The South African Working CSO Group on SDGs (SAWG)

Consultative Workshop on CSO Planned Activities for the South Africa National Voluntary Review (VNR) 2024

Workshop Report

1. Introduction

On the 26th October 2024, African Monitor on behalf of the South Africa CSOs Working Group on SDGs (SAWG) organised a consultative workshop to communicate to stakeholders the CSO's planned activities for VNR 2024 and explore collaboration and mutual learning opportunities.The workshop was also meant to kick-start the CSO-planned activities under the SAWG.

South Africa is conducting the Voluntary National Review 2024, and the various processes have started. Statistics South Africa has already published the national SDG report 2023, with contributions from various CSOs.

It is vital to position citizens and civil society as rights holders, utilising a rights-based framework to participate in the National Voluntary Review process and demand accountability not only from the government but also private sector and others such as local government, international community, local communities, media, academia, and individuals. The right to participate is already enshrined in the constitution, but substantial investment is required to empower citizens to monitor government actions and express their experiences, creating an enabling environment for participation.

It is important to note the decision on the annual theme HLPF 2024 and the goals to be reviewed. The theme for the 2024 session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council shall be "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions".

The Goals under review include:

•   Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere;

•   Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;

•   Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;

•   Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, inclusive institutions at all levels; and

•   Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Building upon these prior achievements and intensive consultations with key stakeholders, African Monitor developed the 2024 CSO VNR Roadmap which was further revised in September 2023 to incorporate the outcomes of the 2023 HLPF.

Objectives of workshop

The aim of the workshop was to share the civil society plan for the VNR process and connect to the government's National voluntary review plan. This workshop also aimed to identify opportunities for collaboration with other stakeholders.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

• Mobilise the broad society participation in the Voluntary National Review processes.

• To share the CSOs plan with stakeholders and identify opportunities for collaboration.

• Coordinate Civil Society participation in the VNR processes.

The workshop was attended by over 50 participants from business, civil society, and government, this report will outline its main themes and outcomes.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr Glenn Farred and Ms Lynette Maart.

2. Setting the Scene: VNR & VLR national processes

Sixolile Ngcobo welcomed all participants on behalf of African Monitor (AM) and the SAWG on SDGs and introduced the speakers on the panel from the National Planning Commission (NPC), UNDP, and SALGA. The SAWG is harnessing the power of partnerships, including within the VNR process. Participants were encouraged to prepare themselves for the observations and insights they could take home and use to shape the VNR roadmap going forward. Sixolile outlined the different sessions and explained the workshop's purpose was primarily to give participants an understanding of what the VNR and VLR processes entail, and to discuss how meaningful participation will be ensured during the VNR and VLR processes.

2.1 National Planning Commission - Ms Xoliswa Dilata & Ms Silondile Mpomposhe

The presentation from Xoliswa Dilata set the scene by outlining the common point of departure. DPME sent out a call of interest to the United Nations (UN) that South Africa would like to present its second VNR in 2024. The goals that will be under review are SDG 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17. Nonetheless, following meetings with other national government departments, GIZ, and the University of Pretoria, the NPC decided to - like they did with the VNR 2019 - to review all 17 SDGs in this upcoming VNR to track South Africa's post-COVID 19 progress. In this way, we will be able to see where we have regressed, where we are still making progress, and where we are stagnant.

A draft road map has been put together for the first phase, which is the engagement of multiple stakeholders through an online form for input. Through the form, CSOs, private sector, and academia are asked to list three challenges affecting implementation of the SDGs, and to list three SDG opportunities for transformation.

The second phase of the VNR process will be the drafting of the report, where African Monitor can come in. The VNR steering committee comprises around 10 people from national government departments, civil society, business and the University of Pretoria coming in on the side of academia. CSOs and private sector are requested to each provide the name of the people that will be part of the writing team to ensure that their inputs are properly incorporated into the VNR. The third phase will be the Multi Stakeholder Validation Workshop, where all the stakeholders review the first draft of the VNR. The fourth phase closely follows this workshop and entails the editing and layout, which is followed up by the final report approval.

