



‘ENSURING NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND’

CSO High Level Political Forum Feedback Meeting Report

Holiday Inn, Harare

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Panellists

Facilitator – Luke Dangirwa (NCPDZ)

Introduction and Objectives – Judith Kaulem (PRFT)

UNDP Rep – Amarakoon Bandara

Government Rep- Dr. J. Kateera, Mr G. Nyaguse (MoMEPIP)

Youth Rep- Ashley Ngwenya and Ingatious Chiveso (Youth Engage)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The CSO Reference Group on SDGs in Zimbabwe convened a High Level Political Forum (HLPF) Feedback meeting which was held at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Harare on 8th September 2017. The meeting came following the recent HLPF which was held in New York in July 2017 where Zimbabwe was one of the 44 countries which participated in the SDGs peer review process- the Voluntary National Review (VNR). The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) under the banner of the CSOs Reference Group on SDGs engaged the government in May 2017 in order to contribute to the country's VNR. The CSOs Post- HLPF Feedback meeting was attended by stakeholders from CSO sectors of Women, Youth, Children, Church, Elderly, Media and People with Disability. The Ministry of Macro-Economic Planning and Investment Promotion (MoMEPIP) was representing the government as the coordination arm of the SDGs in Zimbabwe.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The post HLPF/VNR meeting was organised to meet the following objectives:

- ❖ To report back on the HLPF/VNR – CSOs representatives who participated at the HLPF/VNR in New York sought to share experiences and lessons learnt at the HLPF with the broader stakeholders representing various constituencies.
- ❖ To discuss ways of engaging with the government – the objective sought to explore ways in which CSOs can meaningfully engage with government and other stakeholders in terms of structures, mechanisms and platforms that can be utilized.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF HOW GOVERNMENT CAN ENGAGE.

The Executive Director of the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust, Mrs. Judith Kaulem underscored the need for a multi-stakeholder engagement towards the successful implementation of the SDGs. In her presentation, Mrs. Kaulem emphasized the need for meaningful engagement which should be long-term, regular and systematic. She highlighted that for CSOs to effectively collaborate with government and compliment efforts for the achievement of the SDGs, there is need for equitable access and distribution of resources both financial and technical support.

The engagement with government should be based on collaboration which entails active participation of stakeholders and increased uptake of multi-stakeholder views and voices by government. The government was urged to refrain from other forms of engagement such as informing, consultation and involvement which limit meaningful participation of CSOs and other stakeholders in government led processes and embrace collaboration instead.

Mrs. Kaulem emphasized the need for CSOs to understand how the UN system with regards the HLPF works. This has implications for CSOs participation and advocacy as input cannot be received outside these recognized structures. She shared information on the formalized

nine sectors of society which are the main channels through which broad participation is facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These are referred to as the Major Groups and include:

- ❖ **Women**
- ❖ **Children and Youth**
- ❖ **Indigenous Peoples**
- ❖ **Non-Governmental Organizations**
- ❖ **Local Authorities**
- ❖ **Workers and Trade Unions**
- ❖ **Business and Industry**
- ❖ **Scientific and Technological Community**
- ❖ **Farmers**

However, it was noted that the 2030 agenda refers to other stakeholders (specific constituencies) and refers back to resolution 67/290, which clarifies the need to include “other stakeholders ...” who may not fit easily into any of the categories above.

1.3 CSO EXPERIENCES AT THE HLPF: YOUTH ENGAGE

Three representatives from Youth Engage represented the Zimbabwe CSOs in the Youth and Children Major Group at the HLPF in New York. Two of the three representatives, Ignatious Chiveso and Ashley Ngwenya shared their experiences with CSO during the meeting. The reflections on the HLPF provided critical details on issues concerning effective youth engagement around SDGs. There was an increase of youth representation at the HLPF although their participation was limited to side events. The youths acknowledged the government’s facilitation to get CSOs representatives accreditation under the government delegation. This was highly appreciated as it gave the representatives access to many meetings which otherwise would not have been possible under the ordinary delegate accreditation. One notable observation was the low representation of youths from the African continent which hindered the projection of the African youth voice at the HLPF. Lack of financial support also restricted the number of youth representation from Zimbabwe, with only 3 able to attend with support from donors. The focus on youth in the Ministerial Declaration was only highlighted on issues of sexual reproductive health and youths as advocates of change in paragraphs 6 and 25 of the declaration. There was no further mention of the youth thus giving impetus for more advocacy and articulation around issues of youth engagement. Some of the challenges the youth delegation encountered at the HLPF included the following; Youth participation was limited to side events. Very few country such as the

Netherlands were able to include youths as part of the team that delivered the VNR report which is something the government of Zimbabwe should emulate. Most youths are working on SDGs but there is limited information at their disposal on the processes happening around the globe.

