

**Summary of the Position Paper**  
**submitted by the Non-Governmental Organizations Major Group**  
**High Level Political Forum 2019**

Stories collected from NGOs leading up to the 2019 HLPF demonstrate the interconnectedness of the goals and the continuing need to take holistic approaches to achieving them. Challenges noted by NGOs consistently reflected exclusion, disempowerment, reduction of diversity, lack of disaggregated data, separation of sectors, unilateralism, and lack of political will. Whereas the processes that brought about progress placed people at the centre of development and had at their core human rights, inclusion, empowerment, disaggregation of data, cooperation and true collaboration across sectors; multilateralism, will and commitment to action taken *with* all stakeholders, as promised in the 2030 Agenda.

Member States, the UN System, and civil society have committed to people-centred and inclusive partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, the NGO Major Group calls upon Member States to ensure that civil society and those most affected by policy-making are guaranteed an active and meaningful role in the process of decision-making, planning, implementation, evaluation, and assessment ensuring accountability, empowering people to lead their own development, and leaving no one behind.

Empowerment, inclusion and equality are the *outcomes of* and the *means for* achieving sustainable development for all humanity and for our shared planet.

For the 2019 SDGs under review, the NGO-MG calls upon Member States with their unique responsibilities, and all stakeholders to work collaboratively to:

(SDG4) Ensure free and accessible quality education for all, in particular for girls and women; support educators through professional development and adequate financial compensation; expand the vision of education beyond ‘preparing workers’ to be more holistic and inclusive, using formal and informal structures, and respecting local and indigenous cultures, native languages, and cultural diversity in order to prepare global citizens to contribute to a sustainable society;

(SDG8) Use goal-driven development rooted in human rights to achieve economic growth, opportunity and decent work; take action to reduce CO2 emissions, decoupling economic growth from environmental and socio-cultural degradation; eradicate human trafficking and slavery in all forms; and review and revise current GDP-based indicators for SDG 8 in order to capture and learn from a disaggregated picture of growth that shows the impacts of growth on marginalized groups and on workers;

(SDG10) Ensure equality and freedom from discrimination for all, respecting human rights and providing comprehensive social protections; address inequalities between countries, eradicating abusive trade practices and tightening global restrictions on speculative trading; monitor global food prices; reform international financial bodies to ensure more equal representation of low- and middle-income countries; ensure equitable financing for the SDGs including through redistributive fiscal policy; and uphold the Global Compact on Migration;

(SDG13) Align actions with the Paris Agreement; adopt disaster risk-informed planning that includes all stakeholders, especially those most vulnerable to climate risks; empower local communities to strengthen their own resilience; place long-term resilience at the core of disaster preparedness and response actions; prioritize ecologically sustainable practices; and act with *urgency* on climate change impacts already affecting lives and ecosystems, engaging multilateral cooperation and cross-sector collaboration;

(SDG16) Ensure transparency and meaningful access to government systems at every level and for every person; empower the most vulnerable with full and equal access to justice mechanisms; promote peace to ensure sustained security, rule of law, justice, and inclusiveness; uphold the independence and integrity of the judiciary; and integrate the rule of law and governance-oriented approaches throughout sustainable development efforts and priorities;

(SDG17) Form partnerships that include civil society and are sensitive to local socio-cultural contexts; improve transparency; expand access to technological tools, while ensuring their ethical use; and include in *meaningful* ways the voice and committed actions of civil society in the process of designing and effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda.