

11 July 2019 | THEMATIC REVIEW: PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIETY

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Which should be the principles to guide the strengthening of the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, including the HLPF Reform?

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for this opportunity to be heard. I am Camille Madiz from Plan International. Together with Terre des Hommes and Defence for Children International, and with support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we lead the Girls Advocacy Alliance, a global initiative that promotes equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women in 10 countries across Asia and Africa, including the Philippines where I come from. Leading to this HLPF, I worked with government, children, and CSOs to help ensure that civil society, especially young people, are represented and able to meaningfully participate in the VNR process that my country was leading. I am grateful to the Philippine National Economic and Development Authority for their openness to collaborate as we reviewed our country's progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Today, I speak with you as part of the Children and Youth Major Group.

To strengthen the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, including the HLPF reform,

We need to **increase stakeholder engagement in the development of national priorities and follow-up, and in review processes**. Governments must map out and document the contributions of civil society in achieving the SDGs. We are working for a common goal, and we need support to effectively carry out our efforts.

In my region, many CSOs still feel that they are not being engaged in any stage of SDG implementation. We need to **formally include non-state actors in governance arrangements**. Mechanisms must be institutionalized to ensure our meaningful and active participation. Develop guidelines or tool on data collection, so that citizen-generated data are valid and can be utilized to fill-in data gaps or complement state-generated data.

Let us also **allot more time to VNR presentations**. *But what happens after the HLPF? Once we go back to our countries?* As someone who worked on the VNR, I want to hear from my government. Report back to us - to children, to civil society, to constituents on what happens next. We must be provided spaces for meaningful follow-up on the outcome of this year's VNR and HLPF. We need to know in order to have a hand in shaping what happens next.

Because the way we are developing now remains exclusionary and unsustainable. We need this to change. And it starts with **commitment and focus on "leaving no one behind."** Tokenistic participation of civil society must end. We're more than check boxes and fillers to make VNRs seem inclusive and participatory. Mechanisms must be established to ensure the VNR process do not just remain open and transparent, but is actually accessible to everyone. While governments have asked us to contribute to the VNR, many CSOs are not aware of the timeline and preparations of the state and therefore could not find an entry point for participation.

As for the report itself, dedicate a chapter in the VNR to "leaving no one behind" that details who is being left behind, the available data and data gaps, efforts to leave no one behind; and efforts to reduce domestic inequalities.

Girls and young women like myself are largely absent from national plans on SDG implementation and on SDG reporting. We need to ensure that girls, boys, young women and young men are at the forefront of implementation, data collection, VNR reporting and the HLPF agenda.

Thank you for your time. Good morning.