Overlaps between youth access to rights and the SDGs

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Introduction

About the project

This Publication is an output of the project **"Youth access to rights through implementing the SDGs"**[1]. Supported by the Erasmus+ programme of the EU and lead by the organisation *Centre for Intercultural Dialogue CID* from North Macedonia, the project aims to develop capacities of youth leaders and youth lead organisations to improve young people's access to rights through the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) implementation plans. In concrete, the project focuses on designing, developing, testing, implementing, and evaluating specific tools that support young people's access to rights in the SDG Agenda.

In the past decades increasing efforts have been made to ensure that proper mechanisms for youth participation are set in place. Even though there are different models for youth participation globally, they do not contribute to the same extent to young people's access to rights. While the Rights-based approach can vary from country to country, the SDGs are globally accepted. In order to find a common ground, the project proposes to look into the SDGs as a global framework, and explore strategies and tools for improving young people's access to rights through implementing the global goals.

The Consortium gathered around the idea that young people's access to rights is a key element to resolving global issues as defined in the SDGs. The project aims at making this link clearer by ensuring that youth access to rights takes a visible part of SDGs' implementation plans. This is to be done through identifying strategies and capacity building for advocacy and programme management. The idea for more youth access to rights in implementing the SDGs would mean that young people will not disproportionately benefit from SDGs' implementation processes, as well as offering them meaningful spaces and support to express their views on what their obstacles for accessing their rights are, and what can be done to overcome those obstacles.

Furthermore, the project is built around **the concept of learning and advocating for the SDGs**, through mobility activities based on a comprehensive educational approach to map how youth access to rights can be achieved within the implementation of the SDGs. Educating young people and youth workers to become more aware of the global goals will allow them to learn about the interdependence of the world's systems, feel morally compelled to confront global injustices and take responsible action to promote a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

Finally, the innovative approach of this project allows moving beyond the development of knowledge and cognitive skills to build values and soft skills among learners, enabling them to facilitate international cooperation, promote social transformation and become drivers and multipliers of genuine change in their societies, by using an already existing global development agenda and securing that young people are not left out from it.

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[1]The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all people and the world by 2030.

Partners

The project engages 12 youth associations across Europe and the world to exchange good practices with regards to the SDGs' implementation plans and see them as an opportunity to promote specific standards such as the Recommendation on Young People's Access to Rights. The project answers the common needs of partners from different countries and, through a unique educational approach, contributes to connecting the SDGs with diverse local, regional and national level practices in the field of youth work and participation.

The project Partnership is composed of the following organisations lead by CID: Out of the Box International (Belgium), Community Volunteers Foundation TOG (Turkey), Youth for Exchange and Understanding (Belgium), World Vision for Education and Development WVED (Cameroon), Fondazione Istituto Morcelliano (Italy), JEF Europe (Belgium), the Kenya Scouts Association, Narxoz University (Kazakhstan), Associacao de Jovens Engajamundo (Brazil) and The National Youth Council of Fiji NYCF.

Why this publication?

It is necessary that Sustainable Development Goals maintains to be a topic on which youth organisations engage in dialogue both among themselves and with governments in order to push reforms on the agenda. The project's innovativeness is ensured through a rather unique approach – instead of promoting youth access to rights as a stand-alone issue, the project is promoting it within a globally accepted framework of the SDGs. Youth rights-based approach efforts are often directed at governments and other authorities, underlining that providing space for youth in the existing development agenda could have a longer and more sustainable impact than as a stand-alone intervention. Given that the project is established on developing the **advocacy capacities** of youth organisations and young people to advocate for their access to rights within the **SDGs' implementation** process, this publication aims to provide youth workers, leaders and young people with the theoretical approach and tools necessary to design, implement and evaluate effective rights-based approaches, especially in the sustainable development agenda.

The publication you are about to read contains the definitions of sustainable development, goals, rights based approach, mapping of existing practices and recommendations for achieving an impact on **policy level** through cross-sectorial cooperation and engagement of key stakeholders in working with young people to ensure that young people can identify and prioritise their issues when it comes to access to rights, and that these issues can be high on the agenda of the SDGs' implementation plans. Finally, this publication was designed to support youth leaders to address youth access to rights and remove the barriers to it through open and flexible materials and guidelines, with an ultimate aim of creating a model that can be up-scaled on policy level on how to successfully overcome societal challenges identified by young people.

Sustainable Development

Before diving into advocacy, it is important to have an understanding of and, at least, some basic knowledge on the topics of sustainable development and sustainable development goals.

The definition of sustainable development says that it is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a concerted effort towards ensuring a sustainable, resilient and inclusive future for current and generations to come, because there is no Planet B.

It contains two key concepts within it:

- The concept of 'needs', in particular, the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.[2]
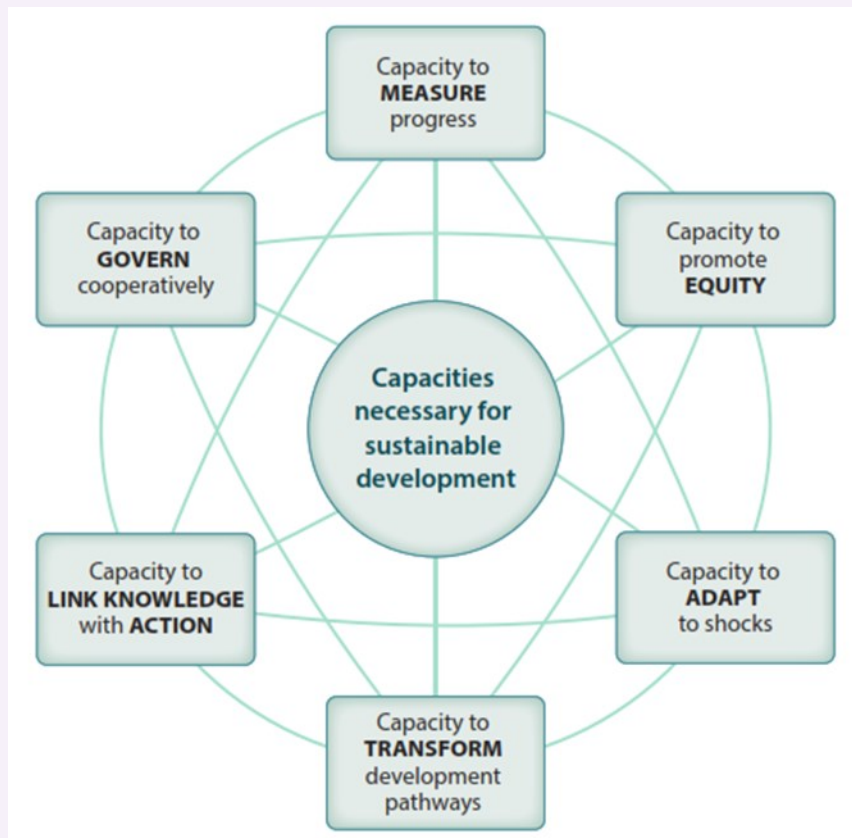
To call sustainable development a success it is important to coordinate and match the following core elements: 1) economic growth, 2) social inclusion 3) environmental protection with clear actions for climate change.

These are also called three dimensions or pillars of sustainable development, while some authors added the forth one of culture, institutions and governance.

There are six interdependent capacities that are necessary for the successful pursuit of sustainable development. These are the capacities to measure progress towards 1) sustainable development; 2) promote equity within and between generations; 3) adapt to shocks and surprises; 4) transform the system onto more sustainable development pathways; 5) link knowledge with action for sustainability; and 6) to devise governance arrangements that allow people to work together in the exercising of the other capacities.[3]

[2]World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*/Brundtland Report (1987)
[3]**William C. Clark* and Alicia G. Harley,** John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA; Sustainability Science: Toward a Synthesis | Annual Review of Environment and Resources (annualreviews.org)

Sustainable development can be achieved through localised initiatives. In 1992 the Rio Earth Summit resulted in Agenda 21, Think Globally, Act Locally[4]. Local initiatives can support access to clean water through sanitation programs, address hunger through community food banks and community gardens, promote local recycling initiatives and ensure that all children have access to quality education through tailored support for girls, vulnerable children and those with disabilities.

In 2015, the United Nations and its 193 member countries adopted the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a 15-year plan that addresses 17 global and interconnected issues, including the reduction in poverty and hunger, putting an end to discrimination and preventing the long-term consequences of climate change.

The Goals and targets to stimulate action to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all are set out in: *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*[5]

[4]Agenda 21, UNCED 1992, Agenda 21 .:. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (un.org)
[5]Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org)

The 2030 Agenda is based on 5 Ps:

People

We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

Planet

We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

Prosperity

We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

Peace

We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

Partnership

We are determined to mobilise the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.[6]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are being followed up and reviewed by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) at the global level, established in 2012 by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), through its outcome on "The Future We Want".[7]

Sustainability vs. Sustainable Development

One might ask, what is the difference between sustainable development and sustainability? Sustainability is often thought of as a long-term goal (i.e. a more sustainable world), while sustainable development refers to the many processes and pathways to achieve it (e.g. sustainable agriculture and forestry, sustainable production and consumption, good government, research and technology transfer, education and training, etc.).

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[6]ibid
[7]High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (un.org)

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

These goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.

The 17 SDGs were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which set out a 15-year plan to achieve the goals.