The NPC began a process earlier this year with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) where they had a capacity building workshop with municipalities on the VLR. Those VLRs will also be used in the process of writing the 2024 VNR.

One of the biggest lessons learned from the 2019 VNR is as if the government was writing the VNR on its own - it didn't have the voice of civil society and academia. Need to make sure the 2024 VNR is not solely a government document and more inclusive, including in the writing teams which should have a variety of people and voices. Aware of and agree that the statistics of STATS SA are limited in a way. Would help the NPC if civil society could provide a document with the resources needed from their side.

Timeline
- Currently moving towards phase II, which is expected to be done by November.
- Need the names of CSOs members who are going to be in the co-writing team as soon as possible.
- The First Draft of the VNR should be out in January 2024.
- First stakeholder engagement on the First Draft will be in February 2024, after which will be closely followed by the Second Draft.
- Presentation of Second Draft VNR and main messages/outcomes to clusters and cabinet in March 2024.
- Final stakeholder engagement will be in April 2024.
- VNR finalized for cabinet approval in May 2024.
- VNR submitted to the UN in June 2024.

2.2 United Nations Development Programme - Mr Rogers Dhliwayo
The presentation of Rogers Dhliwayo from UNDP South Africa provided participants with an overview of the current state in terms of the implementation of the SDGs and how this calls for a new approach - the 'VNR 2.0'. Mr Dhliwayo explained that halfway to Agenda 2030, the SDGs are off track, with stagnation and a multitude of crises leading to visible regression in terms of climate action, loss of biodiversity, and inequality in most VNRs. Mr Dhliwayo emphasised that continuing 'business as usual' will make it simply impossible to achieve the SDGs.

The most recent Global SDG Report[1] was highlighted as a useful reference as it talks about the transformative actions which are needed and it came up with 11 high impact interventions to accelerate progress on the SDGs, including strengthening the role of the public sector. This is where Mr Dhliwayo sees a role for the VNR as a tool to rescue the SDGs.

VNRs have generally been a success, with process being widely embraced by countries. Some (Kenya, Zimbabwe) are already in process of submitting their 3rd VNR. Apart from reviewing, the VNRs themselves have also been reviewed since 2017. In these reviews of the VNRs, the following outcomes appeared:

- VNRs tend to be more descriptive than analytical;
- Interlinkage of SDGs not reported on in most VNRs;
- Transformative actions countries can take are missing from the VNRs;
- Climate and environment goals (SDGs 12, 13, 14, 15) and even inequality (SDG 10) are systematically underreported; and
- VNRs do not report on who is left behind.

VNR 2.0

Accordingly, there is a need for a 'VNR version 2.0' approach with the following recommendations:

- Rebalance VNRs from descriptive to analytical to further facilitate peer learning and policy insight;
- Enhance focus on key challenges including obstacles to progress that are structural and difficult to change;
- Include assessements of the core transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda, including the means of implementation and policy coherence;
- Conduct a participatory process at the country le el that has transparency, recognizes the role of civil society, and creates space for their contribution to identifying priorities;
- Institute a national learning process with feedback loops to policy debates; and
- Include civil society shadow reports in the HLPF and other international review processes such as regional meetings.

To make sure this upcoming 2024 VNR will actually try to address some of these challenges, we have to be aware of what the review of the previous 2019 VNR says. The need to look at linkages and with that spillover effects between the SDGs, especially in the South African context, was stressed once more. Addressing the issue of state capture was identified as one of the biggest levers South Africa can use to achieve the SDGs. These points raised by Rogers were echoed by Ulrich Wehnert from GIZ, who shared the concern of the systemic underreporting on SDGs and sees a role for civil society to make sure this underreporting will not happen again during the 2024 VNR.

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[1] https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/FINAL%20GSDR%202023-Digital%20-110923_1.pdf

2.3 South African Local Government Association (SALGA):   Mr Tebogo Matlou - VLR process

The presentation from Mr Tebogo Matlou of SALGA started off with identifying the gap that exists in translating the global SDGs into actionable plans and initiatives at community level. This is a missed opportunity for all 257 municipalities in South Africa. To bridge this gap and accelerate SDG progress, Tebogo argued civil society urgently needs to focus on localizing the SDGs and empower not only municipalities but also communities to understand the SDGs and play an active role in achieving these objectives.

