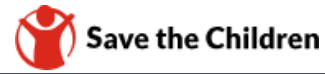


# PROGRESSING NATIONAL SDG IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2023 VNRs



Key findings and  
Recommendations

# Welcome & Agenda

- Opening Remarks- David Donoghue, Former Irish Ambassador
- Moderator- Oli Henman, Action for Sustainable Development
- Presentation of key findings of the report- Wangu Mwangi
- Views from key civil society groups from VNR countries
- Q&A
- Responses from key partners of the report

# Introduction to the Eighth Edition

- The Progressing SDGs Implementation Report has been developed and published by a group of civil society networks and international NGOs, every year since 2016.
- A team of researchers analyzes and collects data from all available VNR reports each year, based on a comprehensive analytical framework made up of 100+ variables.
- The 2023 report has been considerably shortened, and provides a sharper and more focused approach to analysis than in previous years.
- In 2023, the analysis was based on 39 reports – 38 country VNR reports + the first regional report by the European Union
- Wherever possible, we include a CSO “fact check” box immediately following specific assertions in the official reports.

## CSO View: Decentralized SDG governance arrangements in Chile




*Chile's VNR highlights plans around the creation of sub-national chapters of the National SDG Council, in the context of a broader re-design of this governance arrangement.*

According to information obtained by Chilean NGO platform ACCION, no concrete initiatives have been taken at the moment regarding the restructuring of the National Council, which was an aspect highlighted in the new SDG Strategy, and to some extent in the VNR.



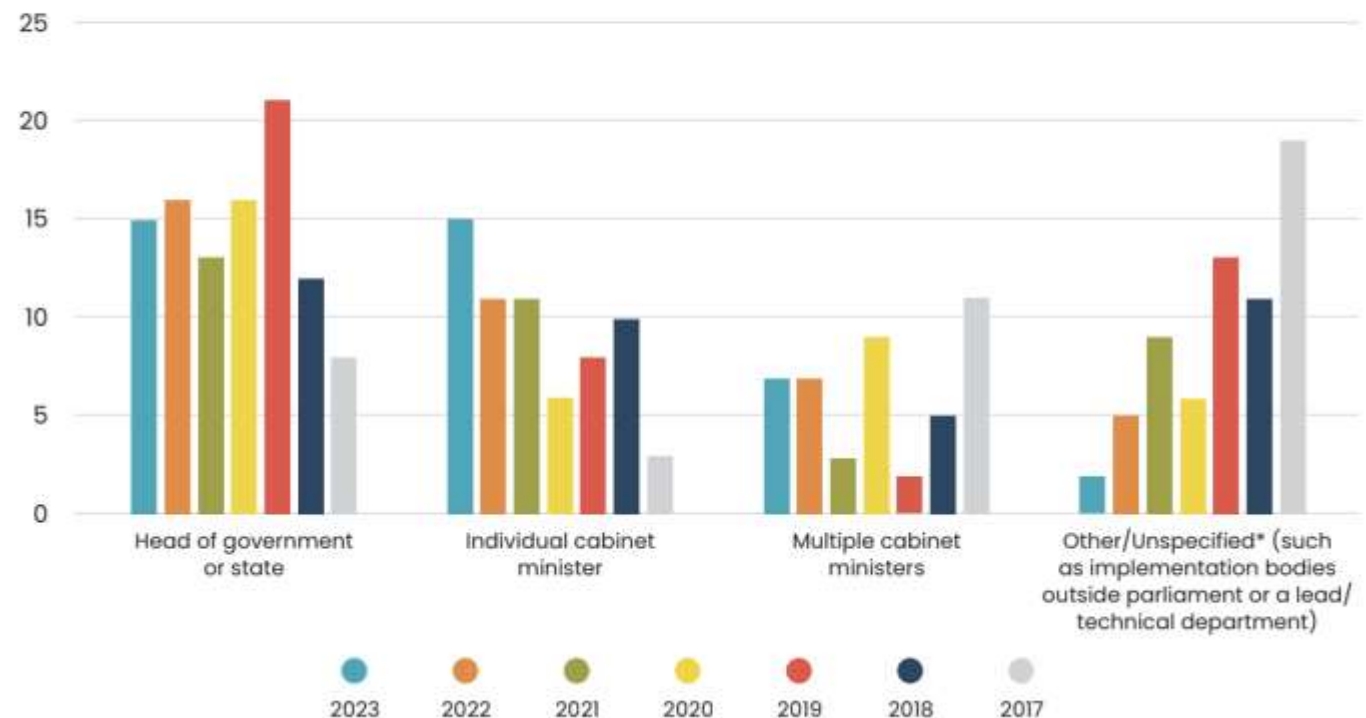
## Key elements of the report- *Wangu Mwangi*

