiny- such as the reliance on the WTO for addressing the imbalance between developing and developed countries (10.a), and foreign direct investment as a resource for developing countries (10.b). Another key target is mentioned as promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status (10.2). However, the critical aspect of exclusion based on sexuality has been completely excluded.

In terms of the inequalities within countries, social causes of inequality related to exclusion and the intersecting nature of inequalities have not been addressed. Indeed the idea of social exclusion, which is inextricably linked with inequality, is barely referred to. For instance, the idea of descent-based discrimination which manifests itself in the caste system is a serious cause of inequality in India. This sort of inequality impacts access to housing, essential services like water and health-care, education, jobs and in effective participation in the political process. The exclusion worsens in the case of women. Do the SDGs have it in them to reflect such complexities?

In case not, the SDGs cannot claim to 'leave no one behind'. There are other problems as well- the foregrounding of goals in a human rights language is missing even as reference to human rights paradigms are made (Para 7). The articulation of the SDGs accords a significant role to the market and private sector, but with no provisioning for their accountability. Further, role of the state and that of state institutions is minimized.

Global partnership, tax justice, and financing for development

Goal 17 which relates to strengthening of the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development fails to privilege public finance for development instead urging developing countries to raise resources from multiple sources (which can include the private sector). The recently concluded conference on Financing for Development (FFD) in Addis Ababa saw negotiators attempting to highlight the private sector as a source of finance and public private partnerships minus a need for accountability.

While stressing on domestic resource mobilization, the burden of effective tax regimes falls on developing countries (Goal 17). The responsibility of developed countries in tax evasion is not recognized. The fostering of Inequalities due to climate change is not factored in the document either.

We have reservations about the emphasis on industrialization through a separate goal (Goal 9). Despite prioritizing eradication of all kinds of poverty as Goal 1, the goals barely touch on the structural causes of poverty which also need to be addressed.

The SDGs use reassuring language for the responsibility of each country for its own economic and social development and the role of national policies, domestic resources and development strategies (Para 12) This appears to be an effort to not impose ideas of development, yet if countries are left to decide their own standards- citizens might end up with very little in some cases, especially if governments are authoritarian and unconcerned about people's welfare.

The global partnership for the implementation of the sustainable development mentions governments, civil society, the UN system and also the private sector (Para 13). The extent of the role the private sector in this partnership is unclear, as are the modalities of their involvement and accountability, if any.

The requisites for implementation

We echo the importance of improving availability of and access to data and statistics disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts to support the support the monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs. We agree with the need to take urgent steps to improve the quality, coverage and availability of disaggregated data to ensure that no one is left behind (Para 17).

Certain requisites for implementation include:

- The imperative is on the state to spread awareness about the SDGs at a grassroots level.
- The aggregation and dissemination of data should be citizen-led- meaning citizens should not only be involved in data collection, but should know why and for whom data is being collected.
- There is an urgent need to popularise the SDGs- much of the conversations around SDGs has happened at a global level, among a few elite circles. How can these discussions be brought to the local level? One effective way is through the translation of the SDGs document in as many local and regional languages as possible.
- Further there is a need to identify a cluster of policy asks in relation to the SDGs and design a road map for the accomplishment of those policy goals.
- Civil society would need to identify the gaps in policies, budgets and legislations, and also those constituencies which were left out during the consultations on the framing of the goals.

Clearly, implementation is not going to be easy, and responsibility can rest with no one actor. The state must take the lead in it, and actively consult concerned citizens and civil society in the process.

3. Please visit wadanatodo.net for more details.

GLOBAL UNCERTAINTIES SHADOW OVER THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDGS



After a lengthy consultation process, which started with the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and followed by a succession of consultations at different levels (national, regional and international), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be ratified by the United Nations (UN). With 17 goals and 169 targets, the agenda shall set the course for global development in the next 15 years.

SDGs will be a major undertaking for all global stakeholders. Development actors are expected to be actively engaged in promoting and implementing the agenda in its entirety. Achieving SDGs however will not be an easy task given the host of major challenges, including a prolonged economic crisis and an increasingly shrinking space for civil society.

Economic Crises and SDGs

The global situation is currently rocked by an unstable economic and political situation. The economic and financial turmoil that struck the United States in 2008, followed by the crisis in European Union countries has led to an unpredictable economic and political environment across the globe. In a recent phenomenon, China devalued its Yuan currency to 3%. China's decision to depreciate its currency raised doubts over its economic prowess which has thus far helped sustain the world's economic growth.

