

Statement by Nicole Cardinal, Save the Children International
Informal interactive hearings with representatives of Non-governmental Organizations, Civil Society, Major
Groups and the Private Sector on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
General Assembly Hall, United Nations, New York, 27 May 2015

‘Monitoring, Review and Follow-up’

Introduction

1. Thank-you for the opportunity to speak today. I am responding on behalf of my Afghan colleague Zubaida Akbar who unfortunately could not be here today.
2. **A promise is only good if it is kept.** The post-2015 development agenda is the promise of a better, more equitable and just world for children and adults alike, and a robust system of accountability is how we can ensure that this promise is kept.
3. In response to the discussion, I would like to highlight three key points:
 - i. The need for a continuum of accountability with national accountability as the bedrock;
 - ii. The opportunity for the HLPF to conduct national peer reviews and global reviews of progress; and
 - iii. The importance of prioritizing and engaging the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

A continuum of accountability with national accountability as the bedrock

4. First, we believe there should be **a cycle or continuum of accountability from national to regional to global levels** and back again.
5. **National accountability between the state and its citizens should be the bedrock of post-2015 accountability** with countries conducting regular reviews of progress in an inclusive and participatory manner, including with children and young people. Perhaps the best way to let one thousand flowers bloom is to consult children who, as many of you know, have literally thousands of ideas. One child we consulted was clear about the importance of national accountability, stating we need **‘stronger communication between those who make the decisions and those who ‘get’ the consequences of those decisions.’**
6. National accountability can be supported by regional dialogue and monitoring, and a global follow-up and review process under the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) **where key recommendations are subsequently followed up at national levels, as well as within the HLPF itself.**

A High Level Political Forum with national peer reviews and global reviews of progress

7. Second, at a global level, Member States should establish **an open, inclusive and participatory HLPF that provides for reviews of national and global progress, multi-stakeholder engagement,** and which allows us to collectively ‘keep our finger on the pulse’ in implementing the SDGs.
8. We believe such **an HLPF can best be achieved through peer reviews of national progress.** Each year, some Member States could be reviewed during the first four days of the HLPF. **Three-hour parallel or simultaneous peer reviews could be conducted by groups of Member States representing a balance of high, middle and low-income countries, as well as a balance of geography.** The three-day ministerial segment could then focus its attention on review of global progress. Under this model, each Member State could benefit from a review every four years, or three times over the duration of the post-2015 agenda.

9. Given the global nature of the agenda, the **HLPF must provide a space where Member States of different income levels and regions share progress and challenges, especially when it comes to the means of implementation and the global partnership.** Regional peer reviews can be helpful but we need ‘reviews that go beyond borders’ if we are serious about addressing transnational challenges. A space for peer reviews could also help to facilitate a dynamic ‘platform for partnerships’ and build a spirit of solidarity where Member States, UN Agencies, the private sector and civil society alike come together to address challenges in implementation, as well as to report on voluntary commitments to implement the SDGs.

Prioritizing and engaging the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups

10. Third, accountability at all levels should **explicitly consider progress, or lack thereof, for the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.** Tracking progress across all goals and targets for all disadvantaged groups would help to reinforce the interlinkages between goals and targets, and would ensure that we truly leave no one behind.
11. We recognize this will require a **strong commitment from Member States to disaggregate data** as well as significant financial and human resources to improve the coverage, quality and transparency of data. The **establishment of a Global Partnership on Data** could assist in this regard as well as **engaging citizens, including children and young people in participatory monitoring and data collection.** Participation is not just an end in itself but a means to produce better and more accurate data. If you want to know how people are doing, you should engage them in asking the question.
12. Finally, success should be measured not just by what we achieve for some, but by what we achieve for all. **No target should be considered fully met until met for all relevant social and economic groups.**

Conclusion

13. In conclusion, we know that the terminology for this portion of the agenda is an issue that will have to be resolved. Language may be one thing but action is everything. **What matters most is not what the mechanism is called, but the action that will be taken to fulfil the post-2015 promise to people, the planet and our shared future.**
14. **It will not only be what we do, but also what we do not do, for which we should all be held accountable.**