- **Governance, Institutional Mechanisms and Engagement:** including the format for governance oversight of the Agenda and how far these include non-state actors, with a focus on civil society groups
  - **Policies for 2030 Agenda Implementation:** considering elements of baseline and gap analysis, policy coherence as well as the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into national frameworks
  - **Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Partnership:** including steps taken to strengthen awareness-raising, localization, means of implementation, challenges and best practices, and a focus on Leaving No One Behind
  - **Plus Recommendations for improvement to VNRs:** considering the ongoing HLPF & ECOSOC Review conducted on a 4 yearly basis.
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# Key findings (1): Governance & Institutional Mechanisms

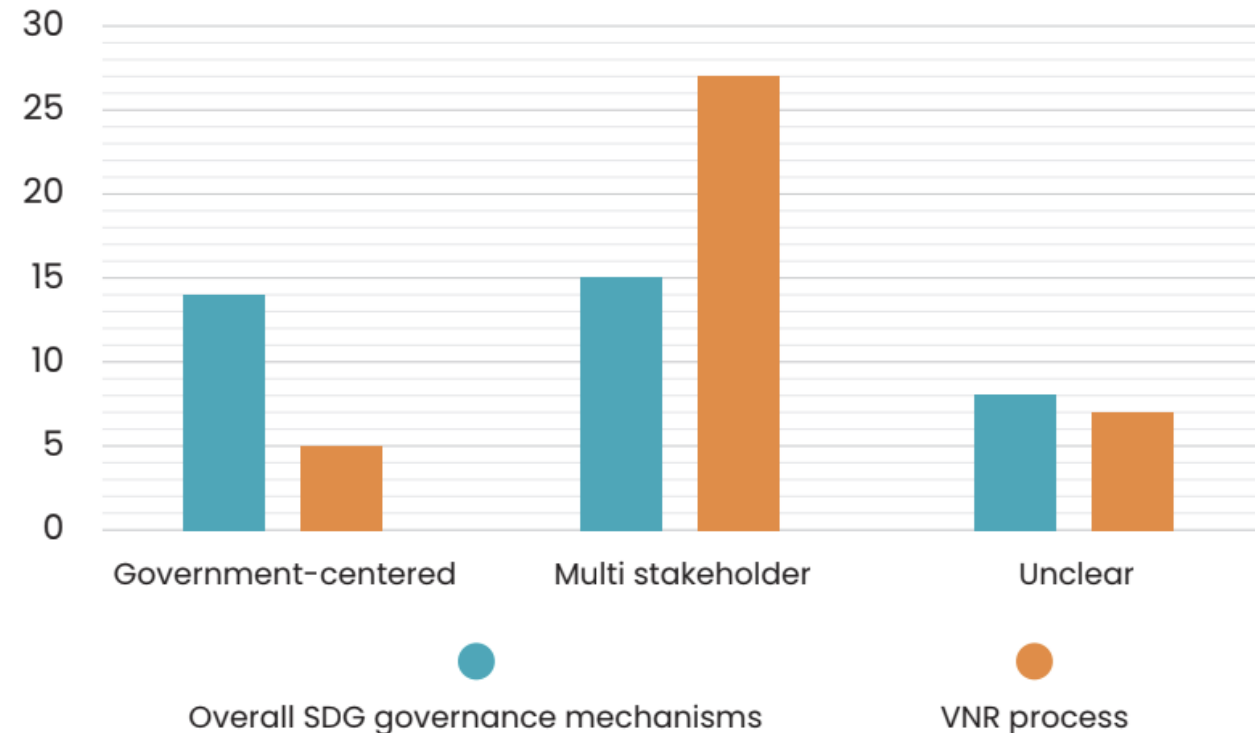
- **72% of countries** (compared to **57% in 2022**) report that they have established new SDG coordinating institutions to enhance a “whole-of-government” approach – **of which 15 are vested at the highest state level.**