Many are speculating on whether this sudden move was intended to boost China's export volume as the country's economic growth slowed down, or to simply let its currency follow the mar-

ket mechanism. The market has reacted negatively to Yuan's depreciation, where stocks are sold off, causing the stock indices of countries worldwide to weaken. This includes the weakening of the currencies of emerging countries such as Indonesia and Brazil due to significant capital outflows.

The political situation is no less disheartening. Many countries are troubled by massive protests that question the legitimacy of their rulers, while other countries are ravaged by bloody conflicts as fundamentalist groups tighten their grip. Tension mounts in different regions following intensified border disputes. Meanwhile, citizens' groups in various countries have more assertively rejected the arrival of immigrants as job opportunities become scarcer.

The aforementioned situation is clearly different from the time when MDGs were adopted. MDGs were formulated whilst the world was swayed by an optimistic outlook as the global economic and political situation was then relatively stable following the crisis in the 1980s, and subsequent economic turbulence in Asia in 1997. The economic situation at the time was buoyed by a new-found confidence on the growth of rising economies as the world's new economic superpowers as evident in the economic strengthening of emerging countries. The political situation was then also relatively stable, albeit not entirely free from the threat of fundamentalist groups.

The unpredictability of the global situation will have a profound impact on the achievement of SDGs, including on the issue of financing for development. Developed nations' non-committal on

support for achieving SDGs through adequate financing reflects an uncertain global situation. A sense of foreboding sets in as there are no new breakthroughs in commitments for development financing.

This is evident in the results of the UN Conference on Financing for Development or the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) that has failed to adequately respond to financing needs due to lack of commitment from advanced countries towards poor and developing countries. Demands from poor and developing countries under G77 to establish an inter-governmental tax body were not well responded to by developed countries. On the contrary, pressures have intensified to support private economic actors who clearly cannot be relied on entirely to commit to the sustainable development agenda.

Civil Society Engagement in SDGs

Given the grave challenges arising from an uncertain situation, considerable efforts are critical, not to mention pressures from all actors, including civil society, to ensure the achievement of SDGs. However, in many countries civil society is facing a difficult situation where their role is restricted, either by legislation or threats from non-state actors, such as fundamentalist groups.

The Chinese government for example, recently drafted its first law for regulating foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Quoted from the Economist (August 22nd 2015) that this law potentially imposes strict constraints on foreign or foreign-supported groups, and no funding from abroad will be allowed. An organization should be registered with the government. It is no different from the law enforced in Russia that labels organizations receiving aid from other countries as 'foreign agents'.

Under such circumstances, there is skepticism over whether civil society will play a more central role in efforts to attain SDGs. Hence, there is urgent need for global pressures to ensure civil society engagement at the international, national and local level. At the national level, there needs to be a multistakeholder body to design a national

action plan on SDGs, and to devise the necessary strategies to achieve SDGs by all parties. The Secretariat must play a pivotal role, not only in terms of implementing but also monitoring SDG achievement at all levels. To this end, obstacles that may hamper civil society engagement should be removed.

From the previous implementation of MDGs, civil society participation from formulating the agenda to implementation and oversight was extremely minimal. In reality, civil society had significantly contributed to achieving MDGs. In Indonesia for example, civil society has productively worked at the community level by providing quality education and health services to help the government attain SDGs.

These contributions however are not documented, making it seem as though any achievement made in regard to SDGs was solely the government's doing. Given past experiences and an uncertain global situation, SDGs from the outset must engage civil society in its entire process in the hope of turning SDGs into a reality.

CIVIL SOCIETY PROPOSAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA IN MEXICO



Resuming the Busan commitments and the statement of the First High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation held in Mexico City on April 2014, we call on the Mexican government to ensure the strategy for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of 2030 Agenda in Mexico is inclusive, transparent and effective.