1.3.1 Recommendations

The youths made the following recommendations to CSOs, Government and other stakeholders;

1. Strengthen participation of young people in the implementation, review and reporting processes of the SDGs in the country by engaging young people as leaders and partners through partnerships, and inclusion at all levels of implementation of the Agenda 2030.
2. Capacity building of young people to effectively engage in the Agenda 2030 through increasing financial investments for youth-led programmes, building technical skills, and leadership support through creation of spaces for participation, establishing a vibrant youth delegation programme and leadership skills capacity for the various roles and responsibilities.
3. Engage young people's expertise and input especially in closing data gaps for young people, as well as in monitoring and tracking of the SDGs to effectively capture young people's programming, contribution and participation in the SDGs agenda.

There is need for youth data driven through capacity building of youths to collect data that can be used at national level.

In response to some of the recommendations from the youths, Dr. Kateera, the Permanent Secretary in the MoMEPIP said currently the Ministry is working on developing an ICT based database for SDGs having recognized the importance of data.

1.4 UNDP ZIMBABWE POST HLPF REFLECTIONS

Mr. Amarakoon Bandara, the UNDP Senior Economic Advisor said that the UN commended the MMEPIP for the role it played in presenting the report which was well received at the HLPF. The world did not expect Zimbabwe to present a progress report considering that other countries are still collecting data on indicators, developing frameworks and implementation plans. The UNDP encouraged the CSOs and the government to adopt the best practices from the 44 countries that were peer reviewed at the HLPF as envisaged in the Ministerial Declaration. The Ministerial declaration also stressed the importance to have a multi-dimensional approach to poverty reduction.

Mr. Bandara informed the meeting that post HLPF, UNDP meet with the MMEPIP and the Deputy Chief Secretary in the Office of the President (OPC) to agree on SDGs implementation parameters for the remainder of the year going into 2018. The meeting resolved that advocacy around SDGs, awareness raising and action planning remains fundamental until the end of the year. The need to agree on indicators and targets; and data sources was also raised on the same meeting as issues of great importance for monitoring purposes. The country will be producing yearly SDGs progress reports starting at the end of 2018. Mr. Bandara also underscored the fact that there is need for the government to put in place transparent and accountable mechanisms to reap maximum benefits from the resources that the country has. This entails establishing robust institutional reforms to curb illicit financial flows and safeguard resources that can be used in the implementation of the SDGs. Zimbabwe is capable as a country to generate and finance its own development process considering the vast resource pool and does not need to wait for International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, United Nations Agencies or donor partners.

1.4.1 Key Messages

In the plenary discussion that ensued, development partners were urged to collaborate with government on the process of SDG priority identification and ensure that the identified priorities are taken as investments from which proceeds will be anticipated. This is fundamental considering the shift of global development funding priorities; hence CSOs have to be strategic and innovative in resource mobilization.

Both the UNDP and government were urged to provide more platforms that encourage multi-stakeholder participation. This is important as it will raise awareness at the grassroots level that will enable communities to appreciate SDGs, hold their local leaders and themselves accountable. The popularization of SDGs should adopt a variety of approaches such as use of social media, print, electronic media in the dissemination of the information.

1.5 GOVERNMENT'S SDGs IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

In her address to the meeting, the Permanent Secretary to the MoMEPIP, Dr. Kateera informed the participants that the government has added goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institution to the list of previously prioritized ten goals making the focus goals 11. This was to the applause of the CSOs who in different fora had lobbied for the inclusion of SDG 16 to the priority list. The efforts of all stakeholders should be channeled on the implementation and achievement of the 11 priority goals notwithstanding the relevance of the remaining 6 SDGs. Both CSOs and private sector were urged to compliment government efforts in this regard. Dr. Kateera said that the MoMEPIP will soon embark on provincial consultative meetings with the objective of developing ZIMASSET 2 considering that the current national development plan (ZIMASSET 1) is expiring in 2018. CSOs were urged by the government to focus on Vision 2060 at Africa level, SDGs at global level and ZimAsset at local level in-

order to identify gaps and any outstanding agenda in their respective sectors, particularly on SDGs they are currently working on. The government is also embarking on a process of harmonizing investment policies and laws in-order to attract both domestic and foreign investment. This will culminate in the development of an Investment Policy Statement covering both local and foreign investment which will aid in the implementation of the SDGs. MoMEPIP intends to establish a one stop investment shop which will aid the ease of doing business in the country and all these developments are to be completed by 05 December 2017.