Municipalities are the first to be impacted by issues affecting urban development, including slums, infrastructure, migration, data, and economic development post-COVID 19. To monitor these developments and localize the SDGs to the community level, SALGA developed a support programme in which they invited municipalities to apply to and participate in the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) process. The envisioned output of the partnership is a VLR document, which requires partnership and collaboration, even more so with municipalities facing financial, human, and technical resources constraints. By participating, municipalities will be able to gain new partners and funding opportunities for activities that are connected with the SDGs.

For the upcoming VLR, SDGs 1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, and 17 are selected as these mostly affect local government, and the following 13 municipalities participate:
- Eastern Cape:
    - *Buffalo City - Category A*
    - *Kou-Kamma - Category C*
- Gauteng:
    - *City of Johannesburg - Category A*
    - *City of Tshwane - Category A*
    - *Midvaal - Category B*
    - *Mogale City - Category B*
- KwaZulu-Natal:
    - *eThekwini - Category A*
    - *City of uMhlathuse - Category B*
- Limpopo:
    - *Ba-Phalaborwa - Category C*
    - *Lephalale - Category C*
- North-West:
    - *Rustenburg - Category A*
- Western Cape:
    - *Mossel Bay - Category B*

Mr Matlou highlighted a SALGA-developped waste management app as existing tool that can be used for other issues affecting municipalities. Mr Matlou also explained SALGA is still in the process of determining the institutional arrangement and emphasised the importance of identifying focus areas and combining a top down (research) and bottom up (community needs) approach while solving the resource issue.

Floor discussion:

- The audience raised the point that the outlined reporting system might only highlight what economic development is doing and therefore doesn't cover most of the real issues confronting communities and asked how SALGA exactly wants to empower local municipalities by educating local councilors only.

- Mr Matlou countered the perception that SALGA is only dealing with councilors since all SALGA programmes include communities. Mr Matlou further explained the current programme is a pilot since VLR is a new thing for municipalities. Align the VLR support with municipal processes so there is no duplication of efforts, with SALGA using the participatory model.

- Inclusion of SDG 5 on gender and gender specific indicators in the VLR process

- Regarding gender, it is set as one of the compulsory goals for SALGA for all municipalities to report on. SALGA also looks at gender strategies of municipalities and wants programmes that support women, youth and elderly.

- VLR timelines
- The target deadline for the VLR is March 2024 in order for the local government to contribute to the country report.

3. Mobilising the broad society participation in the voluntary national review processes

3.1 Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung (FES) - Ms Zanele Matebula

Ms Zanele Matebula from the Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung (FES), serving as representative of the labour movement, signaled in her presentation that governments are currently leading the transformation towards sustainability, with the trade union movement lagging behind, also in their response to the effects of the transformation that is taking place. Civil society and the trade union movement together are meant to ensure that the unfolding transformation happens in a just way, with dignity and human and traditional rights respected.

As Ms Matebula from FES pointed out, this is currently not happening as smoothly as it should be. The right people are not interested and there is a lack of will at the part of those who are in charge of ensuring that those voices are heard and represented. Accordingly, Ms Matebula presented the view that the trade union movement, together with civil society, are very critical role players in the 2024 VNR processes.

Nonetheless, as things currently stand, to the trade union movements the SDGs are not necessarily a priority, except if you go to the global trade union forum. At the national level, the trade union is more focused on climate change, particularly the just transition, and gender, but the other areas take the backseat and are not necessarily directly related to the SDGs. Another issue pointed out by Ms Matebula is that a divide exists between the trade union movement and civil society. This is a relationship that needs to be fostered and strengthened because the trade union movement has important rooms where it contributes to issues related to the SDGs, including the International Labor Organization (ILO). We have not yet mastered the craft of making this happen.