Each goal has its targets, indicators and regular annual reports on the progress. Here, one will find the overview of each of the goals, while more information can be found at a dedicated UN website: THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development (un.org) Considering the complexity of the SDGs, the text below is a collection of information provided by the United Nations and European Union texts on the topic.

Goal 1: No Poverty. End poverty in all its forms, everywhere.

The first Sustainable Development Goal aims to "End poverty in all its forms everywhere". Its seven associated targets aims, among others, to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty, and implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

Priority actions on poverty eradication include:

- improving access to sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources;
- providing universal access to basic social services;
- progressively developing social protection systems to support those who cannot support themselves;
- empowering people living in poverty and their organisations;
- addressing the disproportionate impact of poverty on women;
- working with interested donors and recipients to allocate increased shares of ODA to poverty eradication and
- intensifying international cooperation for poverty eradication. [8]

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[8] Poverty eradication | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org)

Goal 2: Zero Hunger. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

As the world population continues to grow, much more effort and innovation will be urgently needed in order to sustainably increase agricultural production, improve the global supply chain, decrease food losses and waste, and ensure that all who are suffering from hunger and malnutrition have access to nutritious food.

Extreme poverty and hunger are predominantly rural, with smallholder farmers and their families making up a very significant proportion of the poor and hungry. Thus, eradicating poverty and hunger are integrally linked to boosting food production, agricultural productivity and rural incomes.

Given expected changes in temperatures, precipitation and pests associated with climate change, the global community is called upon to increase investment in research, development and demonstration of technologies to improve the sustainability of food systems everywhere. Building resilience of local food systems will be critical to averting large-scale future shortages and to ensuring food security and good nutrition for all.[9]

Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Sustainable Development Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to *"ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages"*. The associated targets aim to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio; end preventable deaths of newborns and children; end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases; reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases; strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse; halve the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents; ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services; achieve universal health coverage; and reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and pollution.[10]

Goal 4: Quality Education. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Sustainable Goal 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030, through ensuring equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

This goal supports the reduction of disparities and inequities in education, both in terms of access and quality. It recognizes the need to provide quality education for all, most especially vulnerable populations, including poor children, children living in rural areas, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and refugee children.

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[9] Food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org)

[10] Health and population | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org)

It is of critical importance because of its transformative effects on the other SDGs. Sustainable development hinges on every child receiving a quality education. When children are offered the tools to develop to their full potential, they become productive adults ready to give back to their communities and break the cycle of poverty. Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility.[11]

There is growing international recognition of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as an integral element of quality education and a key enabler for sustainable development.

Goal 5: Gender Equality. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Gender equality is a human right. It is also a precondition for realising all goals in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Though girls and boys on average face similar challenges in early childhood, gender disparities become more pronounced as children grow. Adolescent girls, due to expected gender roles, may face a disproportionate burden of domestic work, expectations to be married, risks of early pregnancy, as well as sexual and gender-based violence. Globally, 650 million girls and women alive today have been married as children and over 200 million have undergone female genital mutilation. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened existing gender inequalities, especially for the most marginalised children.

Gender inequalities are still deep-rooted in every society. Women suffer from lack of access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. In many situations, they are denied access to basic education and health care and are victims of violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

With the aim of better addressing these challenges and identifying a single recognized driver to lead and co-ordinate UN activities on gender equality issues, *UN Women* was established in 2010.

UN Women works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, empowerment of women, and achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Goal 6 aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Water and sanitation are critical to the health of people and the planet. Goal 6 not only addresses the issues relating to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), but also the quality and sustainability of water resources worldwide. Improvements in drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are essential for progress in other areas of development too, such as nutrition, education, health and gender equality.

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[11]SDG Goal 4: Quality Education - UNICEF DATA

Water and sanitation are at the core of sustainable development, and the range of services they provide underpin poverty reduction, economic growth and environmental sustainability. However, in recent decades, overexploitation, pollution, and climate change have led to severe water stress in locales across the world.

Today, 2.2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water, and more than 4.2 billion people lack safely managed sanitation. Climate change is exacerbating the situation, with increasing disasters such as floods and droughts. 80 percent of wastewater in the world flows back into the ecosystem without being treated or reused, and 70 per cent of the world's natural wetland extent has been lost, including a significant loss of freshwater species.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses an additional impediment, impairing access for billions of people to safely managed drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services – services desperately needed to prevent the virus from spreading.[12]

Millions of people die every year from diseases associated with unsafe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. Young children are particularly vulnerable – WASH-related diseases remain among the leading causes of death in children under 5, and they contribute to malnutrition and stunting. Each year, 300,000 children under 5 die due to diarrhoea linked to inadequate WASH. Despite significant progress, 2.2 billion people worldwide do not have safely managed drinking water services. Over half the global population, 4.2 billion people, lack safely managed sanitation services.[13]

Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Goal 7 aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Sustainable energy is a critical enabler and dramatically improves the quality, accessibility and reliability of services that children rely on for their survival, development and well-being. In homes, for example, children need reliable access to modern lighting for their daily chores and to do homework after dark. And they need heating and cooling to stay comfortable. Health centres and schools require energy for lighting, operating medical devices and life-saving procedures, cooking, heating, cooling and digital connectivity. Low levels of electricity access are correlated with poor educational performance, lower attendance and a decreased ability to attract and maintain teachers.

Energy lies at the heart of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all will open a new world of opportunities for billions of people through new economic opportunities and jobs, empowered women, children and youth, better education and health, more sustainable, equitable and inclusive communities, and greater protections from, and resilience to, climate change.[14]

[12] Water and Sanitation | Department of Economic and Social Affairs (un.org)
[13] SDG Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation - UNICEF DATA
[14] https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

The 8th Goal aims at ensuring inclusive and sustainable economic growth around the world, notably by:

- achieving full employment, decent and productive work for all, and equal pay for equal work by 2030;

- ending forced labour and child labour by 2025 and addressing informal work, to which women and children are exposed the most;

- supporting investment, entrepreneurship, and innovation to boost job creation.

According to the UN, nearly 2.2 billion people live below the poverty line and it continuously becomes harder to find decent jobs. Globally, 200 million people are unemployed and 1.4 billion people are in vulnerable jobs, with 783 million who are working poor. The global gender pay gap stands at 23% and without significant efforts it will take another 68 years to achieve equal pay. Additionally, informal work, associated with poor employment conditions, is often the norm when it comes to employment in partner countries and remains an important challenge to be addressed.

Increasing employment and ensuring decent work for all are essential aspects of sustainable development. Quality employment and decent work conditions help reduce inequalities and poverty, and empower people, especially women, young people and the most vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines decent work as "productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity".

In general, work is considered as decent when:

- it pays a fair income

- it guarantees a secure form of employment and safe working conditions

- it ensures equal opportunities and treatment for all

- it includes social protection for the workers and their families

- it offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration

- workers are free to express their concerns and to organise.[15]

[15]https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/topics/employment-and-decent-work_en

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

According to the United Nations (UN) investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. It has long been recognized that growth in productivity and incomes, and improvements in health and education outcomes require investment in infrastructure.

UN definition of this goal is: Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all. [16]

Goal 10: Reduced Inequality. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Reducing inequalities and ensuring no one is left behind are integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Inequality within and among countries is a persistent cause for concern. Despite some positive signs toward reducing inequality in some dimensions, such as reducing relative income inequality in some countries and preferential trade status benefiting lower-income countries, inequality still persists.

According to UNICEF, Inequality starts with the lottery of birth – who your parents are and where you are born – that accounts for variation in the resources and opportunities available to people. The social and economic inequalities and disadvantages in early life can limit opportunities for the realisation of one's rights and the ability to realise one's full potential. Discrimination based on age, gender, ethnic or racial group, disability status, sexual orientation, migratory status, residence or other factors serve to disadvantage some individuals in many different and often invisible ways, throughout their lives. These patterns of inequality get passed on from generation to generation. Therefore, early interventions and investing in all children, especially the poorest and most marginalised, is central to breaking intergenerational poverty and inequality. [17]

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The world's population is constantly increasing. To accommodate everyone, we need to build modern, sustainable cities. For all of us to survive and prosper, we need new, intelligent urban planning that creates safe, affordable and resilient cities with green and culturally inspiring living conditions.

In 2008, for the first time in history, the global urban population outnumbered the rural population. This milestone marked the advent of a new 'urban millennium' and, by 2050, it is expected that two-thirds of the world population will be living in urban areas. With more than half of humankind living in cities and the number of urban residents growing by nearly 73 million every year, it is estimated that urban areas account for 70 per cent of the world's gross domestic product and has therefore generated economic growth and prosperity for many.

[16] https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal9

[17] https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/goal-10-reduced-inequalities/

Given the importance of this topic to global development efforts, recent movements pushing to address sustainable development from an urban perspective have taken place throughout the world. Results from this movement can be seen in the inclusion of a stand-alone goal on cities and urban development in the 2030 Agenda, Sustainable Development Goal 11, "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".[18]

Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The 12th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG12) aims at ensuring responsible consumption and production patterns everywhere in the world, notably by:

- halving global food waste per capita and ensuring the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources by 2030;
- fighting pollution, reducing the overall waste generation, and improving the management of chemicals and toxic wastes;
- supporting companies' transition to green infrastructures and practices;
- making sure everyone everywhere is fully informed of ways to live in harmony with nature and eventually adopts thoughtful habits.

