

SIGBI Programme Director's Blog July 2019



Carol Infanti, APD Economic Empowerment

Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality

In July, the UK is going to the United Nations to deliver a Voluntary National Review (VNR) of its progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality is the theme for the meeting of the high-level political forum (HLPF[1]) on sustainable development on 9 – 18 July at the UN New York.

Our work in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is key to our continued recognition by ECOSOC[2].

The goals to be considered in relation to this thematic review are 4, 8, 10,13,16 and 17.



Forty-seven countries will present their VNR, including the UK. (see map below). These are intended to inform governments in relation to policy making, whilst also facilitating peer learning, exchange of experiences, identifying lessons learned, as well as gaps.



The SDGs provide governments with a challenge; balancing realism with optimism, but they have enabled conversations to take place which otherwise may not have happened. We now talk about so many of the other things that matter to human lives like extreme poverty and economic empowerment and environmental concerns.

The UK published its 'Main Findings' in May, the full report is expected mid-June. One of the three things that the UK Government is 'proud' of are the steps that have been made in terms of increasing employment, including for women and those with disabilities[3]. However, they also recognise the challenge of the need for more and better data. As you know, we are revising our

Programme Action Database, the new version with the SDGs included, is due to go live in September this year.

Looking at the projects that you are doing in clubs and regions, through the lenses of the SDGs, gives you an opportunity to review what you are doing, why and how. Ask yourself how are we contributing to the SDG agenda? If you are holding a coffee morning to raise funds for a project, tell us about the project and what it aims to achieve, how it will impact the lives of women and girls. If you have been running a project or competition for a number of years, is it time to do a critical review? Ask yourself/ your programme team these questions: –

- Have you made any changes over the life of the project; did they work?
- Did you collect some data at the start of the project so you can measure if there has been a change?
- Have you had feedback from the community or recipients of the project? Are they partners in your project?

In this challenging time with limited time and resources, partnership working is a good way forward. Strong trust and good communication are vital for partners to feel confident to come forward with new ideas and give evidence for change, which will ultimately strengthen its impact.

[1] The HLPF is the central platform for reviewing the 2030 Agenda and progress on the SDGs.

[2] UN Economic and Social Council <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

[3] UK report VNR Main Messages <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/main-messages-for-uk-voluntary-national-review/uk-voluntary-national-review-main-messages>

Carol Infanti
APD Economic Environment