Another area covered by Ms Matebula was the importance of ensuring that in everything that we discuss and put together in the report, the area of development for South Africa and Africa at large takes a key expression and that in every area we decide to report on, we make sure there is a gender perspective. Illustrating this point is the issue of closing coal mines. This closing of coal mines will affect communities and workers because jobs will be lost. Yet, there is no communication that is happening between civil society that is organizing at the ground level and the trade union movement. There are no strategies that are being put together by civil society and the trade union movement to advise the government on job creation, poverty alleviation, and prevent gendered suffering. The trade union is the strongest thing the weak and marginalised have.

3.2 Mining affected communities - Mr Mncedi Nxadi

The presentation of Mncedi Nxadi from Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA), as a representative from a mining affected community, closely tied in to the second point raised by Ms Matebula from FES. Speaking from his experience, as a person who is coming from a township, those living in the townships are not part of the SDG process. In the SDGs, we talk about inclusion, participation, and leaving no one behind but none of this applies when you are from a mining affected community. Mr Nxadi would like to see a situation as described by Mr Matlou from SALGA in which municipalities are mandated to be part of the VLR process. Because, coming from a mining affected community, a voluntary basis simply won't work because if dont want to participate, then no one is going to force me to, meaning there are going to be SDGs that will never be implemented in some communities. Community-based organizations therefore need to organize themselves more. because - affected by the mining operations - they are the ones best positioned to challenge these policies.

3.3 Civil Society Unmuted - **Mr Mashile Phalane**

Mashile Phalane of the Batlhabine Foundation spoke as representative of civil society unmuted. With the elections around the corner, Mr Phalanele posed the question to the audience of what civil society is going look like if the result means a coalition government. Taking the audience back to the time of state capture, Mashile pointed out civil society never played a role there because it was - and still is - so disorganized and confined to working in our own spaces. He pointed out that South Africa actually needs a coordinated civil society , which is the aim of our SDG platform. He also stated that civil society should be vocal there as they are the one's who represent the most marginalized communities or organizations out there in the periphery. When we are organized, civil society can have a voice to debate government bills, secure more funds, and play a very important role in achieving the SDGs.

Inclusion of rural women: Francina Nkosi

Ms Nkosi highlighted the importance of gender dimension especially in rural areas gender based gaps exist in terms of information about the SDGs, access to land, and economic opportunities for women, youth, LGBTQI+, and people with disabilities.

Floor discussion:

- Mr Glenn Farred emphasised that all that was said during this panel is part of an ongoing conversation of exploring ideas and opportunities.
- Ms Jacqueline Rukanda from Natural Justice voiced the lack of safe space to discuss key issues as one of the main reasons hindering the creation of synergies between trade unions and civil society.
- Ms Matebula added that if you go to rural areas, you will find that people regard trade unionists as politicians, while certain community leaders who are supposed to be neutral affiliate to certain political parties which confuses people on the ground.
- Ms Matebuka answered that FES is creating platforms to ensure that existing gaps are bridged by fostering engagements between civil society and trade union movements. Regarding the just transition, FES tabled the option of trade union movements and civil society demanding that 10% of internationally allocated funds must go to job and skill creation.

4. Aligning Stakeholder Plans with the National Process - United Nations Global Compact South Africa (UNGCSA)

Ms Rethabile Mbokodi from UNGCSA explained her organisation's work and approach to engaging the private sector on the SDGs. Ms Mbokodi pointed out that the organisation had six industry round tables with the private sector to get inside strategy maps on:

1. agriculture, food production & retail;

2. electricity, water, infrastructure & real estate;

3. financial services & fintech;

4. manufacturing, consumer goods, pharma & health;

5. mining, natural gas & resources; and

6. telecommunications, ICT, education & media.

In these roundtables, Ms Mbokodi explained, Global Compact deep dived into the SDGs with the respective companies to find out which ones are important to them, what is happening in their sector, what challenges they are having, and what needs to happen in terms of further collaboration.