In a nutshell, while the world's population is constantly growing, SDG12 is about decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency, and promoting sustainable lifestyles. There can be no sustainable development without sustainable consumption and production first.

According to the UN, if human activity continues at current rate, we will need 3 planets to sustain our lifestyles by 2050. We consume more resources than the planet can generate, and growing rates of pollution and waste only exacerbate the problem. Commercial and residential energy use is the second most rapidly growing area of global energy use after transport. Agriculture and the textile industry are the biggest polluters of clean water in the world. By 2020, the OECD forecasts a 32% increase in car ownership and expects global air traffic to triple, which will inevitably result in more CO2 emissions. And around a third of all food produced in the world is wasted each year, while millions of people suffer from hunger, mainly in third world countries.

As natural resources are not infinite, we all need to learn to 'do more and better with less', at all levels. Individuals can apply small but impactful changes in their daily lives to reduce their own waste and carbon footprint. However, we are committed to achieve SDG12 because individual efforts are not enough; global and coordinated action is required to tangibly and sustainably switch to responsible consumption and production worldwide.[19]

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[18]https://sdgs.un.org/topics/sustainable-cities-and-human-settlements

[19]https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/responsible-consumption-and-production_en

Goal 13: Climate action. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The 13th Sustainable Development Goal aims at addressing the global and urgent challenge of climate change, notably by making sure that all countries of the world:

- strengthen their resilience and adaptation to climate change, with extra attention to the small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), as well as the communities most vulnerable to and affected by climate change;
- mainstream climate change in global and national policies, strategies, and planning to ensure coherent, efficient, and quick actions;
- raise awareness and educate people about the climate challenge and actions to take.

Climate change is affecting us all, no country is immune. It is disrupting economies and impacting people's lives. Sea levels are rising, weather patterns and temperatures are changing, and the number of climate-related natural hazards seems to be more frequent and more severe. According to the UN, if we do not address climate change, the average global temperatures could rise beyond 3°C. Between 1901 and 2010, the global average sea level rose by 19 cm. The Arctic Sea ice is shrinking by 1.07 million km 2 every decade. Global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) have increased by almost 50% since 1990.[20]

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States express their commitment to protect the planet from degradation and take urgent action on climate change. The Agenda also identifies, in its paragraph 14, climate change as "one of the greatest challenges of our time" and worries about "its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development. Increases in global temperature, sea level rise, ocean acidification and other climate change impacts are seriously affecting coastal areas and low-lying coastal countries, including many least developed countries and Small Island Developing States. The survival of many societies, and of the biological support systems of the planet, is at risk". [21]

Goal 14: Life Below Water. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

The 14th Sustainable Development Goal aims at cutting marine pollution, restoring and conserving marine and coastal areas and ecosystems, ending unsustainable fishing practices, and improving the management of marine resources, to ensure both economic benefits for all and the protection of seas and oceans.

Oceans cover 3 quarters of the Earth's surface, host millions of species, and can absorb 30% of carbon dioxide produced by humans. Yet, water temperature and acidity levels are rising, and marine and coastal biodiversity is dropping, due to overfishing, unsustainable coastal development, marine pollution, climate change etc. 60% of the world's coral reefs may disappear over the coming years and, at current rates, the UN expects a 20% increase of coastal eutrophication by 2050.

Globally, over 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal resources, marine fisheries employ over 200 million people, and marine industries generate about 5% of the global GDP. Oceans significantly contribute to food and nutrition security. Therefore, as part of our development cooperation, we support specific projects promoting the sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in partner countries, with a special focus on coastal and island partner countries and

[20]https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/climate-action_en

[21]https://sdgs.un.org/topics/climate-change

small-scale fisheries, which are the most affected by the degradation of oceans.[22]

Oceans, seas and marine resources are increasingly threatened, degraded or destroyed by human activities, reducing their ability to provide crucial ecosystem services. Important classes of threats are, among others, climate change, marine pollution, unsustainable extraction of marine resources and physical alterations and destruction of marine and coastal habitats and landscapes. The deterioration of coastal and marine ecosystems and habitats is negatively affecting human well-being worldwide.

Good governance, an enabling environment, sustainable land and marine-based human activities, and adequate measures will be required to reduce the negative anthropogenic impacts on the marine environment, for example due to a more sustainable use of resources, changes in production and consumption patterns and improved management and control of human activities. Projects and measures should ideally be designed and implemented in an integrated, cross-sectoral and cross-scale manner, in line with the ecosystem approach and involving all stakeholders.

Human well-being cannot be achieved without the protection and conservation of the Earth's ecosystem. To maintain the quality of life that the oceans have provided to humankind, while sustaining the integrity of their ecosystems, a change will be required in how humans view, manage and use oceans, seas and marine resources.[23]

Goal 15: Life On Land. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The 15th Sustainable Development Goal aims to protect natural habitats and prevent the loss of biodiversity by 2020. It also aims to preserve by 2030 the biodiversity of forests and freshwater ecosystems, amongst others by combating deforestation and desertification.

Forests are home to more than 80% of all terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects. Around 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood. Nonetheless, according to UN numbers, 3.3 million hectares of forests have been lost between 2010 and 2015. 52% of the land used for agriculture is affected by soil degradation, and due to drought and desertification 12 million hectares are lost each year – 23 hectares per minute. The land degradation directly affects 74% of poor people. At the same time, illicit wildlife trafficking is threatening conservation efforts, with nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants reported in illegal trade.[24]

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

The 16th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG16) aims to build strong and just institutions in support of peaceful and inclusive societies around the world by 2030, notably by:

- promoting the rule of law, transparency, accountability, good governance, and non-discrimination at all levels of government;
- ensuring equal access to justice for all and protecting everyone's fundamental freedoms;
- significantly reducing violent deaths, torture, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, human trafficking, corruption, and organised crime;

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[22]https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/life-below-water_en

[23]https://sdgs.un.org/topics/oceans-and-seas

[24]https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/life-land_en

- significantly reducing all forms of violence and promoting peace.

SDG16 is the main SDG associated with the promotion of peace, justice, and inclusion. The cornerstone of this SDG's targets and their interface with other SDGs are clearly linked to the strengthening of societal and state resilience by promoting the rule of law, justice, democracy, human rights, and equality.

Corruption, bribery, theft, and tax evasion cost developing countries around €1.12 trillion each year – an amount of money that could have otherwise been invested in societies and helped lift the world's poorest out of extreme poverty for at least 6 years. Nearly half of Sub-Saharan Africans don't have a birth certificate. Around one third of all prisoners in the world are held in detention without sentencing. The lack of access to justice impedes the protection of the fundamental freedoms of many and is perpetrating exclusion and discrimination patterns. Additionally, children rights' violations continue to plague many countries.[25]

Governments can offer the first line of protection: birth registration systems give children a claim to vital social services, equitable justice systems and other forms of child protection.

No child should ever be exposed to violence. Yet, globally, millions of children continue to face violence in their homes, schools, communities and online. Violence takes many forms: emotional, physical and sexual. Witnessing or experiencing violence erodes a child's health, well-being and potential.[26]

Goal 17: Partnership for the Goals. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

The 17th Sustainable Development Goal aims to increase international cooperation and strengthen global partnerships at governmental level, including through public-private partnerships and the involvement of civil society. This should help developing countries to:

- strengthen domestic resource mobilisation, including through international support;
- mobilise additional financial resources from multiple source;
- attain long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing.

Following SDG17, developed countries should fully implement their official development assistance. Collaboration should cover topics such as finance, technology, capacity building, as well as policy and institutional coherence.

Developing multi-stakeholder partnerships to share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial support is considered as vital to the overall success of the SDGs. SDG17 is therefore key to achieving each of the other 16 SDGs and reaching the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. [27]

[25] https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/peace-justice-and-strong-institutions_en

[26] https://data.unicef.org/sdgs/goal-16-peace-justice-strong-institutions/

[27] https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/sdg/partnerships-goals_en

Climate change and SDGs

Climate change is already impacting public health, food and water security, migration, peace and security. Climate change, left unchecked, will roll back the development gains we have made over the last decades and will make further gains impossible.

Investments in sustainable development will help address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building climate resilience.

Conversely, action on climate change will drive sustainable development.

Tackling climate change and fostering sustainable development are two mutually reinforcing sides of the same coin; sustainable development cannot be achieved without climate action. Conversely, many of the SDGs are addressing the core drivers of climate change.

Youth rights and rights based approach

Youth rights

Youth rights are human rights. However, youth organisations are seeking to enhance the human rights of young people.

Human rights conventions apply to everyone but young people are a group in between childhood and adulthood without the same level of protection by the international community, often facing discrimination and different multiple barriers.

According to the European Youth Forum[28], the biggest youth led advocacy platform in the world, promoting Youth Rights certainly means promoting equality of opportunity and this could be done also through positive discrimination for young people.

Youth rights can be referred to – among others – the following coherent categories: autonomy, education, participation, employment and social protection, freedom of expression and information, non-discrimination and equal opportunities, freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, including the right of conscientious objection to military service, juvenile justice and detention, mobility, sexual and reproductive health, healthy life, and the right to decide over their own body.

There is no specific framework or instrument setting out the particular rights of young people at a global level. A convention on youth rights has been put forward in the past as an idea that would have the potential to address the specific challenges young people face, just as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does for children. However, there has never been the necessary political will to draft such an instrument.