For Mexico, like many other middle-income countries, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will pose a significant challenge for internal implementation. We at CAIDMEX⁴ have identified three major challenges that Mexico must resolve in order to achieve the goals for sustainable development:

a) Social policies at the national and local level must guarantee transparency and accountability in their implementation; Corruption is one of the major obstacles that prevent the proper implementation and effectiveness of programs for marginalized populations.

b) The mechanisms for civic participation should ensure an effective process, so that citizens have access to information, as well as the development, monitoring and evaluation of public policies at various levels and sectors. Citizen councils should not be mechanisms for simulation and fortuitous validation; on the contrary, they must function as bodies that engage in consultation, management and reporting of government policies.

c) Extreme social inequality has its roots in the prevailing economic model of the last few decades; we must rethink the socio-political dynamics of our

country and region with the aim of establishing economic systems that favor sustainable growth.

For that manner, we propose the creation of an institutionalized mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda, which takes into account the participation of all key development actors that comprise the Global Partnership – especially civil society organizations –, while at the same time respecting their autonomy and diversity. In the national implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), civil society was not included in the Specialized Technical Committee resulting in implementation and evaluation of MDGs without the participation of civil society. For the implementation of the new targets, there should be in place a mechanism with clear strategies for the participation of civil society in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda.

It should be noted that civil society organizations are key actors in development since they often serve as bridges between the global and the local, enabling people to claim their rights, promoting a rights approach, helping to shape development policies and partnerships as well as overseeing their implementation. Civil society has knowledge of local solutions, of what works and what does not, and its inclusion can guarantee success for the Agenda. The public has the right to participate and create, in conjunction with the State, a strategy which entails its design, implementation and monitoring.

Proposals for national implementation of the 2030 Agenda

National implementation should incorporate CSOs in state and national development plans as well as in the budget and program structure at the federal and state levels. Rearrangement of the programs under each strategy must occur along with the creation of new strategies that promote sustainable development and enable achieving the target of zero hunger, poverty and child mortality, while incorporating all Ministries.

Mexico, like other middle-income countries, has many of the necessary resources to promote the Agenda. However, there must be strategies to reduce corruption and promote effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels as set forth in SDG 16. Fiscal and economic strategies should be redirected to ensure that the growing inequality is reduced and that “no one is left behind”. Although other actors can contribute in financing the Agenda, it is the responsibility of the government to ensure compliance and to create strategies and solutions for the common good. The Agenda requires not only the design of new programs but also for each State to respect, protect and guarantee human rights.

Implementation should not be a centralized effort and there must be ownership from local and municipal governments. There must be an emphasis in the importance of local implementation and the creation of differentiated strategies established according to territorial development. Participation of citizens must be promoted (particularly from the most marginalized sectors) in the strategy design, implementation and monitoring. To this end, local governance and civic participation must be fostered to “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” as set forth in SDG 16.

The implementation of the Agenda will be an opportunity to promote a more sustainable development model, which at the same time is a challenge. The SDGs promote not only the expansion of coverage of services but also the guarantee of rights and quality of services. Strategies should focus on protecting these rights and generating sustainable changes rather than solely positioning the progress of the State. At the same time, the Agenda promotes sustainable development and ques-

tions a focus on economic growth. The challenge of promoting inclusive development to decrease inequality and protecting the environment involves reassessing the economic policies of each State.

Civic participation in the 2030 Agenda

Governments must ensure spaces that are transparent, inclusive, timely and relevant at the local, national, regional and international levels for the inclusion of input from the public at all stages of the implementation of 2030 Agenda, and they must report on progress in implementing the SDGs to citizens in an active, timely and periodical manner. They should also ensure the involvement of civil society in progress assessments and the findings of such evaluations should be published in a timely and accessible manner, resulting in prompt, concrete and efficient actions. With such commitment and effort, there must be assurance that no one is being left behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The overall success of the 2030 Agenda will depend on the commitments and public policies implemented by each government, in particular its inclusiveness and comprehensiveness. We must go beyond discourse and use implementation as an opportunity to assess the effectiveness and impact of current public policies and restructure them to ensure sustainable development. The Agenda was created by States and their citizens, and its success will be defined on whether civil society is included in the next fifteen years.

4. The International Coalition for Development Action (Coalición de Acción Internacional para el Desarrollo en México) - CAIDMEX is a group comprised of civil society organization, both national and international, based in Mexico which aims to advocate as a collective in international agendas. Its members are: 1. Corporativa de Fundaciones, 2. El Barzón Nacional, 3. Iniciativa Ciudadana para la Promoción de la Cultura del Diálogo 4. Investigación, Organización y Acción Comunitaria Altepétl, 5. Oxfam México, 6. Save the Children, 7. The Hunger Project México, 8. World Vision México.



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