These inside strategy maps served as baseline for the next step in the process: the priority topics roundtables. In these priority topics roundtables, Global Compact helps the private sector identify pathways to Agenda 2030 and what needs to be done. The 10 following priority topics are currently undertaken together with companies, civil society and government to accelerate sustainable development:

1. Growing sustainable investment;

2. A just transition to carbon neutrality (net-zero);

3. Solving the South African Energy crisis;

4. Ethical transformation governance;

5. Effective public-private sector partnerships;

6. Synergies with civil society & community;

7. Impact & opportunity post-pandemic;

8. Building global supply chain resilience;

9. Empowering women to achieve gender equality; and

10. Leveraging sustainability frameworks.

Part of Global Compact's VNR process is to analyze participating companies' annual submissions. Based on these reports, the following emerging SDG priorities appear: SDG 8 - decent wage and economic growth, and SDG 13 - climate change. As Global Compact hosts more roundtables, this picture may change.

What global compact hopes to get out of the VNR for the private sector is an enhanced understanding of the status quo, of the challenges, and of the opportunities. From there, it is possible to look at future trends that can inform us on what is coming and what we need to do to reach Agenda 2030. To this end, Global Compact is also talking to research institutions. Calls on civil society to collaborate and join in on the process.

Floor discussion:

- Participants agreed that there is a need for engagement with the private sector and civil society. One of the participants picked up on this point and expressed his worry that the language that is currently being used might be too technical and therefore asked what Global Compact is doing in terms of localizing or simplifying the language.

- Zanele Matebula asked whether Global Compact has engaged with trade union movements, if at all. Another participant asked how Global Compact will ensure that the private sector is not just implementing sustainable programs for compliance purposes but also for the benefit of the communities. Given that AngloAmerican is one of Global Compact's sponsors.

- Sixolile Ngcobo emphasised the importance of who you associate with, especially when promoting a development agenda.

- Ms Mbokodi explained the organization has a mandate to help companies to enhance their corporate sustainability for the good of all of us. Global Compact therefore also convenes a lot of companies for them to learn from each other and exchange best practices. Global Compact doesn't deal directly with communities but holds the private sector nonetheless accountable through their reporting on Global Compact's principles. Ms Mbokodi also acknowledged Anglo is not 'clean', but at the same time Global Compact is not there to judge, any company that is serious about amplifying its impact can join. In order to go from paper to implementation to action, being inclusive in your language is of vital importance. Haven't involved trade union movements to date, but is something Global Compact can look into.

5. Methodology

Ms Maart introduced this panel by reiterating the specific objectives for this workshop, which were to:

- mobilise broad society participation in the Voluntary National Review Processes;
- share the CSOs plan with stakeholders and identify opportunities for collaboration; and
- coordinate civil society participation in the VNR processes.

This third and last objective was central to this panel. With the 'rubber now hitting the road', participants were encouraged to take copious notes.

5.1 Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD): Nicolas Sautejoux

Mr Nicolas Sautejoux from A4SD presented the methodology used for the VNR consisting of the People's Scorecard and Spotlight Report. The People's Score Card focuses on an assessment of the depth and scope of the implementation process. It analyzes how conducive the policy environment is to sustainable development, the extent to which national and institutional capacities are made available by governments for the

implementation of the SDGs and a measurement on the level of inclusiveness and participation that is imbedded within the SDG implementation process at the national level.

Importantly, since 2023 marks the halfway point in the implementation process of Agenda 2030, as a perception based survey, the scorecard will aim to take stock of tangible progress on actual SDG implementation in each country since 2015. The people's scorecard process is adaptable to each national context, but generally looks as follows:

1. Form a broad CSO coalition - gathering the widest possible array of constituencies and thematic CSOs or networks

2. Conduct a survey (online and/or in person) in order to gather perceptions around the level of progress on each SDG (scale from -5 to +5).

3. Spotlight report: Assessment of the national implementation process through the open questions included in the People Score Card template + goal-by-goal analysis

4. Convene dialogues - national and sub-national in the spirit of leaving no one behind. Also consider thematic groups e.g. poverty, equality, food, biodiversity, water and sanitation, and above all, historically marginalized communities

5. Scorecard and spotlight report validation to reach a wide consensus around its content and outcomes

6. Follow up post-VNR

Nicolas from A4SD encouraged participants to internally research which coalitions would be interesting to keep the momentum going and to build the foundations for a more continuous monitoring process going forward, as much as possible. The idea behind using SDG targets as main reference rather than SDG indicators is that since it is a perception based survey, the SDG targets allow for a broader understanding.