1.5.1 SDGs Strategy

In his presentation, the Director of Policy Planning and Coordination Mr. Nyaguse said that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be implemented within the National Development Plan, Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset). The SDGs have been integrated into the national development plan's four core clusters and three sub-clusters for ease of implementation. The Working Groups of the implementation plan consist of all institutions and Ministries' SDGs focal persons responsible for the implementation of policies, projects and programmes key in the attainment of the SDG, targets and indicators. The clusters comprise of representatives of all stakeholders who have an interest in the topical issues dealt with by that group or Cluster. They will include Government, Civil Society, Development partners, the Donors, the Private sector, Parastatals; Faith Based Organizations, Women's groups, People with Disabilities, the Elderly, Youth groups, Philanthropists professional bodies etc. The year 2015 was adopted as the base year in the implementation of the SDGs for reporting purposes, ease of data collection and consistency in reporting.

Clusters	Relevant SDGs	SDG Targets
1. Food Security and Nutrition	1,2,3,6, 12,13,14 and 15	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.9, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 12.1, 12.3,12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 14.7, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9
2.Infrastructure and Utilities	3,7 and 9	3.6, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 9.1, 9.4
3.Value Addition and Beneficiation	9 and 12	9.2, 9.3, 9.5, 12.6
4.Social Services and Poverty Reduction	3,4 ,5 and 6	Part A(targets for Health) 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 6.2 Part B (targets for Education and Gender) 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6

5.Public Administration and Governance	8,10,11 and 16	8.7, 8.8, 10.2, 10.3, 10.7, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6, 11.7, 12.7, 16.1, 16.2,16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10
6.Fiscal Reform Measures	8,10 and 17	8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.9, 8.10, 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.5, 10.6, 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.5, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.11, 17.12, 17.13, 17.14, 17.15, 17.16, 17.17

Source: MoMEPIP 2017

In addition to the clusters highlighted above, MoMEPIP will add a financing strategy as a separate column detailing how each cluster goals and targets will be financed. Another column specifying roles of different stakeholders such CSO, Private sector, development partners and the government will also be added detailing the specific role of each and every stakeholder within their respective clusters, Finally, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) column checking on the progress being made by the different stakeholders in their respective clusters will form of the implementation strategy.

The financing of SDGs implementation will assume a multi-stakeholder approach and global partnerships to mobilize resources for SDGs Implementation. The country is pursuing an approach that will strengthen domestic resource mobilization; hence government is welcoming dialogue which can enhance the country's options for resource mobilization and enhancing funding for SDGs. Government is also intensifying private sector and civil society involvement to bridge the huge financing gap that exists

The government acknowledges the importance of working with CSOs as central to the achievement of the SDGs. The government recognizes that there is need to collaborate with key partners who will be involved in the Financing, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the SDGs. The identified key stakeholders by government are; Government (national and sub-national structures); Private Sector (both Domestic and Foreign); Community-Based Organizations; Development Partners; Youth Organizations; Women's Organizations; Local Authorities; Faith Based Organizations; and Organizations representing PLWD, the Elderly and the general citizenry.

The government acknowledges that the civil society is already operating at the grassroots levels, through community based organisations in areas such as health, education, sustainable livelihoods, HIV & AIDS, and alleviating poverty among others which is a welcome development. However, there is need to take stock of the activities on who is doing what, and what has been funded on the ground so that there is a collective and comprehensive picture on SDGs to avoid duplication of work. This will also ensure that all areas receive attention and none of the goals is left behind.

1.4.2 Key Messages

In the plenary discussion following the Ministry of MoMEPIP's presentation, the following issues were highlighted and/or debated.

- MoMEPIP in collaboration with UNDP is going to translate SDGs sensitization materials into vernacular languages during the Provincial SDGs Sensitization meetings with communities. The translation of awareness materials is an important exercise that will generate level community understanding of SDGs and their focus. It is fundamental that the translation of dissemination materials is not limited to vernacular languages but also to brail for the visually impaired to ensure that information on SDGs reaches the furthest person left behind.
- Given that the SDGs will be implemented under the ZimAsset Cluster model, the participation of all people from all sectors is critical towards the attainment of development targets. The politicization of ZimAsset raised fears amongst stakeholders as a deterrent to participation of people who have different ideologies to those purported to have crafted the policy. MoMEPIP as technocrats will not make invitations to SDGs cluster meetings, provincial awareness meetings and other public fora on political basis. There is need to demystify the ZimAsset cluster platform as a civic engagement platform divorced from politics for critical constructive engagement on SDGs.
- MoMEPIP is the coordinating Ministry on SDGs with an internal institutional structure set up to ensures efficient reporting on SDGs. The Ministry will use Fiscal Reform Measures (Cluster 6) of the implementation strategy also known as Enablers under the ZimAsset to coordinate the work being done by various CSOs, UN Agencies, Private partners etc. in the country. This entails development of an Aid Coordination Management System (ACMS) in collaboration with Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (responsible for domestic resource mobilization) and Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (responsible for the registration of Non-Governmental Organizations). The ACMS will detail who is doing what, where in Zimbabwe and enable data sorting by sector, by Organization, by location etc. This system will consolidate all the information on SDGs and make it easier to track progress of the work done by different stakeholders in their respective jurisdiction.
- In response to a concern that was raised that to date the SDGs activities were largely government-centric, limiting the participation of multi-stakeholders, the MoMEPIP said it is working in collaboration with Development Research Institution and National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) in disseminating information of cluster meetings. This collaboration is ensuring that communication on SDGs cluster meetings is not government centric. The Ministry is in the process of developing a website which will be used in the dissemination of information and key dates of key events and meetings. MoMEPIP is also in the process of developing a Communication Strategy as part of the effort to increase

