



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sweden Voluntary National Review Major Groups and other Stakeholders Statement 15 July 2021

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We commend the government's efforts to conduct an inclusive and participatory process in the review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, for taking a human rights based approach on advancement of the SDGs, and showing awareness of remaining urgent challenges, such as, persisting inequalities and the need to change human relationship with nature.

Yet, there is a clear consensus among civil society and other stakeholders that many recommendations are not reflected in the VNR and participation has been limited in comparison to 2017. We also remain concerned about the lack of an institutionalized mechanism to engage diverse civil society in the implementation and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda, leading to lost synergies, missed opportunities and overlooked expertise and experiences in this process.

We call for Sweden to develop an institutionalized mechanism to implement and review the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This includes the enactment of an action plan with clear guidelines, benchmarks, and indicators, inclusive data collection, and the convening of an annual national forum to enable broad stakeholder engagement.

As such, we would like to ask, how will Sweden institutionalize the follow up, review, and measurement of the Agenda 2030 and practice systematic inclusion, dialogue, and participation of diverse civil society actors, including those who have been furthest left behind?

The principle of Leaving No One Behind is central to Sweden's implementation of the 2030 Agenda, yet there is a lack of well-defined and procedural approaches to meaningfully involve marginalized groups and civil society working with children and young people, Arctic Indigenous Peoples, including the Saami people, migrants, the Roma people, national ethnic minorities, transgender, intersex, and non-binary persons, persons with disabilities, older persons, among others. These communities also face a disproportionate burden of the issues important to civil society working in Sweden and on development, notably poverty, food and land insecurity, homelessness, and health issues, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and fueling social exclusion, while lacking decision-making power.

Civil society provides unique expertise, contributes significantly to the achievement of the SDGs both locally and globally, and facilitates democratic development. Conscious action must be taken to leverage and recognize civil society as equal partners, in collaboration with other sectors and with the government, to realize the 2030 Agenda.