



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Issue Briefs

4. *Preparing the HLPF for post 2015: Reviewing progress and implementation*

Background

The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) recognized that numerous efforts have been and are being made to achieve sustainable development since the adoption of Agenda 21 through legislation and institutions, and international, regional and sub-regional agreements and commitments. The high-level political forum on sustainable development created in Rio+20 is to provide high-level guidance and recommendations to advance sustainable development. It is also to promote the sharing of best practices and experiences including successes, challenges and lessons learned. General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the forum also stipulates that HLPF will conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Those reviews will be voluntary, state-led and provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. In 2016, they will replace the national voluntary presentations held in the context of the annual ministerial reviews (AMR) of ECOSOC.

The forum's monitoring and review function will need to be situated in the context of the accountability framework on the post-2015 development agenda, expected to be adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015.

National reviews

The national reviews should build on the experience of the national voluntary reviews held in ECOSOC with the AMR. There are also many examples of implementation reviews or peer reviews, such as in the context of the African Union, the OECD, trade or human rights. It will be necessary to take a bold and innovative approach to ensure that the forum's review truly impacts implementation and benefits the countries that undergo reviews as well as the international community. Some guiding considerations are:

- National reviews represent an opportunity for improving the monitoring and review of progress made by Member States on sustainable development and ultimately on SDGs.
- The national reviews allow countries to share experiences on implementation at the national level, iden-

tifying common barriers and exchanging possible solutions. To this end, it is essential that national voluntary presentations at HLPF present lessons learned, including challenges and opportunities.

- Reviews should function to advance sustainable development and the implementation of sustainable development goals within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda.
- The review process should not become an additional burden on countries. It is important that national reviews produce reports that will be useful nationally, regionally and globally. Existing mechanism should be used to the extent possible.
- Reporting also needs to be inclusive. All relevant actors, state and non-state should be involved. The reviews should give the opportunity to launch partnerships for implementation.
- Reporting to HLPF would also need to be cyclical with a built-in review process. Recommendations given to countries on the basis of their reporting need to be revisited to see their follow-up.
- The national reviews should draw on the full range of relevant national inputs, based on reliable information and data, including disaggregated data to the extent possible. Thus it is important that capacity building is available for all relevant stakeholders, on a demand-driven basis, to assist developing countries in their reporting. This reporting will require not only access to relevant information and data, but also adoption of approaches that are integrative and consistent with sustainable development.
- The Global Sustainable Development Report could highlight conclusions and lessons from the reviews. The report was envisioned in Rio+20 to improve the science-policy interface in sustainable development.
- Reviews are useful if they contribute to an understanding by individual governments of how they are doing, and to the collective understanding of how the international community is doing. The identification of gaps and challenges, or replicable successes, could thus influence the agenda of the forum.
- The review of reports and information presented needs to analyse the drivers of implementation on the ground.
- In the case of developing countries, the involvement of the UN system and development partners should promote the implementation of recommendations. For all countries who volunteer to undertake the review, the review and reporting should foster implementation of sustainable development objectives and commitments at all levels.

Guiding questions

This session will be organized around the following guiding questions:

- How can the national reviews of implementation under the HLPF be designed and conducted to help accelerate progress on the SDGs and sustainable development, building on the lessons learned from other review processes?
- How can the reviews contribute to the strengthening of partnerships for implementation?
- Given the universal nature of the SDGs, how can the national reviews promote broader accountability in the context of the post-2015 development agenda?

