

Four priorities for the HLPF 2016 'Ensuring that No One is Left Behind'

The 2016 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) will be the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, much focus will be on discussing plans and strategies for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and approaches for translating the SDGs to national contexts. The HLPF's theme *Ensuring That No One is Left Behind* requires particular attention to **human rights and fundamental freedoms, non-discrimination, gender equality** and the **meaningful participation of civil society and youth** as prerequisites for inclusive and sustainable development.

Countdown 2015 Europe, EuroNGOs, ASTRA Network and IPPF European Network¹ recommend that European governments address the following four points when delivering national statements and include them in the ministerial declaration:

1. The promotion, respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind, is indispensable to ensuring that no one is left behind.

A human rights based approach needs to be at the core of 2030 Agenda implementation plans and strategies. The 2030 Agenda should give added impetus for governments to undertake legislative and policy reforms to ensure equality *for all* under the law, irrespective of age, sex/gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status, and the realization of civil and political rights, as well as social, economic and cultural rights, including non-discriminatory access to education, health and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

2. Inclusive and sustainable development can only be achieved with the realization of gender equality and the human rights and empowerment of all women and girls.

The 2030 Agenda calls for the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda. Explicit and concrete attention is needed to realize 'a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed' (para 8). It is therefore crucial that: **a)** gender equality is integrated throughout all plans and strategies for implementation of the Agenda; and that **b)** progress in the realization of gender equality is monitored and reviewed during each HLPF, in all regional reviews and in all the Voluntary National Reviews.

3. Meaningful civil society and youth participation is a critical enabler of successful SDG implementation, and essential to effective global, regional, national and sub-national follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

Civil society plays a critical role in holding governments accountable for implementing the 2030 Agenda and for identifying gaps, and lack of progress in achieving particular targets or for particular groups that are left behind. They must be involved as governments develop implementation plans and strategies. Specifically, young people need to have the opportunity to participate in the formulation of policies, laws and programmes that affect their lives. As we see civil society space shrink around the world, defending and investing in their crucial role and meaningful youth participation in implementation, monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda becomes even more paramount.

4. Capacity building for and investment in effective data collection and data disaggregation are needed in order to identify whether groups are being left behind.

Significant investments in and capacity building for data collection and analysis, especially in developing countries, are essential to be able to live up to commitments for disaggregation of data, to truly measure what is needed, and to make policy adjustments so as to ensure no one is left behind. What gets measured, gets done, which means that particular emphasis needs to be placed on measuring progress for marginalized groups and those that have been left behind in the past.

¹ [Countdown 2015 Europe](#) is a consortium of 14 leading European non-governmental organizations working in 12 European countries and with the EU institutions to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and family planning are a funding priority for European donors and a policy priority in Europe and globally. The European NGOs for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Population and Development ([EuroNGOs](#)) is a membership network of 36 non-governmental organizations from 22 European countries working on sexual and reproductive health and rights. [ASTRA](#) - Central and Eastern European Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights is a regional informal network consisting of 39 organizations from 21 countries. ASTRA advocates for the full implementation of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) with special focus on SRHR of women in Central and Eastern Europe. [IPPF European Network](#) (IPPF EN) is one of six regional networks of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), a global service provider and leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights. IPPF EN's region covers Western and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.