Despite the lack of a global instrument on youth rights two regional instruments focused on the rights of young people exist. These are the African Youth Charter (AYC) and the Iberoamerican Convention on Rights of Youth (ICRY), the latter to which Spain and Portugal are also signatories.[29]

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[28] https://www.youthforum.org

[29] https://tools.youthforum.org/youth-rights-info-tool/human-rights-and-young-people/

Rights-based approach

The rights-based approach starts from the philosophical position that all people are entitled to a certain standard in terms of physical, mental and social well-being.

It is a conceptual framework intended to empower people, in this case young people. The perception of citizens as rights-holders, and policymakers as duty bearers, introduces a decisive degree of accountability into approaches when working with young people. It represents a shift from a 'basic-need' approach, which entails making an important distinction based on the identification of basic requirements of people that need to be fulfilled.

As a concept, the rights-based approach ensures the meaningful and systematic inclusion and empowerment of the most vulnerable.

Overall (human) rights based approach has two objectives :

- To empower rights-holders to claim and exercise their rights;
- To strengthen capacity of duty-bearers who have the obligation to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights.

Rights-holders are individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to duty-bearers.

Duty-bearers are state or non-state actors that have the obligation to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights of rights-holders.

This approach is based on the following principles :

- **Participation** – everyone is entitled to active participation in decision-making processes which affect the enjoyment of their rights.

- **Accountability** – duty-bearers are held accountable for failing to fulfil their obligations towards rights-holders. There should be effective remedies in place when human rights breaches occur.

- **Non-discrimination and equality** – all individuals are entitled to their rights without discrimination of any kind. All types of discrimination should be prohibited, prevented and eliminated.

- **Empowerment** – everyone is entitled to claim and exercise their rights. Individuals and communities need to understand their rights and participate in the development of policies which affect their lives.

- **Legality** – approaches should be in line with the legal rights set out in domestic and international laws.[30]

Relevant stakeholders in the Sustainable Development Goals monitoring and implementation

Everyone is a stakeholder when it comes to monitoring and implementation of SDGs. The overall process is coordinated by the United Nations and their agencies, but in strong partnership with governments and civil society organisations around the world.

According to the platform called *Sustainable Development Knowledge platform*, major Groups were recognised during the Earth Summit in 1992 within the document called Agenda 21 as the ones that need to be part of the sustainable development process. These groups are:

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[30]https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/human-rights-based-approach

- Women

- Children and Youth

- Indigenous Peoples

- Non-Governmental Organisations

- Local Authorities

- Workers and Trade Unions

- Business and Industry

- Scientific and Technological Community

- Farmers

The participation of these groups has been reaffirmed by the Rio+20 Conference in the document called "The Future We Want". Governments also invited other stakeholders, including local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities, to participate in UN processes related to sustainable development, which can be done through close collaboration with the Major Groups.

Each group is represented by international organisations which work closely with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) but are self-coordinated and independent from the UN Secretariat and bodies.

Their work is coordinated by The Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) which is part of UN DESA. DSDG facilitates and promotes the contribution of stakeholders from different sectors at the global level, including at special events at the United Nations high-level political forum.

Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) were integral to the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its adoption, MGoS have been actively working towards its implementation, through projects, initiatives, advocacy, knowledge-sharing, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. MGoS often works in partnership with other sectors, including governments.

United Nations high-level political forum (HLPF)

Every year since 2015, nations come together in New York to evaluate their efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

The High-level Political Forum (HLPF) is the central United Nations platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs at the global level. It is the apex of the architecture for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda established by the 2030 Agenda and General Assembly resolution 70/299.

The HLPF on Sustainable Development meets:

- Every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly for two days;

- Every year under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council for a period of eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment.

Member States have stressed the need for the HLPF to promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the Major groups and other stakeholders at the international level in order to make better use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions. The major groups and other stakeholders include non-governmental and non-profit organisations, business and industry, and local authorities, among others. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/290, the Forum is open to the major groups, other relevant stakeholders and entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the General Assembly, building on arrangements and practices observed by the Commission on Sustainable Development.

While retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders are allowed:

1. To attend all official meetings of the forum;

2. To have access to all official information and documents;

3. To intervene in official meetings;

4. To submit documents and present written and oral contributions;

5. To make recommendations;

6. To organise side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat;

Key UN Resolutions

GA Resolution 70/1 – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

GA Resolution 75/290 B – Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council; Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on the format and organisational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level   B High-level political forum on sustainable development

GA Resolution 66/288 – The Future We Want

GA Resolution 70/299 – Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level

GA Resolution 67/290 – Format and organisational aspects of the HLPF

GA Resolution 72/305 – Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council

GA resolution 74/298 – Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the high-level political forum on sustainable development, resolution 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level

GA Resolution 74/4 – Political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly

Partnerships

DSDG, apart from coordination of major groups and other stakeholders, also maintains a global registry of commitments and multi-stakeholder partnerships made through various UN conferences in support of the SDGs including the SDG Summit (2019), the UN Ocean Conferences (2017 and 2021), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conference (2014), and the Rio+20 Conference (2012), among others.

In 2019 DSDG launched, in collaboration with partners, the 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator[31] to help accelerate and scale up effective partnerships to advance the SDGs. The initiative provides research on effective partnership practices and capacity development of relevant stakeholders to develop and implement partnerships to advance the SDGs. A particular focus of the Partnership Accelerator is to support developing countries in forging new partnerships to advance the SDGs by strengthening collaboration between stakeholders and sectors at the national level.

The role of youth organisations in the SDGs monitoring and implementation

In the process of implementation and monitoring of SDGs, young people and youth organisations are represented by the European Youth Forum (YFJ) which collaborates with other youth-led bodies across the world.

According to YFJ, youth organisations can play a strong role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through, inter alia, raising awareness on the issues the Agenda seeks to tackle, advocating for the achievement of the Agenda and implementing parts of the Agenda through projects in areas such as providing development education, breaking down barriers between young people, engaging in dialogue at all levels and changing consumption patterns in younger generations. Youth organisations can also serve as role models in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by sharing best practices, cooperating with other civil society stakeholders and contributing to the action of public authorities.

In turn, the 2030 Agenda recognises young people as "critical agents for change" and youth rights and needs are embedded to a greater or lesser extent throughout the SDGs.

Therefore, the key policy message is:

> *In order to meet the SDGs, governments at all levels must unlock young people's potential as agents for change by systematically investing in meaningful youth participation, including through support to youth organisations.*

Guided by its Member Organisations, YFJ has developed throughout the years several policy documents and publications on the topic of sustainable development and SDGs implementation and monitoring which can serve as a starting point to better understand how to get involved:

- Position Paper on Fiscal Policy

- Youth Progress Index 2021 Report, 2021

- The European Youth Blueprint to Recovery, Chapter 4: Sustainable alternatives to build back better, 2020

- Resolution in support of youth demanding urgent climate action, 2019

- Policy Paper on Sustainable Development, 2018

- Position on the Comprehensive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe, 2018

- The Future of Europe: unleashing the potential of young people, Chapter 1: Sustainable Development, 2016[32]

[31]https://partnershipaccelerator.netlify.app

[32]https://tools.youthforum.org/policy-library/sustainable-development/

Education on Sustainable Development

Education has evolved as an essential element of society throughout the time. Education is not only about learning to read, write and count. It is about increasing knowledge, enhancing skills and developing attitudes. Education is a powerful tool to achieve change in society. After the UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972, "environmental education" gained a considerable level of recognition. Environmental education focuses on raising awareness about the environment and its associated changes. Yet, in the next few years the need for a more holistic approach emerged. In this context, the idea of Education for Sustainable Development has been born.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is about the learning needed to maintain and improve our quality of life and the quality of life of generations to come. It is about equipping individuals, communities, groups, businesses and government to live and act sustainably; as well as giving them an understanding of the environmental, social and economic issues involved. It is about preparing for the world in which we will live in the next century, and making sure we are not found needing.

Reorienting education towards sustainable development will give people skills to make lifestyle changes and will enable a society to become more sustainable. People will learn to think beyond the economic, societal, and environmental horizons of their immediate families and communities. They can learn about other lifestyles, careers, and life conditions. This exposure may even ignite a passion to bring sustainable change to any community in which they choose to live.

ESD is beyond the traditional practice of Environmental Education, which focuses on teaching and learning about, in and 'for' the environment. Instead, ESD foresees engaging people in new ways of seeing, thinking, learning and acting. People are not only able to explore the relationships between their lives, the environment, social systems and institutions, but also to become active participants and decision-makers in the change process. For this reason, some of the main elements of ESD are future envisioning, critical thinking and reflection, systemic thinking, building partnerships and participation in decision-making processes.

ESD is explicitly recognized in the SDGs as part of Target 4.7 of the SDG on education. UNESCO promotes the Global Citizenship Education (GCED) as a complementary approach. With its overall aim to develop cross-cutting sustainability competencies in learners, ESD is an essential contribution to all efforts to achieve the SDGs. This would enable individuals to contribute to sustainable development by promoting societal, economic and political change as well as by transforming their own behaviour.

GCED is a form of civic learning that involves students' active participation in projects that address global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature. The two main elements of GCE are:

1) "global consciousness" – the moral or ethical aspect of global issues, and

2) "global competencies" or skills meant to enable learners to participate in changing and developing the world.

What can youth organisations do to promote ESD?

