



TAP Network Response to the Post-2015 “Zero Draft”

The Zero Draft of the Outcome Document for the Post-2015 Development Agenda represents a critical juncture in laying out a new sustainable development agenda for the global community for the next 15 years. Consequently, we must ensure that this outcome document is truly reflective of the ambition and commitments needed to achieve a universal and transformative sustainable development agenda. It must create an enabling environment that mobilizes and empowers all stakeholders – particularly civil society – to engage in the implementation and follow-up and review of the agenda, including holding governments accountable for their commitments and actions.

If we are to collectively achieve the commitment to “leave no one behind” and ensure the credibility of the Post-2015 development agenda, principles of transparency, accountability and participation must be fully reflected in the Post-2015 Zero Draft. The Post-2015 framework must promote openness, accountability and effective public institutions, build trust between states and citizens, and empower civil society to engage in the design, implementation and accountability of public policies, at all levels.

The following brief outlines the key recommendations and critical language amendments from the Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network – an informal coalition of 115 civil society organizations in 34 countries working to ensure that the Post-2015 agenda fosters open, inclusive, transparent, accountable and participatory sustainable development, at all levels.¹

¹ For a full compendium of suggested language amendments to the Post-2015 Zero Draft from TAP Network Organizations, please visit our website at <http://tapnetwork2015.org/>

Preamble

Rio Principle 1 states that people are at the center of concerns for sustainable development. We strongly support the preamble's commitment that "no one will be left behind," however, the rest of the declaration lacks sufficient language and references to the people-centered nature of the new agenda and the importance of regular and meaningful participation – particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable people. We call for the preamble – and the rest of the Declaration – to outline concrete commitments on *how* to put the 'leave no one behind' principle into practice and to strengthen this commitment so that no goal or target is considered met unless met for all social and economic groups. This must be a foundational pillar of the Post-2015 agenda.

*This Agenda is a **[n urgent]** plan of action for **people, planet and prosperity** that also seeks to strengthen universal **peace** in larger freedom. All countries acting in collaborative partnership **[with all stakeholders, including civil society,]** will implement ~~the~~ **[this people-centered]** Agenda. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet for **[the survival and prosperity of]** present and future generations. We are determined to take the **[immediate,]** bold and transformative steps needed to shift the world on to a sustainable path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind, **[and that no goal shall be considered met unless met for all social and economic groups.]***

Declaration

The title "Transforming our World by 2030: A New Agenda for Global Action" Declaration sets an aspirational tone for the Post-2015 outcome, however, language throughout the Declaration must be strengthened accordingly to convey a firm commitment to implementing this self-proclaimed "transformative" agenda. If the Declaration is the means to inspire real action and to communicate the new agenda to people around the world, it must be made abundantly clear that Member States are *committing* to bold and transformative action, and not just stating ambitious aspirations.

While the preamble of the Declaration boldly pledges "that no one will be left behind," the rest of the Zero Draft does not sufficiently reflect this commitment, particularly regarding *how* this will be achieved. Member States must be more explicit in their commitments throughout the Declaration to convey *how* they intend to meaningfully engage, empower and prioritize all people, especially the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups – to send a very clear message to the global community that they are truly serious that "no one will be left behind."

References to principles of transparency, accountability and participation throughout the Declaration are insufficient and must be strengthened. All people, including the world's poorest and those most vulnerable and marginalized, must be recognized not just as "recipients" of development, but as valuable voices and powerful actors to bring about change in their own families, communities, and countries. Member States must commit to be fully transparent in implementing and following-up of the agenda, as well as to actively engage and empower citizens in these activities.

Recommendations for the Declaration

Paragraph 4

Language must be made more explicit and committal when elaborating on the commitments being made by Member States in this new agenda – including referencing the affirmation that no goals or targets shall be considered met unless met for all economic and social groupings.

*4. As we embark on this great collective journey, we pledge ~~that nobody will be left behind~~ **[to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first.]** We ~~wish to see~~ **[affirm that]** the goals and targets **[will only be fully achieved when they are]** met for all economic and social groupings.*

Paragraph 28

We welcome the reference to Paragraph 28 on issues contained within Goal 16. While the paragraph highlights that these issues are prerequisites and essential elements for achieving sustainable development, it lacks detail as to core principles that underpin effective governance – including transparency, accountability and citizen participation. It is important that the declaration highlights the need to address transnational threats, such as flows of arms and illicit finance, since these challenges to achieving peace and accountable governance need to be addressed at the global level.

*28. Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace. The new Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), the rule of law and effective[,] ~~and~~ accountable **[,inclusive and participatory]** institutions. These are fundamental requirements for the achievement of sustainable development. **[Transparency, accountability and citizen participation are driving forces for building effective, inclusive, peaceful and just societies and institutions, for realizing human rights, and for ensuring we leave no one behind.]** Factors which give rise to violence, insecurity and injustice, such as corruption and poor governance, are addressed in the Agenda. We must redouble our efforts to resolve or prevent conflict **[universally]** ~~and~~ to support countries emerging from conflict situations **[, and to strengthen or establish enabling environments for civil society stakeholders and individuals to play a role as independent development actors,]** so as to lay the foundations for sustainable development. We commit to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment.*

Paragraph 36

Given the importance of quality, timely, transparent and accessible disaggregated data to monitor progress and ensure we are truly leaving no one behind, paragraph 36 should include a reference on the need for transparent and accountable multi-stakeholder partnerships to mobilize resources for disaggregated data.

