



Recommendations for the process of preparing  
Voluntary National Review to be presented at the High  
Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

2018



Movimiento Mundial por la  
Infancia de Latinoamérica  
y el Caribe

The meeting of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2018 (HLPF), convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, will be held from 9 to 18 July in New York. This year, the following countries in the region will present progress reports under the voluntary national review mechanism: Bahamas, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

In this framework, from the MMI-LAC<sup>1</sup>, we share the following recommendations<sup>2</sup> that support our participation and role as civil society in relation to the Voluntary National Reviews, the regional and national processes of the 2030 Agenda and its presentation in the HLPF, as well as our objective of including children and adolescents as central to this process and as key actors<sup>3</sup> and partners within the framework of the promise of leaving no one behind.

## PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL REVIEW ELABORATION

**Recommendation 1: To ensure that your country preparative for the review are open, inclusive, transparent and participatory, taking into account inputs and opinions of all actors, including children, excluded groups, and civil society organizations.**

In preparation for the national reviews to be presented at the HLPF meeting in New York this year, it is important to ensure that there are formal and informal opportunities for all actors, including children, to contribute their opinions and experience in the report and national presentation,<sup>4</sup> giving priority to the effective and efficient use of existing human and financial resources to support such participation, as well as its additional allocation in cases where it is necessary, in such a way as not to leave anyone behind. For this, governments must:

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<sup>1</sup> The World Movement for the Childhood of Latin America and the Caribbean (MMI-LAC, for its Spanish initials) is a regional alliance which works for the promotion, protection and defence of children's rights, integrated by: YMCA, SOS Children's Villages International, ChildFund International, Child Helpline International, Defence for Children International (DNI), End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children (ECPAT International), UNICEF, Marist foundation of international solidarity (FMSI), International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), Interamerican Institute for Children (IIN-OEA), Plan International, Red ANDI Internacional, Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña por la Defensa de los Derechos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (REDLAMYC), Save the Children, Viva, Together for Children, World Vision International.

<sup>2</sup> Document based in Save the Children's recommendations for the elaboration fo Voluntary National Reviews for the HLPF 2017 and MMI-LAC's organizations' inputs.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.movimientoporlainfancia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El\\_mundo\\_que\\_queremos.pdf](http://www.movimientoporlainfancia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El_mundo_que_queremos.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Aligned with paragraph 74(d) of the Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda.

- a) **Raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda**, so that people, including children, are aware of the commitments made, their rights and how they can participate meaningfully in the processes for the completion of national reports;
- b) **Provide different forms for meaningful contributions and the participation of excluded groups**, identifying these groups and addressing financial, linguistic, logistic or age barriers that could prevent these groups from meaningfully participating in national consultations; and
- c) **Ensure that consultations are held with civil society actors**, which prioritize the participation of girls and boys, as soon as possible, in a transparent, open and inclusive manner.

**Recommendation 2: To ensure that the national review includes a section dedicated to the promise that no one will be left behind. This section should offer an evaluation of the most excluded groups, including children and adolescents. It should also highlight the strategies, plans and policies that will be implemented to ensure that the most relegated arrive first, as well as share experiences of the challenges and the measures that can be taken or will be taken to overcome them.**

The promise that no one will be left behind is the most transformative aspect of the 2030 Agenda. Consistent and evidence-based reports on the progress made to make the promise a reality must be essential for all national reports.<sup>5</sup>

To include the promise that no one will be left behind must include the following:

- a) **An evidence-based evaluation of which groups are lagging behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, based on disaggregated data,<sup>6</sup> qualitative data and consultations with civil society and other interest groups, including representatives of groups in poverty situation and excluded, and of children and adolescents. This section should also include an evaluation of gaps in the availability and quality of the disaggregated data necessary to identify lagging groups, in line with the SDG target 17.18, and the steps that are being taken to cover these information gaps;
- b) **An overview of the strategies, plans, public policies and budgets that will be implemented to accelerate progress for the most lagging groups**, an assessment of the key challenges and how they will be overcome. This should include the strategy and investment necessary to disaggregate data by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, disability, geographic location and other relevant characteristics in national contexts to determine the progress of groups that are lagging behind;
- c) **National “essential” goals of equity**: these goals, established for provisional dates between 2017 and 2030, would aim to reduce gaps in progress between the groups that are most advanced and the groups that have been further behind in the selected SDG targets.