Implementation and monitoring of SDGs is a complex process. But every youth organisation around the world, no matter of the size, can contribute to embedding ESD in its work and therefore contributing to changing behaviour of every individual. One of the partners in the project, Youth for Exchange and Understanding, has developed a paper on Youth Work and Education for Sustainable Development[33] and here are some ideas on:

[33]https://yeu-international.org/policy-papers-b-n/

1. How to raise awareness about ESD:

- Organise training courses, seminars or conferences in order to implement actions on sustainable development for young people (18 – 30 years old)

- Organise free of charge informal social events such as public movie projections, performances, art exhibitions about sustainable development and related topics, which might be followed by discussion or an expert's speech

- Encourage organic gardening as part of both schools curricula and/or their community work.

- Calculate their environmental impact (such as carbon and water footprint) on an annual and/or event basis.

- Organise outdoor activities (nature tours, bike riding, rowing, swimming, etc.) guided by specialists/experts in order to promote/inform young people about a sustainable lifestyle.

- Act as role models of sustainability to young people and other Youth Organisations/Non-Governmental Organisations following "sustainability" and "eco-guidelines" in their activities. For instance, implement recycling and reusing methodologies within every event

- Encourage the usage of existing interactive e-learning tools on sustainable development by the young people they work with.

- Measure the usage of paper in their work and plant a tree after spending a certain amount of paper. As it is difficult to measure how much paper can be made from a tree, each organisation should make their own guidelines to follow (planting a tree per 6 or 12 months; after each event, etc).

2. How to develop the competences of youth organisations to include elements of ESD in their NFE (non-formal education) activities:

- Ask for expertise and support from environmental organisations in order to enrich their knowledge related to environmental issues. Practical collaboration and exchange on a local level is highly recommended.

- Include ESD in the agenda of annual meetings.

- Use the "living library" method in order to raise awareness about sustainable development. "Library books" in this case can be experts on sustainable development, or victims of unsustainability.

- Create an online platform with educational materials and other sources which youth workers can use in order to enhance their competences on ESD.

- Broaden the field of activity in both urban and rural areas that are not supported by other youth organisations.

3. How to strengthen the cooperation among different stakeholders concerning ESD:

- Cooperate with other Non-Governmental Organisations by organising common events and activities about sustainable development in order to reach a wider public.

- Create training courses on sustainable development for the teachers of their communities.

- Improve the visibility of the campaigns related to sustainable development through multiple media channels.

- Organise educational activities about sustainable development for young people, inviting children of different stakeholders to take part in them. Through their children, stakeholders will have the chance to learn about sustainable development and reinforce the efforts of youth organisations when it comes to ESD.

- Collaborate with local authorities and accommodation owners in order to organise events for families to promote sustainable lifestyle through intergenerational activities.

- Organise ESD events in which they invite both young and elder people to participate. In this way, they can use an intergenerational approach and obtain support from elder people in their ESD initiatives.

- Organise an orientation event for stakeholders in order to present their successful activities in the field of ESD. Such events can be also used as an opportunity to gather funds for future activities.

Educational activities on the topic of Sustainable development and SDGs

There are many resources available online for teaching about the Sustainable Development Goals and here are some of the links where inspiration on how to bring SDGs and sustainable development to young people and local communities can be found:

Sustainable Development Goals – Student Resources: The United Nations offers a variety of fun and engaging activities to help educators teach students about the Sustainable Development Goals and what they can do to take action and make them a reality.[34]

Sustainable Development Goals – Resources for Educators: UNESCO provides a resource bank for educators on the Sustainable Development Goals. The bank includes hundreds of pedagogical ideas for classroom activities and multimedia resources explaining how to most effectively integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into teaching and learning in early childhood care and education, primary education, and secondary education.[35]

Learn and Teach – SDGs: Change for Children has compiled a list of several SDG learning resources educators can use to teach about the Sustainable Development Goals in the classroom and inspire students to be global citizens and advocates for a more sustainable future for all people.[36]

Sustainability - European Youth Foundation (EYF) of Council of Europe has collected a number of toolkits its beneficiaries developed on the topic of sustainable development and its impact on youth work.[37] Together with young people, EYF has also developed guidelines towards sustainability in youth projects for the use of youth organisations and other actors of the youth sector.[38]

SDG Academy - The SDG Academy has created many free online courses and educational materials on sustainable development and the SDGs. Some of their courses include Work and Employment for a Sustainable Future, Governance for Transboundary Freshwater Security, Climate Change: The Science and Global Impact, and Nature-Based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience.[39]

[34] https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/student-resources/
[35] https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/sdgs/material
[36] https://changeforchildren.org/learn-teach/learn-and-teach-sdgs/
[37] https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/publications
[38] https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/sustainability
[39] https://sdgacademy.org/

Introduction to Advocacy

Key terms to consider

Advocacy is generally defined as getting support from another person/entity to help you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights. Advocacy seeks to ensure that all people in society are able to:

- Have their voice heard on issues that are important to them;

- Protect and promote their rights;

- Have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives.

In essence, advocacy is actively supporting something important to you.

Moreover, advocacy involves promoting the interests or cause of someone or a group of people. It is also about helping people find their voice. Another definition of advocacy can be that it is the act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place, or thing.

There are three main types of advocacy - self-advocacy, individual advocacy and systems advocacy.

An example of an advocacy is a non-profit organisation that works to help women of domestic abuse who feel too afraid to speak for themselves.

The 5 **basic principles of advocacy** are:

Clarity of purpose, Safeguarding, Confidentiality, Equality and diversity, Empowerment and Putting people first.

Generally speaking, there are two main methods of advocacy:

- **Lobbying or direct communication** and

- **Campaigning.**

What is the difference between advocacy and lobbying then?

While all lobbying is advocacy, not every advocacy is lobbying. Advocacy is any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports, defends, or pleads on behalf of others. Lobbying involves influencing through direct, private communications with decision-makers. Lobbying, particularly through personal meetings with decision-makers, can be a powerful and cost-effective advocacy. Campaigning involves speaking publicly on an issue with a view to generating a response from the wider public and using a variety of techniques such as: chain e-mail or letters, opinion pieces and letters to the editor in newspapers, newsletters, celebrity endorsements, media partnerships with newspapers, journalists and film-makers, web-based bulletins and online discussions,   public events, or large-scale advertising campaigns.

Advocacy requires research, public education, organising, mobilising, lobbying, and voter education. Effective advocacy encompasses a broad range of activities including research, budget and legislative analysis, delegating and motivating. The ability to clearly define the problem is perhaps the most important advocacy skill that individuals need to develop as it helps in eliminating the probable wastage of valuable time and efforts of advocacy. A key part of effective advocacy is building good relationships with people who are in the position to make decisions or to offer help.

Practical tip: If possible, prepare the questions you want to ask before a conversation or meeting with decision-makers or stakeholders. Where appropriate, use stories or visual ways to communicate information.

The aim of advocacy is generally to influence decision-making in desired areas and to inform the public or governmental bodies about issues of importance. Furthermore, advocacy allows people to defend and safeguard rights by raising awareness. Simply put, advocacy means actively supporting a cause and trying to get others to support it as well.

Advocacy allows **youth** to feel empowered, and when young people are empowered they feel confident and capable. They become active contributors and collaborators, excited to explore their impact on the world around them. The overall thrust of **Youth Advocacy** is to empower young people in their everyday lives. Youth advocacy can be seen simply as a response to injustice young people either face or witness and cannot idly stand by. Youth Advocacy attempts to provide support to young people in all areas that affect them, be it education, housing, employment, unemployment, health, social security, recreation or human relationships. Youth Advocacy also gives the young insights into the adult world of decision making and the exercising of authority, and enhances the young person's understanding of the legal process. This helps young people to make clear choices about issues that affect their everyday lives. Youth Advocacy can assist young people in using the existing social systems to develop a real sense of self-worth. Thus, young people are in a better position to be responsible for them and more able to deal with society's demands.

Furthermore, Youth Advocacy aims to prevent the diminution of a young person's self-respect, caused by paternalistic and authoritarian attitudes of those who have professional authority over young people's lives, such as: teachers, law enforcement authorities, well-meaning but sometimes misguided social workers, probation officers and others within the helping professions.[40]

You can support youth to self-advocate by:

- Using information that makes sense to them

- Ensuring that they get to have their say

- Involving them in decisions and listening to what they have to say

- Giving them time to process information and make decisions.

It is also very important to allow active collaboration between adults and youth—integrate youth into committees with adults who can act as mentors. In addition, it is useful to form relationships with teachers who engage youth in community concerns to increase youth involvement.

To conclude, the term 'advocacy' means different things to different people. Youth advocacy is the process of identifying, understanding, and addressing issues that are important to young people. Advocating for youth in schools, communities, and society at large, can empower them to take on responsibility for their own safety and well-being. Advocacy promotes equality, social justice and social inclusion, and it is central to generating the momentum and commitment to achieve these and other SDGs. It can empower youth to speak up for themselves, become more aware of their own rights, to exercise those rights and be involved in and influence decisions that are being made about their future. Young people's access to rights is clearly the key to resolving global issues as defined in the SDGs, and knowing how to engage in advocacy for SDGs implementation using the access to rights approach is undoubtedly a valuable asset in the youth work arena.

Planning and Executing an Advocacy Campaign

Advocacy campaigns are organised movements focused on influencing political change and driving awareness around issues at the local, state, or national level. Policies in many countries are slow to respond to changing circumstances and often interfere with the accomplishment of sustainable forest management and human well-being, in part because of bureaucracy-related weak institutional mechanisms and tools to enable such responsiveness. Policies and procedures are, nevertheless, an essential part of any organisation.

