



Civil Society Views on the Interim list of Indicators for the PSGs

As a core constituency of the International Dialogue that also consists of members from the g7+ and international partners, civil society welcomes the work on an interim list of indicators for the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals embedded in the New Deal. This document reflects over a year of work, the content of which has been developed on the basis of the five pilot countries that undertook fragility assessments and developed country-specific indicators. Since the Third Indicator Working Group in Nairobi, where the currently circulating interim list was developed, new concerns from the g7+ have been raised, and this statement endeavours to articulate the CSO Platform's suggestions on a way forward.

This statement reflects the work and perspectives of the CSO Platform on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, a Southern-Northern civic coalition that supports civil society participation in the International Dialogue and local civil society engagement in the implementation of New Deal commitments, including the development of fragility assessments and country-specific and common indicators.

Purpose of the common indicators

The CSO Platform respects that the development of common indicators is, and must be, a 'work in progress' – viewed as a key tool alongside the country-specific indicators – for learning and sharing across g7+ countries. The CSO Platform agrees with the g7+ on the purpose of the indicators – that they:

- should be understood as part of a piloting process in which they are tested for their relevance and are not fixed;
- need to be flexible in order to be realistic and meaningful at the country level;
- should facilitate knowledge sharing between g7+ countries;
- are necessary but not sufficient; they must accompany country-specific indicators.

They also are part of a process of building trust in society and with government and international partners about important measures on the path to building resilience.

What needs to be resolved to move forward

- ***Getting past 'all' or 'nothing' and/or 'all of us' or 'none of us'***

This is an ongoing process – an incremental learning process that will develop and enrich over time. Clear agreements should be made on this point to assuage fears about how the indicators might be used in ways that are of concern to g7+ governments.

Political validation of the indicators is a reality. It is vital that the common indicators are presented alongside the country-specific indicators and wider fragility assessments, as combined tools to measure pathways out of fragility. It is extremely difficult to agree on indicators that apply in every context, and inevitably there will be different weight of value for particular indicators in particular contexts, as well as different descriptors to ensure they reflect local realities.

Civil society is concerned that new g7+ countries that have not conducted fragility assessments are weighing in early on what is meant to be a set of pilot country common indicators. The idea is for this interim set of indicators to *now* be tested and developed in this pilot period, in other countries.

The CSO Platform encourages *all g7+ countries* to validate and test the indicators, identifying which indicators are suitable in their context, which might need slightly varying conceptualization, and which simply don't fit their context. If countries fully opt out of this exercise, it will render it futile.

Civil society in g7+ countries would like to be a partner with governments in validating and testing the indicators.

- *Achieving agreement on perception based indicators*

The CSO Platform has concerns that perception based indicators might not be piloted by some countries and wishes to make the case for a balanced approach to the use of objective, subjective and results based indicators.

Why are perception-based indicators important?

- 'Objective' indicators only tell part of the story and often give limited insight into the richness of contextual factors driving fragility and resilience. Triangulation through the use of different indicator approaches is critical to capture a full picture.
- People's perceptions of fragility – the causes and how to address them, are important; governments need to understand societal concerns – whether the perceptions illustrate fact or fiction – so that they can work to address them.
- Many 'objective'/statistically based indicators are designed to prove a negative, which means the results of evaluation are always hindered by searching for the absence of something. The use of perception-based indicators measures a positive – the presence of something that correlates directly with the goals of resilience.

The need to establish ongoing processes and structures to link assessment and planning/policy implementation

A key goal of the New Deal is to promote greater linkages between assessment and planning. Practically, assessment (in this case fragility assessments and PSG/indicator development tools and processes) are meant to drive better planning and policy implementation and support (in this case, One Vision/One Plan and compacts). Fragility assessments then, are not meant to be one-off exercises, but regular assessments involving state and (civil) society, to ensure that policy and practice responds to the changing conditions from fragility towards resilience.