**Figure 1:** Most common sources of leadership for 2030 Agenda implementation



However, **only 38% of countries** characterize their SDG institutional arrangements as “multi-stakeholder” in nature, marking a significant drop since 2022.

**Figure 2:** Inclusivity of overall SDG governance and VNR engagement processes in 2023



# Key findings (2): Policies for 2030 Agenda Implementation

- Overall, the country reports paint a global picture of patchy SDG progress: with some bright spots, but also persistent challenges in breaking through institutional and capacity gaps, and other critical means of implementation.
- Many capacity strengthening efforts highlighted in the reports coalesce around data and digitalization challenges, which have knock-on impacts on countries' ability to accurately assess progress and follow up planning and prioritization of new actions.
- Only a handful of countries elaborate on measures to strengthen international aid effectiveness and development cooperation, with most reports focusing on impacts of the interlinked climate, Covid-19, and Ukraine crises

# Key findings: SDG monitoring

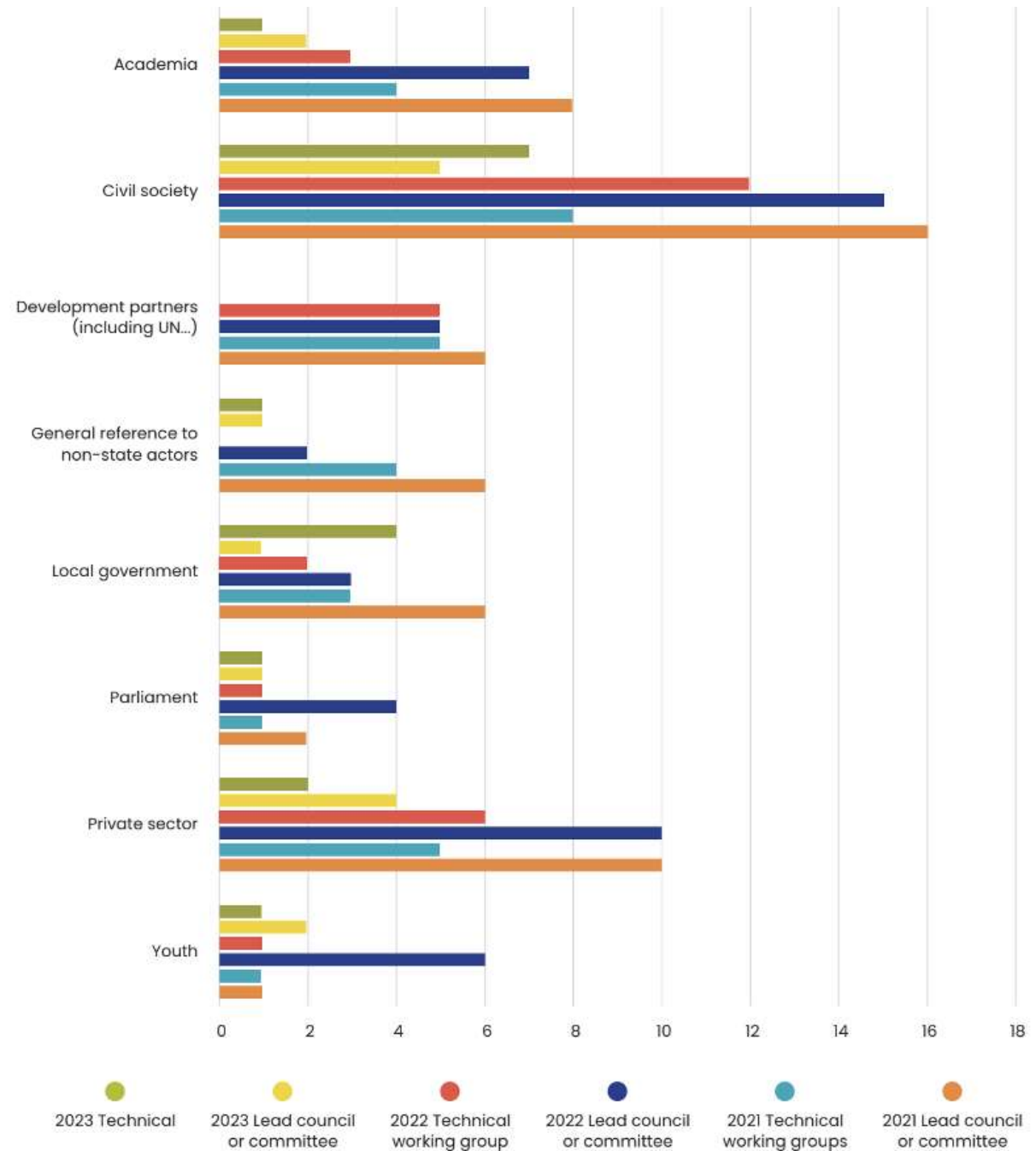
- Approximately **82%** of reports indicate that VNRs were based on an assessment of all SDGs (**77% in 2022**).
- However, the availability of disaggregated data was much more modest, with **less than 20%** of countries indicating they had access to disaggregated data for most of the VNR sections.
- Roughly **68%** of reports (significantly up from **34% in 2022**) provided specific examples of the different ways parliaments contribute to SDG implementation and monitoring.