*36. The scale and ambition of the new Agenda calls for a renewed and strengthened Global Partnership to implement it... mobilizing all available resources. Inclusive **[, transparent and accountable]** multi-stakeholder partnerships will be needed to support specific priorities under the Agenda and to mobilize the requisite resources, **[including for high quality disaggregated data from both official and third-party sources.]***

Paragraph 37

We strongly support the reference to civil society as critical partners for implementation for the new agenda in paragraphs 36 and 37, and call upon Member States to explicitly outline *how* they will engage civil society as implementers of this new agenda in the corresponding Means of Implementation chapter of the Outcome Document.

*37. We ~~emphasize more generally~~ **[recognize]** the critical importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in implementation **[and follow-up and review]** of the new Agenda. **[We note that all stakeholders, particularly civil society, can help fill capacity gaps in, inter alia, planning, implementation, data generation and analysis, and follow-up and review, and will be critical to ensuring that we leave no one behind.]** **[Our]** Governments and public institutions **[commit to working]** ~~will work~~ closely **[at all levels]** in this regard with national parliaments, local authorities, international institutions, business and the private sector, civil society, **[communities,]** academia, philanthropic organizations, voluntary groups and others **[, including those most likely to be left behind such as girls, boys, adolescents, youth, women and persons with disabilities.]***

Paragraph 38

We strongly support the reference to accountability for the new agenda in paragraph 38, but note the narrow scope of the paragraph, as it only references government's role in this framework. Language should also be included on the role of civil society in follow-up and review processes, including provisions for opportunities for inputs from these groups, as a recognition of the value of citizen participation.

*38. Our Governments will be responsible for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing the goals and targets over the coming fifteen years. To support this accountability, provision has been made – and is detailed in Chapter 4 below – for systematic follow-up and review of implementation at the various levels. **[In line with the people-centered nature of this Agenda, we encourage and welcome the engagement of all stakeholders, and particularly of civil society, in the follow-up and review and accountability of this new agenda, and commit to provide sufficient opportunities for their inputs in these processes, at all levels.]***

Paragraph 39

To ensure we have an accurate snapshot of progress towards the SDGs, we must collectively come together as a global community to strengthen capacity for data collection and use from a wide range of stakeholders. Driving a data revolution for the Post-2015 agenda can only be achieved in partnership with governments and all relevant users and producers of data. We support the need for 'quality disaggregated data' in paragraph 39, but call for data which demonstrate the impact of the SDGs on the lives and livelihoods of people living in poverty.

*39. We look forward to the development of **[global]** indicators to assist this work. Quality **[, timely and accessible]** disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress. We agree to intensify our efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, particularly least developed countries and other countries in special situations, **[including by supporting participatory monitoring and data collection.]** We also commit to scaling up substantially public-private cooperation to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including geo-spatial information in supporting and tracking progress. **[We recognize that third-party data sources, such as those generated by, inter alia, the UN, other multilateral institutions, civil society organizations, research institutions,***

academia and the private sector are critical to help fill existing data capacity gaps and to provide a robust and accurate picture of progress, at all levels.]

Follow-up and Review

We welcome the chapter on follow-up and review for the Post-2015 Agenda, and the opening paragraph which highlights the importance of accountability between States and citizens. However, despite references to the importance of civil society and all stakeholders in follow-up and review processes, the language regarding their participation must be more ambitious and clearly defined.

Overall, the chapter on Follow-up and Review needs to be strengthened with more affirmative language, e.g. replacing “could” or “can” with “will.” The Zero Draft should specifically embed principles of transparency, accountability and participation at the core of follow up and review of the agenda.

The role of civil society will be critical in the implementation, follow-up and review and accountability of the agenda. The outcome document must explicitly recognize the role that all stakeholders, including civil society, will play in follow-up and review processes, and elaborate on *how* these processes will ensure their participation.

Additionally, the recommendations and language suggestions below should also be reflected in the “Illustrative Follow-up and Review framework” diagrams on pages 31-32 of the Zero Draft, as appropriate.

Recommendations for the Follow-up and Review Chapter

Paragraph 1

While we welcome the reference to an inclusive and transparent follow-up and review framework, “inclusivity” is not the same as “people-centered” or “participatory,” with the latter language implying the *active* engagement of stakeholders.

1. A robust, effective, inclusive, [participatory] and transparent [people-centered] follow-up and review framework, operating [and coordinated] at the national, regional and global levels, will promote effective implementation of this Agenda and accountability to our citizens.

Paragraph 2

Review processes should be state-led, but people-driven. There should be an explicit reference to governments consulting and engaging with all stakeholders, particularly civil society, to complement paragraph two, which speaks to national ownership. Ownership and participation by local communities and citizens with a wide range of relevant institutions and stakeholders who are engaged in the implementation and follow-up and review of the new agenda is equally important to national ownership. Therefore, we have proposed an additional and complementary paragraph to paragraph 2.