reach of information to the furthest person in the community. The communication Strategy will embrace both print and electronic media which will also be presented in vernacular to ensure universal uptake of information by communities. The CSOs called for MoMEPIP to include and consult all relevant stakeholders in the development of the communication strategy to address issues of inclusivity and relevance of the issues to communities.

- The porous environment in public sector was noted as one of the challenges affecting domestic resource mobilization required for financing SDGs implementation in the Country. Given the illicit financial flows, the government of Zimbabwe is currently developing regulations to enforce the Anti-money Laundering Act. The Act will form the basis for lifestyle audits and the reclamation of corruption acquired assets which will be disposed of to fight that kind of crime. Secondly, there is a Corporate Governance Bill which is currently going through Parliament. This Bill seeks to ensure that parastatals are accountable and transparent in their conduct. Lastly, the Anti-Corruption Commission stance on corruption is an attempt to show government's intention to plug financial illicit flows within the public sector.
- To ensure that the furthest person behind in the community is reached under the principle of leaving 'No-one Behind', MoMEPIP will use provincial structures to engage Provincial Ministers; Members of Parliament (MPs) irrespective of political parties who will in-turn engage their constituencies as bearers of information. The government will target certain specific areas such as Binga that are publicly known to be lagging behind in terms of development for continuous engagement. CSOs were urged to share information with their chapters and constituencies for continuous engagement.
- The Private sector in Zimbabwe responded positively to the adoption of SDGs despite the concern raised over their profit motive orientation. The private sector has been supporting the SDGs implementation in the country with notable contributions being; firstly, the sustenance of the economy under drought periods and economic sanctions; secondly, financing the command agriculture scheme e.g. Sakunda; thirdly, private sector investment in a medical park under the Special Economic Zones (pledged to invest in a medical park in Sunway City) meeting the SDG targets on health; fourthly, Banking sector loans and funds in agriculture (meeting SDG 2 targets on sustainable agriculture) and housing (meeting SDG 11 targets on sustainable cities and communities); and lastly, Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA) has registered private players that are investing in energy sector meeting SDG 7 targets on affordable and clean energy. These are major highlights of the contributions that the private sector is making in the implementation of the SDGs in the country. An important exercise that should be undertaken is taking stock of the amounts by sector that the private sector has contributed in the implementation of goals 2, 7, 9, 11 and other goals not mentioned above.

Recommendations

1. To ensure coordination of policies such as the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP), Zimbabwe SDGs position paper and ZimAsset there is need to understand the purpose of every policy concerned considering they all feed into the same cause. The IPRSP identifies strategies for reducing poverty while the SDGs have brought targets that should be met by 2030 to reduce poverty. The country is implementing the strategies identified by the IPRSP to meet the realistic targets which the country has prioritized under the SDGs.
2. CSOs were urged to move beyond problem identification and proffer government with solutions to engagement and development challenges.
3. The labour sector was urged to join any sector which suits them and/or propose how they seek to participate in-order to gain maximum participation from the sector.
4. The government was urged to involve all stakeholders in the development of the communication strategy for effective communication and sustainability of the communication strategy
5. Older persons sector should be prioritized on the government prioritized implementation strategy clusters. Older persons should be looked at as a resource not as recipients of social services
6. CSOs were urged to take cognizance of the financing aspect of programmes in the planning period before drawing up ambitious programmes that will be stifled by lack of financial support.
7. The Government was urged to popularize the SDGs/ZimAsset engagement clusters so that they became popular amongst stakeholders for continuous and sustained participation.
8. Government was commended for including SDG 16 to the priority list and urged to ensure that it is factored and cuts across all the ZimAsset clusters as they are aligned to the SDGs.

1.6 CONCLUSION

The MoMEPIP was highly commended for their responsiveness to engaging with CSOs and the transparency demonstrated in sharing information. Mrs Kaulem reiterated the importance of ensuring that this engagement does not become an event but develops into a systematic and continuous process for meaningful collaboration. She emphasized the importance of the information of the SDGs strategy shared by the ministry as it will inform the CSOs Reference Group's programming on SDGs moving forward and enable the entity to effectively contribute towards the SDGs implementation in the country.

Appendix I: List of Participants

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