# Key findings (3): Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Partnership

- Most countries have incorporated the SDGs into their national planning processes through dedicated strategies or integration in national development plans. **However, approaches for monitoring vary**, with examples ranging from alignment only at goal-level, target and indicator level, to more decentralized planning and priority-setting processes.
- In most cases the extent to which these plans or strategies are the result of inclusive processes or provide guidance in policy making is unclear. Some countries do mention using these frameworks as templates for regular national monitoring processes, **which would suggest a degree of linkage** between planning, policy making, implementation and monitoring.

# Multistakeholder participation in SDG governance mechanisms

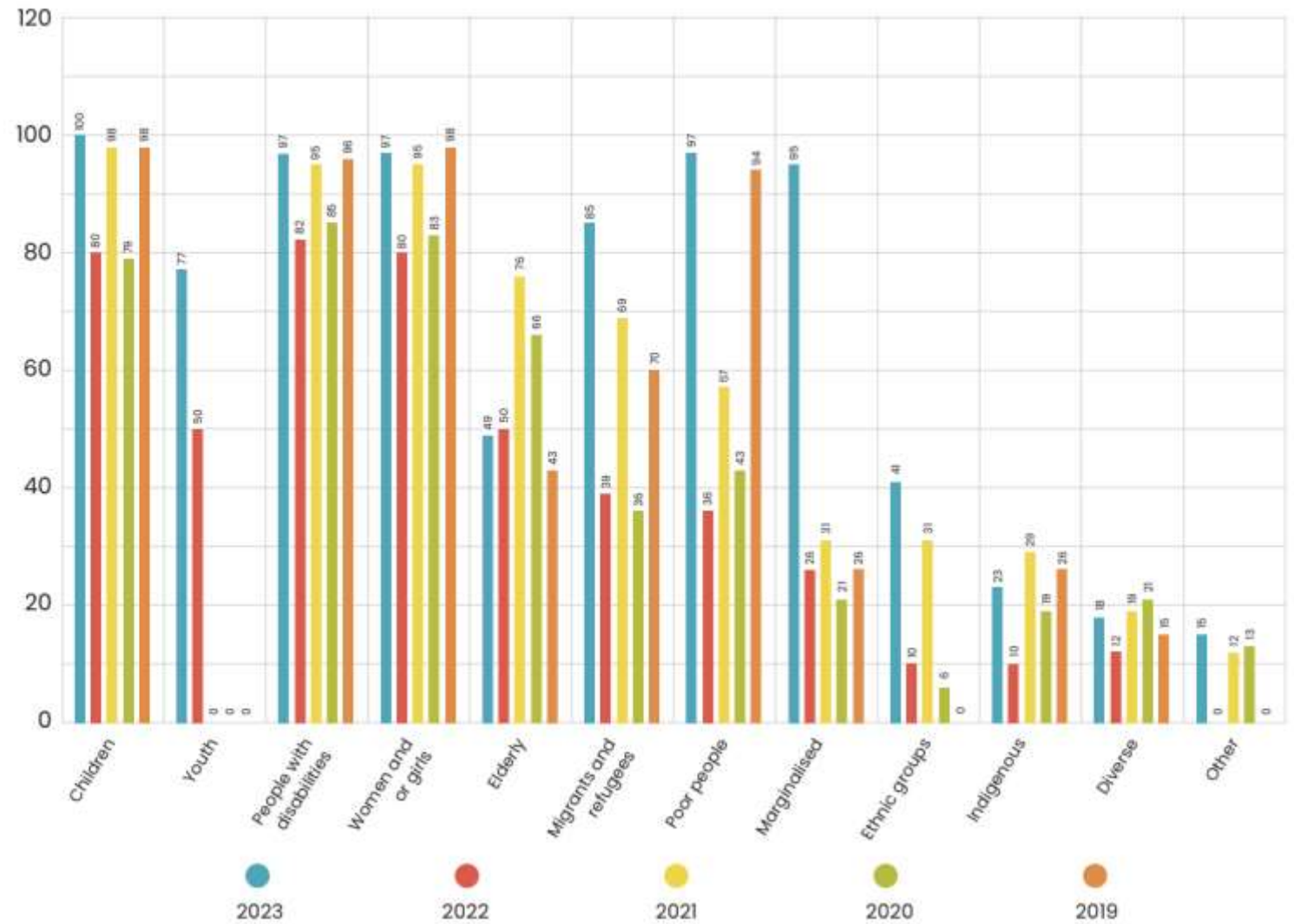


# Key findings: Leave No One Behind

- All of the 2023 VNR reports (**100%**) mention the 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) principle, (compared to 96% in 2022. Moreover, **33%** of reports include a dedicated LNOB chapter or section.
- Approximately **43%** of reports state that they make use of available baseline studies to establish who is left behind, slightly up from **39%** in 2022.
- However, **no single country** has a full picture of who is left behind or at greater risk of falling behind in SDG efforts.

Groups most commonly viewed as 'left behind' in reports

Groups most commonly identified as vulnerable



# Key findings: Localization

- Subnational governments and local non-state actors are increasingly engaged in SDG reviews. Approximately **75%** of countries provided some level of information on their efforts to localize the SDGs (**77% in 2022**)
- **33%** of countries report that VLRs were conducted in parallel with the VNR, up from **16% in 2022**.
- **60%** of reports address multistakeholder engagement at the local level, albeit mostly limited to examples of specific projects and actors rather than an overarching analysis.

# Key findings:

## Civic space

- Several civil society reports produced in 2023 highlight how shrinking civic space remains a serious problem in their national contexts by providing information on government actions that hinder freedom of expression, assembly, association, and access to information – which in some cases contradicts the information contained in the official VNRs.
- Irrespective of political context, all countries and regions can do more to strengthen transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in their 2030 Agenda policy frameworks to ensure that diverse voices are heard and integrated into efforts to achieve the SDGs.