2 bis. [Ownership of this people-centered agenda by all stakeholders, particularly by civil society, will also be critical to the successful implementation and follow-up and review of the new agenda. Therefore, national governments will engage and solicit the participation of all civil society

stakeholders, including, inter alia, the UN and other multilateral institutions, civil society organizations, local authorities, parliaments, research institutions, academia and the private sector and people at all levels of the review process.]

Paragraph 3

We welcome the reference that the follow-up and review processes “will be open and inclusive, supported by an enabling environment for the participation of all people and stakeholders” in paragraph 3c. This text must be maintained and strengthened by referencing people experiencing poverty and vulnerability. The guiding principles for the follow-up and review processes should reflect the people-centered nature of the new agenda and ensure firm commitments on accountability and participation. Open access to transparent data and information and the meaningful and active participation of people in these processes are critical prerequisites for successful follow-up and review of the new agenda.

3. *Follow-up and review processes shall be people-centred and guided by the following principles:*
 - a. *They will address progress in implementing the **[universal]** goals and targets **[in all countries,]** including the means of implementation, in a manner which respects their integrated and inter-related nature **[and in ways that ensure that no one is left behind.]***
 - c. *They will be open, [transparent, accessible], inclusive [and strengthen accountability between states and citizens], supported by an enabling environment for the **[meaningful and active]** participation of all people and stakeholders **[at all levels, and including the world’s poorest, disadvantaged and marginalized groups.]***
 - e. *They will be rigorous and evidence-based, informed by data which is **[transparent, accessible, understandable, shareable,]** timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. Support for developing countries, particularly LDCs, to strengthen national **[and third party]** data systems is critical. **[Third-party data should complement official sources of data by filling data gaps that exist in a timely way, and will help verify official sources of data when data quality is insufficient.]***
 - f. ***Para e.bis [They will focus on progress for the social and economic groups that are the furthest behind, and monitor inequalities within and between countries. No goal shall be considered met unless met for all social and economic groups.]***

Paragraph 9

Building upon the successful model of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process at the UN Human Rights Council, the HLPF reviews should be based on three sets of inputs: a) national reports by Member States, b) information from UN entities, and c) independent reports from civil society. These processes need to be transparent and participatory in order to provide an accurate picture of progress to sufficiently follow-up and learn from successes or shortcomings in implementing the agenda. It is critical that the global level of follow-up and review set a “gold standard” for participation of all stakeholders, and in particular of civil society, to encourage national governments to aspire to in their national accountability processes.

*9. We reaffirm that the HLPF, under the auspices of ECOSOC, shall carry out regular reviews of progress in line with Resolution 67/290 **[and we commit to ensure that the HLPF has sufficient human and financial resources to fulfil its mandate.]** Reviews will be voluntary, while encouraging reporting, **[be transparent, open, inclusive, and participatory]** and include developed and developing countries as well*

as relevant UN entities. They shall be State-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants [**and should consider inputs from national governments, information from UN entities, and independent reports from civil society stakeholders**] They shall focus on assessment of progress, achievements and challenges faced by developed and developing countries, and provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. **[Reviews shall also consider progress of all social and economic groups in order to leave no one behind.]**

Paragraph 14

This paragraph lacks ambition or clear definition, and essentially repeats what is already outlined in Resolution 67/290. In order to make this paragraph meaningful, the issue of how civil society stakeholders will be engaged in these follow-up and review processes should be explicitly outlined. Building on the best practices of the UPR, civil society stakeholders should be provided sufficient opportunities to contribute to the discussions around national or thematic reviews, including through active dialogue with Member States and through official consideration of their inputs in the review processes.

*14. In line with Resolution 67/290, the HLPF will support meaningful participation in follow up and review processes by civil society, the major groups, the UN System, relevant multi-stakeholder partnerships, the private sector and other stakeholders. **[It shall provide an accessible and inclusive platform and sufficient opportunities for civil society stakeholders to engage in interactive dialogues with Member States, including for all reports and inputs submitted by these stakeholders to be presented and considered during these reviews and included in the official outcome of the HLPF.]***

For more information on this joint TAP Network Response to the Post-2015 Zero Draft, please contact John Romano, Coordinator of the TAP Network at romano@wfun.org or +1 609 721 3316

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Endorsing Organisations: Access Info Europe, AfroLeadership, Asia Dalit Rights Forum, Bioregional, CAFSO-WRAG for Development, Campaign 2015+ International, CIVICUS, Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network (CSAYN), EAG/ISPE, ENDA Tiers Monde, Global Financial Integrity (GFI), Global Movement for Budget Transparency Accountability and Participation (BTAP), Global Network for Community Development, Green the Gene, Human Rights First Rwanda Association's, International Budget Partnership (IBP), International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), International Federation of Library Associations, International-Lawyers.Org, National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), Plan International, Saferworld, Save the Children, Sisters of Charity Federation, Stakeholder Forum, The Temple of Understanding, Transparency International, United Nations Associations South Sudan, Universal Rights Network, World Federalist Movement-Canada (WFMC), ZONTA International