

## NGO Major Group's Special Side-Event on the Margins of the 2024 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF):

*“Transforming the Relationship Between the United Nations & Civil Society: Building Healthy and Robust SDG partnerships”*

15 July 2024 | 13:15-14:30 EST | Conference Room F | United Nations Headquarters

Registration: [HERE](#)

Online Access:

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86526075497?pwd=inGUWcdV27gliGzQa1OYKAAb3JbMkH1>

Meeting ID: 865 2607 5497

Code of access: 524640

### Background and Objectives:

Stronger and more effective approaches to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires upgrading relations and strategic cooperation between the United Nations (UN) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), supported by Member States. As such, this side-event seeks to engage these three key stakeholders in a dialogue around the necessity for urgent, effective and efficient collaboration at a time where multidimensional social, economic and environmental threats around the globe keep us further away from sustainable development.

The event will also focus on addressing the current underlying connections and organizational structures that present an obstacle for civil society's engagement in a context characterized by increasing shrinking spaces and erosion of civic freedoms. At a time when civil society groups bring in-depth knowledge and key expertise critical for the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, this session will engage around an innovative dialogue aimed at transforming persistent UN-CSO divides, where Member States also play a significant role.

Subsequently, and based on data provided by civil society initiatives such as the #UNMute Campaign, the event will dig into challenges undermining civil society participation, as well as the proposed solutions and recommendations to transform into healthier and robust partnerships to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, in particular through:

1. Providing a context of the current divides limiting effective and efficient partnerships.
2. Exploring CSOs' strategies to navigate these challenges, especially in terms of access to key UN processes; building strategic coalitions, alliances and partnerships in favor of the SDGs; leveraging local knowledge, and use of adaptive techniques to enhance impact.
3. Highlighting best practices and positive impacts of collaboration between the UN and CSOs, as well as addressing how Member States' support enabling environments for participation and exchange of tangible solutions.
4. Enhancing the need for CSOs to serve as co-leaders of sustainable development in the design, implementation, follow-up and decision-making processes at the global, regional, national and local levels.
5. Addressing how the increasing distance between CSOs and the UN serves in detriment to pursue key advocacy goals, especially within processes such as the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and the upcoming Summit of the Future.

Thereby, and with the purpose of leaving no one behind, we will bring insights from the UN and Member States, along with CSOs from across the globe, including those involved in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, the #UNMute Civil Society Campaign, as well as other platforms in order to enable a transformative dialogue that strengthens collaboration, effectiveness and efficiency towards fulfilling the

promises of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs through healthy and robust partnerships.

### Guiding Questions:

As part of this discussion, we aimed at stakeholders to provide inputs through a well-thought process in which the following questions can be responded:

- What is the current status of collaboration between the UN and CSOs and how has this influenced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developments and the SDGs?
- What are some of the challenges and issues that foster UN-CSOs' divide that prevent them from collaborating more efficiently and effectively, especially within UN-led processes?
- How has this context impacted the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable and the SDGs, especially at the regional and national levels?
- How can a more effective and meaningful collaboration between the UN and CSOs (with key support of Member States) can be achieved and what tools/mechanisms are needed to get there?
- What are some of the solutions to strengthen the needed healthy and robust UN-CSO partnerships to respond to our current and most pressing multidimensional crises, especially around shrinking spaces for CSOs, erosion of civic freedoms, climate change, inequality and others?

### Participants and Structure

The meeting will be attended by experts and representatives from CSOs from different regions, the United Nations System as well as Member States. The event will be a moderated panel discussion followed by an open discussion with online engagement.

### Programme:

Time	Activity and Participants
<b>13:15 PM</b> 5 min.	<b>Welcome and Introduction by NGO Major Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karol Arámbula, MY World Mexico Representative (<i>Executive Director and Founder, MY World México</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>13:20 PM</b> 5 min.	<b>Opening: Current Challenges Around CSOs' Engagement in United Nations Processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderator - Joni Carley (<i>Convener of the Unitive Cluster</i>)</li> </ul> <b>Introduction to Guiding Questions and Speakers- Context</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of First Menti Question: <a href="https://www.menti.com/qlr3muuq4h88">https://www.menti.com/qlr3muuq4h88</a></li> </ul>
<b>13:25 PM</b> 5 min. 5 min. 5 min.	<b>Statements from Keynote Speakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker 1 (UN) - Joop Theunissen (<i>UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs</i>)</li> <li>• Speaker 2 (CSO) Jesselina Rana (<i>CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation</i>)</li> <li>• Speaker 3 (Member State) Christian Rogg (<i>Director, Development &amp; Open Societies, Foreign, Commonwealth &amp; Development Office, UK</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>13:45 PM</b> 2 min.  3 min. 3 min.	<b>Recap: Bridging the Divides Towards the "We"</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderator - Joni Carley</li> </ul> <b>Leveraging CSOs' Experiences and Contributions on the Ground</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Africa Regional Engagement Mechanism</u>: Kofi Kankam (<i>Co-Chair, Africa Regional Mechanism for Major Groups &amp; Other Stakeholders</i>)</li> <li>• <u>Asia Regional engagement</u>: Jyotsna Pandey Singh, (<i>Forus and Asia Regional OP-NGO Major Group</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>13:55</b> 20 min.	<b>Questions and Answers from Audience and Zoom Participants.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderators: Joni Carley and Karol Arámbula</li> </ul>

(Limited interventions to 1 min. per question)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of Second Menti Question: <a href="https://www.menti.com/qlr3muuq4h88">https://www.menti.com/qlr3muuq4h88</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Questions from the Audience</b>  <b>Questions Submitted Online</b>  <b>Responses by Keynote Speakers.</b></p>
<b>14:15</b> 10 min.	<b>Final Remarks by Keynote Speakers: <i>Ramp up Accountability for Civil Society Inclusion?</i></b> 1 min each speaker
<b>14:25</b> 5 min.	<b>Closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderators: Joni Carley and Karol Arámbula</li> <li>Oli Henman, NGO MG Global OP (<i>Global Coordinator, Action for Sustainable Development</i>)</li> </ul>