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[40]https://inyous.teachable.com/courses/560031/lectures/11571784, accessed 7 May 2022

Advocacy campaigns look different based on who is running them. People under the age of 35 are rarely found in formal political leadership positions. A campaign's impact and effectiveness depend on principled leaders who share power with team members, engage in dialogue, and foster trust. In order to respond to the needs of young people, and to guarantee that their basic human rights are recognized and enforced, young people's active and meaningful participation in their societies and in democratic practices and processes is of crucial importance. Advocacy planning facilitates lively political discussion and opposition to public agency which is required for a healthy democracy and a rational decision making process.

Advocacy planning is a theory of urban planning that was formulated in the 1960s by Paul Davidoff and Linda Stone Davidoff. It is a pluralistic and inclusive planning theory where planners seek to represent the interests of various groups within society.

There are 7 steps to developing an Advocacy Plan:

- Step 1: Identifying and understanding your topic.

- Step 2: Identifying specific problems to address.

- Step 3: Identifying a point of action.

- Step 4: Identifying your advocacy target.

- Step 5: Gathering background information.

- Step 6: Identifying your personal strengths.

- Step 7: Developing an advocacy plan.

Several ingredients make for effective advocacy, including the thoroughness with which the advocates researched the issues, the opposition, and the climate of opinion about the issue in the community as well as their skill in using the advocacy tools available (including the media).

As already mentioned, the term "advocacy" encompasses a broad range of activities that can influence public policy, and it should be emphasised that advocacy is the number one way civil society organisations can advance the issues they care about and help bring about systemic, lasting change. Most advocacy campaigns are made up of a few leaders who organise a larger body of supporters.

When planning and executing an advocacy campaign, one should always bear in mind that advocacy involves promoting the interests or cause of someone or a group of people, in the spirit of human rights. An advocate is a person who argues for, recommends, or supports a cause or policy. The fundamental values of advocacy planning in the planning process are those of social justice and equity. The advocacy planning paradigm is predicated upon the concept of pluralism in planning. Clear goals and specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives need to be formulated at the beginning of any advocacy work. These should be based on the analysis of the problematic situation and the availability of resources available for its solution.

Remember that even the most tightly run advocacy campaigns may not always accomplish all of their goals. However, effective advocacy builds your capacity to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people and communities you serve. Engaging in public policy advocacy can also raise awareness of your organisation's mission, mobilise your constituents, and attract positive media attention.

The aims of an awareness campaign include reaching out to the public regularly, measuring that outreach accurately, and motivating the public to take action. Campaigns deliver messages to an audience, and organisations measure how many people receive the message.

When taking on an advocacy campaign, or developing a plan to fight/pass legislation or regulations, it's easy to become so engrossed in the detail of execution that the end goal can get fuzzy. This is why a strategic plan to kick-start and maintain momentum is vitally important to your future success. Right from the beginning, it's critical to set forth a plan that establishes where you are, where you want to go, and how you're going to get there. You can find more information about developing an advocacy strategy in the following chapters of this publication (T-kit and Annexes, pages 12 & 14).

Executing a successful advocacy campaign can be a challenge for nonprofits, but when done well, they motivate people to take action to effect change that will help the organisation meet its mission.

Simply put, advocacy is the active support of a principle or cause by addressing the factors that are causing the problem.

The following six steps shape most advocacy campaigns:

Step 1: Set a Goal

Start by conducting preliminary research, so you know how supporters are talking about your cause and what people in opposition are saying (to understand what conflicts you might run into during the campaign and how to counter them). For example: how young people can work to ensure everyone has access to abortion care. One of the best places to start your research is by looking at how influencers have been talking about your cause; their language and ideas can be incredibly insightful. *Abortion Out Loud* is an example of a grassroots movement established to start a new conversation about abortion — telling youth stories, on their own terms.

Once you understand the greater cause inside and out, figure out how you can narrow it to your organisation's specific focus and resources.

Step 2: Assess Your Resources

Your advocacy campaign will likely be more drawn-out than your typical fundraising campaigns, so it's important to ensure from the beginning that your youth organisation will have all the resources needed to see it through to the end.

To assess your resources, your organisation should ask itself the following questions:

-Do we have enough advocates to help us reach our goal?

-Are there other organisations or groups we can team up with to help us reach our goals?

-What's our budget?

-What other campaigns are we running currently?

-Do we have enough staff time available to realistically take on another effort?

-Do we have the necessary communications tools available to us to help us raise awareness of our cause and campaign?

These questions should definitely be addressed by advocates who, for example, embark on a campaign to ensure all students receive quality sexual health education and sexual health services in a safe and welcoming environment through Sexual Health Education and Sexual Health Services programs.

If it turns out your organisation doesn't have all the required resources to achieve your goals, don't worry. Some ways to mobilise resources for advocacy include influencing donors and institutions to fund certain issues, encouraging individual supporters to give to advocacy; accepting funds from the private sector and sharing resources in alliances and coalitions. Working with limited resources doesn't mean you have to give up your dreams of advocacy altogether. All it means is that you'll have to adjust your goals until you can work toward something bigger.

Step 3: Identify Influential People

Advocates for Youth is an example of an organisation proud to work with youth activists across the USA and around the world. Young people who are part of youth programs go on to be community leaders, legislators, educators, and health care providers. One of the principles they run by is: before you start executing, identify all the actors (groups/entities/ stakeholders) who might have an impact on your campaign, as follows:

Allies are those that have an affinity for your cause and might be willing to take action to further it. They can be individuals, organisations, groups, corporations, or any other entity that's capable of making a difference.

Opponents are those who take a stance against your cause. Their objections might create conflicts within the campaign or, in the worst cases, even act as barriers to your organisation reaching its goals.

Influences help you present your cause by enabling you to craft your campaign message in the most compelling way to potential advocates.

Agents of change are those in power who can help you further your cause. They're really the key players in any advocacy campaign, because they're the ones who are going to be able to enact the change that your organisation is rallying for.

Step 4: Define Your Message and Build Awareness

At this stage, your youth organisation will want to standardise its message, so that all of your advocates understand exactly what you're working towards. This is especially important when it comes to an advocacy campaign, because your advocates will be communicating your message to other allies and agents of change.

For example, you are well aware that teaching children about sustainability enables them to appreciate and respect the natural environment. Early childhood services can provide meaningful hand on learning experiences in order for children to become environmentally responsible. You can raise awareness by organising a (social) media campaign to involve your community and put pressure on decision makers or to go into the community to tell people in your own environment about an issue you find important. Also, you can, as organisation wear clothing and accessories such as t-shirts, caps, rubber or silicone wristbands, and button pins, which are among the most common items you can use to display your support for a cause, or simply start to talk about it online.

You want to make sure that everyone presents a unified front so there's no confusion about how to help your cause and that you'll never undermine the authority of your campaign by sending mixed messages. Since advocacy revolves entirely around the cause, you'll want to start building awareness as soon as possible as clearly visible as possible.

Step 5: Set Your Strategies and Start Implementing Them

Now you're ready to think about what actions you want advocates to take to further them. Some common advocacy actions include:

- -Meeting in a public space to discuss the cause;
- -Taking it to the next level by holding a rally;
- -Signing online petitions;
- -Writing legislators or posting at them on social media;
- -Drive change through Social Media Campaigns;
- -Master email marketing

Once you have a set of strategies planned out, it's time to start implementing them. Most advocacy campaigns start by requesting smaller actions that are easier to complete, especially for youth organisations with an army of volunteers, and then ease advocates into those that are more involved.

Step 6: Track Your Goals

It's likely that your advocacy campaign will be a longstanding effort that extends for many months (or even years!). Throughout the campaign, it's important to track your progress to ensure that you're reaching your goals. Since advocacy campaigns are cause-based, and thus not as quantifiable as fundraising campaigns, the form this will take will vary from organisation to organisation. However, there are a few easy ways that you can tell if your campaign strategies are successful or not.

Primarily, you should look at the number of advocates that your campaign has managed to mobilise. If you can tell that many people are inspired by your message, so much so that they're taking action to make a difference, then that's a pretty good indicator of success. If you find that your message and your goal aren't inspiring people to the extent your organisation would have liked, it's either time to tweak your strategies, your aim, o.r. .your message. On the other hand, if your strategies were successful, make note of which worked best, so you can take similar approaches in your future advocacy campaigns.[41]

SDG Tracker presents data across all available indicators from the Our World in Data database, using official statistics from the UN and other international organisations. It is a free, open-access publication that tracks global progress towards the SDGs and allows people around the world to hold their governments accountable to achieving the agreed goals.[42]

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are defined in a list of 169 SDG Targets. Progress towards these Targets is agreed to be tracked by 232 unique Indicators. The full list of definitions can be found in the Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals And targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[43]

To sum up, effective advocacy campaigns have the power to effect real change. Through the pledge to Leave No One Behind, countries have committed to fast-track progress for those furthest behind first. That is why the SDGs are designed to bring the world to several life-changing 'zeros', including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls etc. The truth is simple: everyone can create positive change by taking action, and it is precisely coordinated advocacy campaigns that help like-minded individuals gather together to make a bigger difference than they could have done alone. Advocacy occurs at many different levels, is conducted by many different groups, and can support change in many different ways. As young leaders of tomorrow, it is pivotal that youth are informed and engaged with the global vision for the future. Over the next fifteen years, youth will not only directly experience the outcome of SDGs and plans, but will also be the key driver for their successful implementation. Advocacy campaigns can seem complicated at first, and it's essential to know where your organisation stands before launching your campaign. Many foundational tenets of effective advocacy have remained the same, and passionate organisations can empower their members to have a voice in public policy with the right tools and support. Provided with the necessary skills and opportunities needed to reach their potential, young people can be a driving force for supporting development and contributing to peace and security.