The Spotlight Report

The Spotlight Report is the narrative report which will allow you to conduct both an overarching assessment of the quality and depth of the process that has been made available by your national governments, and also delve into a goal-by-goal analysis in which you will be able to combine both the scorecard results with a more detailed statistical analysis based on the available data and a policy-based assessment. Ideally, it includes the following:

- Assessment of the type of governance system established to coordinate implementation, and the quality and depth of the mechanisms for civil society participation within these;

- Assessment of mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs across national planning tools, public policies and programs;

- Integration: focus on how interlinkages between the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental and economic) are addressed

- How transparent and inclusive are the established monitoring mechanisms?;

- Analysis of financial mechanisms and resources; also what other kinds of partnerships have been set up, what is the role of different actors (including private sector) and which donors are involved?; and

- Goal-by-goal analysis: indicator + policy-based assessment + highlighting identified "Leaving No One Behind" gaps.

The goal-by-goal analysis is the key pillar of the spotlight report. Its key essential point and added value that civil society can contribute to the VNR process is to highlight whether civil society perceives inequities and inequalities within the implementation process for each SDG at the constituency, community or geographic level.

5.2 African Monitor (AM): Mr Yared Tsegay

Mr Tsegay presented African Monitor's adapted model and guidance based on the A4SD framework. African Monitor has previously used the scorecard in the 2019 VNR to make input into the VNR process in a documented manner. In terms of steps within the VNR process, we have imagined four steps.

The first step is to mobilize civil society by creating, through our networks, goal specific reports. In each thematic area, there are groups of civil society organisations working in that specific area. Within each writing group, there will be a technical CSO with certain technical capacities and knowledge leading this writing group. The writing group should ensure that the scorecard used has input of at least 5-7 affiliated CSOs in order to compile the report.

The second step is to review the research reports produced by CSOs on the goal specific focus areas, the reports produced by STATS SA, and the respective line ministries. The citizen-generated data - the so-called voices - will be used to reflect on lived experiences under each goal.

The third step is for the writing group to deliberate on the scorecard, establish the rationale and provide the score on the goals under review.

The fourth and final step is to draft a short report of approximately 10 pages that expounds the rating given.

The scorecard

Having outlined the four steps envisioned within the VNR Process, Mr Tsegay went on to further explain the methodology used. The scorecard provides a detailed review of each of the selected goals for the review to enable a broad vision of the current level of implementation, follow and review of each goal. It comprises two parts. The first part aims to determine the overall delivery of the agenda, including considering policies and strategies for implementation, assessment of delivery and mechanisms for engagement, including with civil society, local governments, donors and broader stakeholders in realising the SDG. The second part aims to

assess progress on each SDG in turn. The following steps were adopted in conducting the assessment and rating of performance:

- Review whether there is an enabling political environment to delivery the 2030 Agenda (given the 2030 Agenda is essentially a political commitment) by looking at policy consistency and certainty

- Review government Policy Framework (National Development Plan NDP and medium-term strategic Framework) alignment to respective goals and targets.

- Review whether sectoral plans, strategies and programmes will deliver on commitments to the 2030 Agenda

- Review whether the state institutions have with clear mandate (legislation) and resources to deliver on a specific goal

- Review the public resource allocation (budgets) at national, provincial and local government levels and value for money. Also review internal and external audit reports on the utilisation of public resources.

- Assess the level of implementation for each policy, plan and strategy for a specific goal, and relate it to output and outcomes

- Assessment of the awareness of the Agenda 2030 in the country

- Investigate if there is an established follow-up and review mechanism with reasonable access to information and participation

The report outline

The report should be ideally 10 pages and include the following:

1. Context (social, political, and economic context as applicable)

   a. A brief account of the current political, economic, and social context relevant to the goal in question.

2. A performance and progress (assessment of progress achieved so far towards meeting the target by 2030), referring to outputs and outcomes

   a. This refers to the goals and targets - mindful of the process on some targets is measured in inputs and outcomes - such as in SDG 1, 2, 5, 13, 16, and 17, while on other SDGs it measures whether specific action in terms of pieces of legislation has been in place.