<sup>5</sup> For more detailed recommendations on the steps to be taken to implement and report on the commitment to leave no one behind, see Save the Children (2016) Realizing the Pledge to Leave No One Behind: <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/realising-pledge-leave-no-one-behind>

<sup>6</sup> See the Groups Inequities Database (GRID) of Save the Children; -<https://campaigns.savethechildren.net/grid>

Such a mechanism would help ensure that all groups are on track to achieve the goals by 2030 and demonstrate a strong commitment by their country to implement the promise that no one is left behind.

d) **A call for a High Level Summit for no one left behind at the UN General Assembly 2018:** 1000 days after the 2030 Agenda, the 2018 General Assembly represents an important opportunity to reflect, celebrate and share successes and identify solutions to the barriers to promote progress in fulfilling the promise that no one is left behind.

**Recommendation 3: To ensure that national reviews integrate a section aimed at analysing the quality of the investment in childhood that each country makes.**

The analysis of the situation of children and adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean indicates a gap between the legal-formal recognition of their rights and their effective implementation. Promoting effective changes in this context implies putting the rights of children and adolescents at the centre of public policies, particularly in budgets. “The main challenge is in the design of measures and strategies to ensure social advances in a context of global economic slowdown”.<sup>7</sup>

Investment in early childhood should be a priority and a continuous strategic commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Having a measurement of social investment in childhood, disaggregated by gender and age cycles, is therefore the best tool to evaluate and promote the countries' efforts towards the realization of children's rights. Only by investing in childhood it will be possible to break the cycle of poverty. Investing in childhood is the most profitable social investment to ensure that no one is left behind in the 2030 Agenda, investing in children is thinking about the present and the future of the children of the region and the advances of the societies in which they live.

**Recommendation 4: To ensure a comprehensive and systemic approach in the national review that takes into account the interrelationships between Sustainable Development objectives and goals and places special emphasis on the enabling conditions for advancing towards gender equality and guaranteeing the human rights of girls and young women.**

The Sustainable Development Agenda recognizes that the contributions of girls, adolescents and women are fundamental to progress. The commitment to gender equality, rights and the empowerment of girls and women is transversal to the entire 2030 Agenda: in the declaration, in the objectives and their goals, in the means of implementation, in the follow-up and in the indicators proposed for its measurement. In this sense, gender equality, rights and the empowerment of girls and women are a constitutive axis of sustainable development. Likewise, by investing more in girls and adolescents, it is possible to interrupt

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF, Challenges and advances in the Region on the quality of investment in childhood and adolescence. Presentation made at the International Seminar on Investment in Children in Latin America and the Caribbean, Quito 2015. Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/ec/sunicef/documentos/conclusiones/AVANCES\\_Y\\_DE-SAFIOS.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ec/sunicef/documentos/conclusiones/AVANCES_Y_DE-SAFIOS.pdf).

the intergenerational transmission of poverty, exclusion, discrimination, and violence, in addition to achieving the equitable and sustainable development of society.

Therefore, we recommend that States highlight in their reports:

- » Achievements and challenges to address the structural nature of gender inequality and its link with other factors of inequality such as age, ethnicity and territory. This means making girls and adolescents visible in their reports, especially those belonging to indigenous and afro-descendant groups and those living in rural and/or urban-marginal communities.
- » Advances and challenges in guaranteeing the rights of girls and adolescents to fully comply with the commitments assumed in the SDGs and the Regional Agendas, such as the Gender Strategy and its Montevideo Strategy.
- » Plans and policies to end all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and young women, transforming patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns.
- » The means, mechanisms and resources necessary to guarantee the rights of girls and adolescents, and achieve gender equality, highlighting how the country has translated the Sustainable Development objectives and goals into national plans financed with public investment goals in favour of the rights of girls and young women.

**Recommendation 5: To reaffirm the commitment of States to address poverty, inequality, discrimination and violence, promoting cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**

To this end, it is recommended that States ensure that cities and human settlements consider inclusive public spaces for all, especially for children. This recommendation seeks to incorporate the approach and vision of children in the promotion of safe spaces that are sensitive to their rights.

This implies the strengthening of the role of municipalities in the construction and development of safe and children-friendly cities, guaranteeing the protection of their rights with special attention to the protection against violence.