At the end of the day, advocacy is exciting work! You get the pleasure of fighting the good fight, and sometimes, the thrill of victory. In order to have that, though, you need to get through all of the day-to-day details and specifics. You'll need to keep an eye on the forest while working on the trees individually. We hope that the information you found in this chapter will make you better prepared to bring about the changes that matter to your community.

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[41]http://massnonprofit.org/expert-advice/public-relations/plan-an-advocacy-campaign-in-six-steps, accessed 8 May 2022

[42]https://sdg-tracker.org/, accessed 8 May 2022

[43]https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%20refinement_Eng.pdf, accessed 8 May 2022

Training T-kit essentials

This chapter contains a selection of basic tools that can be helpful in getting an Advocacy Campaign off the Ground as well as those exercises that can serve as a guide that you can work through, step by step, to plan an advocacy strategy.

TOOL: THE PUZZLE OF ADVOCACY

Objectives:

-To generate a discussion about key aspects of advocacy, marking clear distinctions between the desired outcomes of advocacy, the sources of civil society's power, and the internal and external factors that enhance civil society's capacity to engage in advocacy;

-To analyse opportunities for and threats to advocacy, given the national and / or regional context.
Use: This tool allows a number of issues to be covered quickly and dynamically in a participatory manner in a group of up to 20 participants.

Time: 1 hour in total.

Preparation:

The facilitator decides on three symbols and makes three different coloured puzzles in the shapes of those symbols. For example, there might be puzzles in the shape of a door - to represent sources of civil society's power; a key, to represent the factors that enhance civil society's capacity to engage in advocacy; a padlock, to represent the desired outcomes of advocacy. Each puzzle is cut into pieces. Each piece has written on it an idea, expressed in very few words, about one aspect of the advocacy process.

Process:
1. Each participant is given one or two pieces of the puzzles, depending on the number of participants.

2. The facilitator asks the participants to work together to put the puzzles together, but does not explain how many puzzles there are or what they represent.

3. Once all of the puzzles are put together, the facilitator asks the participants to arrange them in a logical order. In plenary the participants discuss the meaning of each of the puzzles, reflecting on the common elements of separate pieces.
The participants give a name to each puzzle. The facilitator invites the group to brainstorm on specific situations where advocacy is taking place in their national realities, suggesting specific actions that would take advantage of the sources of civil society's power. (30 min)

4. The facilitator guides a final discussion using the following questions: (15 min)

Why did we put the ideas in this order? Do you agree with the way the puzzles were used to represent different aspects of advocacy? Why or why not? What other elements should be included in each puzzle? Which elements should not be included?

5. The facilitator summarises the ideas about advocacy that the group has discussed.

TOOL: THE ADVOCACY CYCLing

Objectives:

To understand the stages in an advocacy planning process;

To understand the basic components of a Summary Advocacy Strategy.

Use: This tool introduces the process of advocacy planning and identifies the various stages involved. It then suggests a Summary of Advocacy Strategy template and provides some examples of good practices where this has been used.

ACTIVITY 1: The advocacy cycle race (30 min)
Aim: To work out an advocacy planning cycle in a participatory way in group of up to 20 participants
Methods: Flashcards, plenary discussion
Handouts: The advocacy cycle (see annex, page 14)

Process: Display a flipchart with a circle on it. In smaller groups (up to 5 people) participants race to: brainstorm the key stages or activities in an advocacy planning process, write them on the flashcards, and then place the cards around the circle on the paper in a logical sequence, grouping them together where necessary. In the plenary, round up the key groups of cards representing different stages in the advocacy cycle and present the advocacy cycle handout.

ACTIVITY 2: Summary Advocacy Strategy (45 min)
Aim: To devise an advocacy strategy.
Methods: Plenary discussion, buzz groups
Handouts: The advocacy cycle; Quick and easy overview handout; Advocacy Strategy template (see annex, page 14 & 15)

Process:
Ask why a written advocacy strategy is necessary. Introduce the idea that a full strategy document is needed for your own advocacy work, and a summary strategy is intended for communities, allies and donors. In plenary brainstorm what the key components of a summary strategy document would be. Present the suggested template and compare it with the participants' answers. Distribute the summary strategy examples. The 'quick and easy overview' handout lists the basic questions that should be asked when formulating a strategy.

Key points:

A strategy is needed to ensure that people are focused on the problem and to show the route that will be taken to address it. Communities need to know the strategy that will be taken to ensure accountability. Allies might need it to ensure effective participation. Donors may need it for approval of funds. A full strategy may be short (a few pages), but a summary strategy is no substitute for doing the work thoroughly. A strategy helps to clarify goals, objectives and methods of measuring success. A strategy helps to understand risks and assumptions, as well as when allocating resources and responsibilities. Representing all the information regarding planning in a table, as in a Summary Advocacy Strategy, enables you to see the advocacy strategy at a glance, but it should not replace writing out a full strategy. Also, further included are examples of Best Practices of Advocacy in SDGs worldwide.

ANNEXES

HANDOUT[44]: The advocacy cycle

An advocacy initiative can be divided into stages, which in practice may overlap. The time it takes to complete all the stages and the necessary detail can vary to a great extent, depending on the urgency and complexity of a particular issue, the amount of information needed to be able to act, and the advocacy methods chosen.

The basic advocacy cycle is:

1 Issue identification
Identify the problem that needs to be addressed.

5 Evaluation
Monitor actions and evaluate the results throughout the cycle and decide what further action is appropriate or how advocacy could be done differently in the future.

2 Research and analysis
Gather the necessary information and ensure that the causes and effects of the problem are understood.

4 Action
Take action, using the range of methods and activities available. This will need to be agreed and co-ordinated with all those involved.

3 Planning
When advocacy has been identified as an appropriate way of addressing the problem, a strategy needs to be formulated. This includes the goal, objectives, success indicators, means of measurement, targets, allies, methods and activities, risks and assumptions, time-scale and responsibilities.

[44]Adapted from: Gordon, 2002, *Advocacy Toolkit: Practical action in advocacy,* Tearfund, e-book, accessed 8 May 2022 < https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/Gordon-2002-Advocacy2.pdf >

ISSUE – What is the problem?

How serious is it? Is it urgent?

EFFECTS – What are the effects of the problem?

Does it have a great effect on certain groups? If so, who and how? How does the problem affect the youth? Do you have enough information?

CAUSES – What are the root causes of the problem?

What is the role of the policies and practices of the national government? What is the role other groups? What contribution is made by cultural factors and environmental factors? Are the young people able to participate in decision-making?

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS – What do you think needs to be done?

What are your proposals? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Can you defend our position? Are your proposals realistic? How will you measure success? Do you have a clear plan about how change will come about?

STAKEHOLDERS – Who has the power to do something to bring about change?

Are they the government, businesses, community leaders? Can you access them? Are they willing to cooperate? Do they agree they have responsibility for change? Are they able to do something?

POTENTIAL ALLIES – Who is trying to address the situation at the moment?

Is their activity effective? What may need to change? Can you work with them? Are there people who are not yet addressing the issue, but could be persuaded to help you?

RISKS – What risks are there in getting involved in advocacy?

What have you done to reduce the risks? What are the risks if you do not try to address the issue using advocacy work? What assumptions have you made about the causes and effects of the problem, about those in power, and about your own abilities?

METHODS – What methods can you use?

Are you confident in using them? Have they worked before? Are there alternatives? Do you have the skills and resources to use them well?

ISSUE IDENTIFI-CATION AND POLICY CONTEXT:	GOAL — What are you trying to do?			
	OBJECTIVES — What are you trying to achieve?			
	SUCCESS INDICATORS			
	MEANS OF MEASUREMENT			
	TARGETS			
	ALLIES AND OPPORTUNITIES			
	METHODS AND ACTIVITIES			
	RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS			
	RESULTS			
	TIME-SCALE			
HIGHLIGHTS (benefits/challenges/key lessons learnt)				

Best practices: Advocacy in SDGs[45]

INVOLVING THE PARLIAMENT		
In this category you will find two good practices on how Parliament has gotten involved in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The two good practices give two very different examples of ways to involve Parliament. One of the good practices is a campaign that shows how to involve individual members of parliament in the Sustainable Development Goals, while the other one shows how to formalize work on the 2030 Agenda in Parliament.		
ACTION	WHAT	WHY IS THIS INSPIRING?
Implementing the SDGs in the Standing Committees **in the Danish Parliament** **(Denmark)**	In March 2017 an all-party coalition on the Sustainable Development Goals, The 2030-Network, was formed in the Danish Parliament. The 2030-Network that has 46 members from all nine parties in the parliament, is supported by the Danish CONCORD- member Globalt Fokus, which functions as the secretariat of the Network and by an independent panel of actors from NGDO, other civil society organisations, unions, foundations, private sector and many more. The Network that started as an informal Network sent a letter to all chairmen and women of the Parliamentary Committees in May 2018. This letter encouraged the integration of the SDGs in formal standing committees in the Parliament. By doing this, the discussion of how to implement and reach the SDGs will move from an informal to a formal setting in the Danish Political system. Several standing committees have now debated the integration of the SDGs and some have even formed sub-committees to figure out how the integration can be made.	The letter has created a lively debate on the integration of the SDGs in Parliament. It shows that even though you start off by debating the integration of the SDGs and how to reach them in an informal way, it can – over time – change opinions and agendas, which eventually will spill-over into a formal decision-making political system.