3. Policy and institutional ability to deliver on the 2030 Agenda

   a. Policy and enabling environment; Policy coherence (is there a coherent policy framework that can deliver on specific SDG as well as other SDGs), and institutional fitness (mandate, legislative provisions, resources) to deliver the 2030 Agenda.

4. Gaps and accelerators (what are the gaps and what are the accelerators)

   a. What are the three gaps you observe in delivering the 2030 Agenda and what the three solutions you suggest the government has to adopt to accelerate delivery on the Agenda

5. Recommendations

6. A case study (if available)

Working groups

Priority areas	Lead organisation	Support organisation
Key messages and editorial	African Monitor	
SDG 1 - End poverty	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)	
SDG 2 - End hunger	Kagiso Trust	
SDG 5 - Gender equality	Sonke Gender Justice	
SDG 13 - Climate action	Natural Justice	
SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions	CSVR	
SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals	African Monitor	Civicus

Timeline

Items	Timelines
Setting up team	First two weeks of November
A plan (template will be provided) Identified sources (including data), approaches, processes, timelines	First two weeks of November
Feedback by editorial team	Third week of November
First team meeting Enriching the plan	Fourth week of November
Writing processes	Starts December - end January
Writing workshop to review the 1st draft	Last week of January
Share the first draft with editorial team	First week of February
Revise final draft	End of February
Overall report consolidation meeting	Last week of March
Report validation	Second week of April
Report launch	End of April

6. Multi-Stakeholder Coordination for VNR - UCT

Closing the workshop was Dr Dineo Seabe from the University of Cape Town (UCT), presenting the roadmap required to establish and institutionalise the South African National Development Stakeholders Forum to catalyse the progress on SDGs.

Dr Dineo from the (UCT) explained multistake-holder partnerships (MSP) bring together various sectors of society to champion and find the best solution to a problem, such as eradication of poverty, access to health services, or employment creation, by considering the various capabilities, skills and resources of the various stakeholders. MSPs can be delpoyed at any scale and led by any actor or group of actors, be it government, international institution, university, corporate, local government, and communities. The main output of MSPs can include actions, commitments, unilateral efforts, and partnerships that facilitates a collaborative approach to integrated implementation.

There are three core principles of multi-stakeholder partnerships:
1. Convergence of interest - a situational condition where partners support ideas of mutual interest and benefit that may also serve a particular cause, for instance the cause of achieving the SDGs
2. Complementarity of approaches and resources - an opportunity in which two or more stakeholders share complementary approaches and various resources to improve the quality of partnerships aimed at achieving common aims and objectives
3. Shared value - one or more ideals, beliefs, principles or standards that are shared by partners who join together to achieve certain objectives

These three principles are characterized by mutuality, relating to respect and understanding of other partners' knowledge and expertise, common interest and goals, complementary approaches and actions, matching resources and shared ideals and perspectives.

To solve the implementation challenge, the following role is envisioned for the NDSF when it comes to accelerating action on the SDGs:
- creating a shared understanding and common purpose
- knowledge brokering and policy advice
- supporting coordinated and complementary efforts between the different development players
- providing a collaboration and partnership platform to mobilise and direct resources
- encouraging inclusive accountability

Accordingly, there are four phases:
- Phase I: initiating of NDSF
- Phase II: Adaptive planning
- Phase III: Collaborative action

-   Phase IV: Reflective Monitoring

The governance structure will have a steering committee and advisory body, aided by a secretariat, that oversees the different working groups. The VNR process provides an opportunity to pilot this MSP model by putting into practise the National SDG Coordination Mechanism that was adopted in 2019; to reflect the multi-stakeholder approach, including its principles and values; and to bring in and emphasize the concept and language of the South African National Development Stakeholder Forum in the VNR processes.

Closing remarks and way forward : Mr Yared Tsegay

Mr. Tsegay thanked everyone for attending the event in person and online. He highlighted that the SAWG has participated in the VNR before and expressed confidence that civil society can do it again. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of every sector contributing and embracing a whole society approach to the implementation of the SDGs and the VNR process in South Africa.