At the same time, it is proposed to consider children's perspectives and proposals about the city they want and the impulse of processes and participation spaces from the local governments that ensure their effective participation, as they propose jointly in the "Letter of children and adolescents" prepared within the framework of Habitat III.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> "Letter of children and adolescents", prepared within the framework of the Assembly of children and adolescents. HABITAT III, Quito, October 2016.

**Recommendation 6: Ensure that a child or adolescent delegate is included in the national delegation to the HLPF, based on their participation in the preparation of the report and on their country national review preparation in an open, dynamic, interactive and inclusive way, which supports the participation of diverse interest groups among non-state actors, including civil society.**

The 2030 Agenda success will depend on the manner in which commitments to children and adolescents are executed and the most important thing is that the process of the agenda must include them as key actors and subjects of rights. Including a child or adolescent delegate in the national HLPF delegation of your country will ensure not only a better understanding, awareness and representation of their opinions and recommendations, but will also demonstrate the commitment to include and support children and the society in general so that they play an active role in processes of accountability at all levels.

The consultations to end violence, carried out by the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children in 2015-2016, in which we participated as MMI-LAC, show us how children were effectively consulted to shape a strategy that aims to implement and make progress towards the achievement of goal 16.2.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, we emphasize that the review experience of 2017 showed in practice that children's inclusion is possible from the successful practice in Guatemala, which had a teenager as part of its delegation.

More generally, the National Review Session in the HLPF should also maintain the participation of multiple interest groups and interactive dialogue between member States and other stakeholders, including the United Nations system, the private sector, civil society, and also children. Providing space for the meaningful participation of multiple stakeholders is essential to attract high-level participants to the HLPF, promote the reports of non-state actors and help facilitate the interaction and interconnection of different stakeholders for potential future alliances in order to accelerate the 2030 Agenda's implementation.

**Recommendation 7: Country reports should be aligned with the common reporting guidelines of the UN Secretary-General, ensuring a human rights approach with emphasis on children's rights.**

The reporting guidelines published by the Secretary-General in 2016<sup>10</sup> provide a useful and sensitive structure for national examinations. By using the guidelines, the content of national reports is much more consistent, which allows comparisons between countries and identification of common areas of progress and challenges. This approach ensures that all national reviews cover the exposed components, the methodology behind the exam

<sup>9</sup> For more information about end violence consultations, refer to: <http://www.end-violence.org/consultation.html>

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Secretary-General - Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, A/70/684. Available at: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/684&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/684&Lang=E)

(including stakeholders' participation) and the following steps.

Since the guidelines also suggest that national reviews could provide more detailed analysis of SDGs and selected targets, governments could apply this approach to the set of goals to be examined in the HLPF 2018: Objectives 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17.

It is also important to ensure that the review incorporates the human rights approach, especially the child rights approach.

In addition, all contributions and exams must be available in an online portal in a timely, open and friendly manner in advance of the HLPF.

**Recommendation 8: Make use of the observations and recommendations of international human rights mechanisms in the Voluntary National Review process.**

The inclusion of these recommendations, based on international human rights mechanisms of the UN, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council, special procedures and the conclusions of human rights monitoring bodies such as the Committee on Human Rights of the Child, is especially relevant, given that many SDG commitments overlap with current international legal obligations. When relevant, countries should refer to the measures taken to implement these recommendations when reporting to the HLPF.

**Recommendation 9: Ensure that the reports of accountability presented by the States in the HLPF on the 2030 Agenda's level of compliance are disseminated by various graphic and/or audio-visual media among the various social actors of public and private sectors, as well as citizens in general, with special consideration for having child-friendly dissemination material.**

In this way, it is proposed that States' dissemination actions regarding the reports delivered in the HLPF include:

1. The main advances made by the State for each committed objective, as well as the main challenges and pending tasks to continue advancing in compliance with the Agenda.
2. The main commitments that the State assumes to continue advancing in the fulfillment of the Agenda.
3. A special section aimed at children and adolescents, which, in a friendly format and language, explains the main contents of the report, as well as the main implications that compliance with the Sustainable Development Agenda has for their life and development.

For the dissemination of these actions, States should consider the use of a simple and respectful language, which incorporates approaches to rights, gender, inclusion and multiculturalism.



Finally, in order to comply with this recommendation, States must commit economic resources to ensure that all resulting information is available through audio-visual and/or graphic means in the short term.

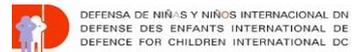
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Sustainable Development Goals Working Group

World Movement for the Childhood of Latin America and the Caribbean



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