Adopt an SDG' campaign **(The Netherlands)**	In the Netherlands, the 'Adopt an SDG' campaign was launched on 25 September 2017, the 2nd anniversary of the SDGs with the purpose to engage newly elected Members of the Dutch Parliament in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In the campaign the member of Parliament (MP) select their favorite SDGs and through social media it is broadcasted how the campaign team handover canvases of the selected SDGs to the MPs. After the adoption of SDGs the MPs are continuously provided with information, expertise, research and policy advice in advance of parliamentary debates by a coalition of approx. forty civil society organisations, working on almost all social, economic and environmental issues that are addressed in Agenda 2030. With twenty-four out of 150 parliamentarians (almost one out of every six) having adopted SDGs, the campaign now covers MPs from both coalition and opposition parties and also from different standing committees in the Parliament.	So far the campaign has visibly contributed to more SDG awareness among Dutch parliamentarians. Some of the MPs refer to 'their' SDG(s) in debates with Ministers and Secretaries of State, and ask the government to propose concrete actions to reach the SDGs, or hold the government to account when it fails to act (sufficiently). When they do so, the campaign broadcasts this via social media channels. We also link up the MPs with journalists, which has led to several series of online interviews about parliamentary action towards the SDGs.

BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS AROUND THE COMMON SDG GOALS

Some of the good practices shown in this category build coalitions across sectors, while others establish new ways of working within civil society. All three good practices were established because there was a need for working in new ways and with new partners on the 2030 Agenda.

ACTION	WHAT	WHY IS THIS INSPIRING?
Cross-sectorial coalition for Sustainable Development **(Estonia)**	In spring 2018 the Estonian Coalition for Sustainable Development was created. This coalition unites NGOs, private sector enterprises and state institutions in order to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Coalition came out with a good-will memorandum to show their commitment in helping Estonia reach Sustainable Development Goals, with their expertise and actions, which combines civil society's knowledge on how to build a more sustainable society, the private sector's economic power to move towards it and policy makers interested in contributing to a good governance model. The goals of the Coalition includes rising awareness on sustainable development, give input for policy makers, contribute to monitoring developments and enhance cooperation. The work of the Coalition is planned to be based on meetings, knowledge exchange workshops, roundtables, trainings, shared media campaigns, studies, shared advocacy etc.	Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation (AKÜ) saw a necessity to build a cross-sectoral network to bring knowledge, decisions making and will power under one umbrella, so that it is beneficial for all. A multi-stakeholder coalition, like the Estonian Coalition for Sustainable Development, is inspiring because it brings the different perspectives, knowledge and skills from across sectors together on the common agenda for a more sustainable society.

National CSO Coalition for Sustainable Development **(Portugal)**	In 2014 a Portuguese coalition of national civil society umbrella organizations was created, focusing on the preparation of a common position on the 2030 Agenda. This coalition has members that represent a broad group of different CSOs – NGDOs, Local Development, Gender CSOs, Trade Unions, Youth CSOs, and Environmental CSOs. The coalition have organized two national consultation processes that included online questionnaires and local workshops where many different local organizations participated and gave their views and contributions regarding their expectation on the 2030 Agenda and its implementation and monitoring. These processes resulted in two reports that were very important to reinforce the Portuguese CSO advocacy work and mark a clear and unified position. The report presented in 2017 was referred as a good practice in the Portuguese Volunteer National Review at High Level Political Forum presented in 2017.	This is the first time that different umbrella organizations are working together and the SDGs have given a common ground to base this collaborative work. In June 2018, the members of the coalition signed a memorandum of understanding that reinforces their commitment to continue the collaborative work we have been doing. The coalition will continue to organize different activities all over the country, reinforcing our role as one of the relevant stakeholders regarding the 2030 Agenda.
A new civil society platform for a sustainable change **(Spain)**	Futuro en Común (FeC) is an innovative cross-sectorial dialogue platform in Spain, working towards sustainable development ,human rights and the strengthening of the civic democratic space. For FeC the 2030 Agenda is a framework that should put people's rights and the care of the planet at the center, and by constructing a common, rigorous and transformative vision of the Agenda 2030, as a political space for change, the platform has attracted a widespread and significant sectoral representation of the Spanish civil society. The FeC platform is comprised of more than 50 organizations with different focuses. It works using a systemic, cross-cutting approach, to generate proposals for policy change, awareness-raising and mobilization. A good example of the work of the platform is the report "A transformative 2030 Agenda for people and for the planet. Proposals for political action". The report was backed by a relevant arch of institutions with the result of provoking high-level commitments	Civil society has a crucial role in the promotion of a transformative Agenda – domestically and across the world. The FeC platform in Spain shows how a cross sectorial civil society working together to deliver ambition and change, including at government level, on the 2030 Agenda, is possible.

HELLO FROM THE OTHER SIDE

Practices on how governments have created inclusive and participative processes while working on the 2030 Agenda

In this category there are both good practices from countries that are frontrunners and countries that are just beginning their work on sustainable development. Together the four good practices show how important it is to include civil society and other actors – whether it is about presenting Voluntary National Reviews at the High Level Political Forum or working on national action plans.

ACTION	WHAT	WHY IS THIS INSPIRING?
A quick turn around (France)	After two years of uncertainty and hesitation, the French government officially announced early in 2018 that a national roadmap dedicated to SDGs' implementation would be drawn up by mid-2019. This comes head of the French Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the High Level Political Forum in the summer of 2019. In order to engage more stakeholders in this process and prepare for next year's moments related to SDGs implementation, the government invited all kind of stakeholders to join the official French delegation at the July 2018 HLPF. This resulted in the biggest national delegation at the time, with representatives from Government, Parliament, research institutions and think tanks, local authorities, NGOs and other CSOs, businesses, trade union, higher education .	With a lot of countries not having any space for consulting their civil society on sustainable development or other kind of matters, this inclusive process has shown that improvement in working with civil society in regards to the 2030 Agenda can happen quickly. Moreover, the HLPF in itself is quite criticized as an official body for being too restrictive for CSOs' representatives, both logistically and politically. Civil Society being invited to be part of an official delegation enables to balance these restrictions to some extent.
Anchoring Education for Sustainable Development (Germany)	The German government supports the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing the UNESCO-World Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development. The NAP was devised by a government nominated multi-stakeholder expert group who organize as the National Platform on Education for Sustainable Development. Civil society was included in the preparation of the NAP through working groups. Furthermore there was an online consultation process addressing interested citizens. During the consultation over 700 recommendations for concrete measures to be taken to promote sustainable development education were made. Over 8000 assessments of the draft NAP were posted of which some have been considered in the following revision of the action plan. The aims of NAP to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the German Sustainability Strategy (GSS). It comprises 130 targets and 349 recommendations for action to structurally anchor Education for Sustainable Development in the whole German educational system.	The National Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development initiated by the German government can be perceived as a positive and effective measure to raise awareness for sustainable development through the cross-sectional involvement of the educational sector. The German government seems to put Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) well into practice with its institutional approach of including all stakeholders in the process of implementing a well-rounded and comprehensive concept of Education on SD.

Working for an inclusive national process **(Latvia)**	In Latvia many Civil Society Organisations including the CONCORD member LAPAS (Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation) has worked actively on the 2030 Agenda for SD for years, but the government process remained closed to them. When it was decided that Latvia will submit the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) in 2018 the LAPAS with members worked actively to engage politicians and the support of the Parliamentary Committee on Sustainable Development was received. This opened the process to NGOs that were then included in the non-formal group drafting VNR. Active work of LAPAS was recognised by the government and representatives of LAPAS were included in the official delegation to The High Level Political Forum. LAPAS aimed to involve more NGOs in this process but due to low awareness and time limits the activity was low. Therefore the post-VNR process is seen of high importance.	Even though an inclusive process haven't been at the center of the Latvian Governments work on the 2030 Agenda, the work of LAPAS and likeminded NGOs shows that advocacy directed towards parliament can have an effect in creating a space for civil society to participate in the national work surrounding the 2030 Agenda.
A democratic process of choosing national priorities **(Slovak Republic)**	It took some time until Slovakia started to take the Agenda 2030 seriously, and begin the work in 2017. The process of selecting the national priorities started in a very democratic way with the initial source of information being Public Opinion Polls. The process continued with a participatory process with selected NGOs, Private sector actors and other representatives, lead by Slovak Academy of Sciences. The priorities were then adopted by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization, which is responsible for the national Agenda 2030 strategy. The Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic will start working on the National Strategy on Agenda 2030 in September 2018 and with the Office begin open to collaborations, not only with the Private sector actors, but all the relevant stakeholders, the hope is that the participatory process will continue.	What is very interesting is how the Agenda 2030 national priorities were identified, with a very democratic initial process and continued with the participatory process mentioned above. Although the cooperation could have been even better and participatory process could have been opened to a wider population, it is very positive it didn't take place behind the closed doors at the Deputy Prime Minister's Office