# Final Reflections: Towards more iterative VNR reporting (1)

- Between 2016 and 2023, UN member states have produced **more than 300 VNRs**.
- In parallel to these official processes, civil society organizations have prepared **at least 100 spotlight reports and other independent assessments** over the years, focusing in particular on the fundamental 2030 Agenda principle to Leave No One Behind.
- As we enter the final stretch of the 2030 Agenda, it is more important than ever for VNR reporting to become more effective as an instrument for accelerating SDG implementation.

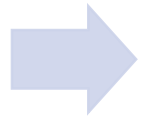
# Final Reflections: Towards more iterative VNR reporting (2)

- Although most countries (90%) said their reports builds on the first VNR, only a handful of countries offer a deeper analysis of remaining gaps and how they will address these in the final stretch to 2030.
- This annual fact check can contribute towards more iterative VNR processes by sharpening its focus even more and calling out business as usual reporting.



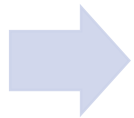
# Recommendations for Member States

In 2023 there was a drop in the percentage of non-state actor participation in specific governance arrangements and high level councils, furthermore qualitative information regarding the nature and scope of these is often minimal



VNRs should seek inputs from CSOs to ensure a comprehensive and balanced assessment of progress towards the SDGs. CSOs can offer valuable insights, data, and case studies that reflect the realities on the ground and highlight areas for improvement.

Although prioritization and SDG integration into national policies are high in principle, substantive details on Leaving No One Behind are often not specified in VNRs



Member states should report on progress in collecting disaggregated data on various groups agreed in the 2030 Agenda. The UN development system could support Member States in identifying, mapping and collecting quality, disaggregated data on these groups to leave no one behind.

More generally, Member states should report on national SDG monitoring mechanisms as well as meaningful participation of stakeholders, particularly those that are the most left behind.



# Recommendations for HLPF Review

As part of the ECOSOC & HLPF Review in 2023, there is an opportunity to strengthen the reporting mechanisms of the HLPF and ensure effective follow up to the second and subsequent VNRs.

➔ A space should be created at the HLPF for the presentation of Voluntary Stakeholder Reviews, in a similar way to the space created for Voluntary Local Reviews to ensure that independent assessments of progress are presented alongside the official reports.

Although the HLPF provides a useful moment for reflection, there is a need for clear actions to flow from the reviews to ensure that a higher level of implementation is achieved in coming years:

➔ The HLPF should ensure dedicated financing for delivery of the 2030 Agenda with a strong focus on a specific fund to support those communities who are most often left behind.

More generally, the UN should establish an annual 'commitment tracker' whereby Member States include progress on commitments made as part of their VNRs or at the 2023 SDG Summit.



# Inputs from civil society groups from VNR countries

- Tatu, child rights activist, Tanzania
- Ian Banda, Youth in Action for disability inclusion in Zambia
- Miguel Santibanez, Accion Chile
- Urantsooj Gombosuren, Mongolia CSO Coalition on SDGs



# Q & A

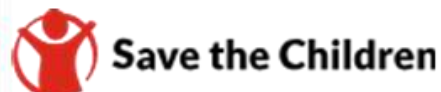
- Questions for panellists and wider inputs from participants





# Responses from key civil society partners

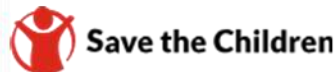
- Lilei Chow, Save the Children
- Andy Ouedraogo, Cooperation Canada



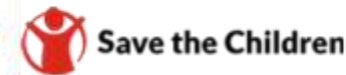
# Feedback survey

Please fill in the short feedback survey here and in the chat:

- English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HBV88BG>
- French: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HBV88BG?lang=fr>
- Spanish: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HBV88BG?lang=es>



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Check out the website with all the reports here:

<https://www.progressingsdgs.org/>