

# **An Introductory Guide to Advocacy for the Transport Sector in the Context of the SDGs**

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Find out more about the programme here: [slocat.net/our-work/multistakeholder-dialogue/youngleaders/](https://slocat.net/our-work/multistakeholder-dialogue/youngleaders/)

# Table of Contents

- 1. **Preface**..... 3
- 2. **The Power of Advocacy outside of the Transport Arena**..... 4
  - a. The Need for Advocacy ..... 4
  - b. The Purpose of Advocacy ..... 5
- 3. **Effective Advocacy** ..... 7
  - a. Transport-Related Goals and Targets ..... 7
  - b. Political Processes Relevant to the SDGs ..... 8
  - c. Scientific Processes Relevant to the SDGs ..... 14
  - d. Engaging Major Groups and Other Stakeholders to Mainstream Transport Issues across Different Non-State Actors..... 15
- 4. **Way Forward**..... 19

**Disclaimer**

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The research for this report was conducted on a voluntary basis.

# 1. Preface

Transport is an integral part of my life. Growing up in a major city in Japan, I was lucky to enjoy efficient metros, buses, and trains that worked effectively and efficiently. Although my hometown, Nagoya, is rather famous for its friendliness to car-drivers, it still has a lot of public transport options.

I started my work in international development and negotiations on the sustainable development agenda in 2014. My initial area of focus was around disaster risk reduction and youth engagement. Since then, I have moved on to sustainable urban development and am now working on local governments and sustainability. However, it took me a long time to realise the significance of transport policy and the importance of sustainable, low carbon transport and mobility advocacy in international fora, even though transport is such a central aspect of everybody's life. It was only after my close colleague began working in the sector that I also began to focus more deeply on the topic of sustainable, low carbon transport.

Perhaps the well-maintained public transport I experienced in my youth made me take its importance to sustainable lifestyles for granted. But there seemed to be more to it. Looking back at discussions around many sustainability issues, I found that the voice for sustainable transport was limited or invisible in the context of sustainable development. The issues and sectors with strong proponents always got a seat. But transport was not one of them.

Thanks to the SLOCAT Partnership, I was able to explore the sector and examine its advocacy effectiveness. As someone rather outside to the sector, I would like to contribute to raising the voice of the transport sector in sustainable development spaces, and hopefully this document does exactly that.

## 2. The Power of Advocacy outside of the Transport Arena

### a. The Need for Advocacy

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) member states gathered in New York and agreed to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This global agenda aims to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development - environment, society, and economy - in all policy areas. Since then, the SDGs have garnered significant attention from around the globe and many national governments established their own implementation frameworks and operationalisation plans. Furthermore, the Paris Agreement in 2015 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in 2016 were adopted to guide global efforts to tackle climate change and achieve sustainable urban development respectively.



Source: United Nations Department of Global Communications

While efforts to achieve both the Paris Agreement and SDGs have been in place, many recent reports point out that we are not on track<sup>1</sup>. To achieve the SDGs, it is crucial to leverage the co-benefits and minimise trade-offs between different policy areas. This policy

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (2019) Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2019. Bangkok.

direction was apparent at the first-ever Climate and SDGs Synergy Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, held in April 2018, and echoed in last ECOSOC Presidential summary of the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), as well as the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), both of which are key aspects of the implementation and review of the SDGs.

Those who are reading this have no doubt that the transport sector plays a major role in achieving sustainable development and the decarbonisation of our societies. SLOCAT 2019 VNR report<sup>2</sup> shows that the “transport sector has multiple benefits to different areas”. However, as there was little discussion on this during the many SDG-related fora, there is an urgent necessity for the transport sector to be heard. If we believe the evidence that is telling us that transport can be a powerful means of implementation to achieve both the SDGs and climate objectives, it is the role of the sustainable, low-carbon transport community to not only formulate policy and implement projects for sustainable transport, but also communicate why the transport sector matters for the global community -- be it Global North or South.

## b. The Purpose of Advocacy

Advocacy must help convince key players, such as development agencies, NGOs, all levels of government, and the private sector, that sustainable transport has the true potential to change the current development trajectory. However, a sense of purpose in doing so affects the quality of the exercise. For what outcomes/purposes are we going to engage in advocacy with the aim of raising the voice of the sustainable, low carbon transport community? There are two basic purposes that should be kept in mind.

### 1. Mainstreaming transport in intergovernmental and other policy discussions

Simply put, engaging international actors, politicians, diplomats, NGOs, UN entities, and others will help mainstream key policy concepts related to transport and development. “**Mainstreaming**” as a policy term of art means to make something almost ubiquitous within the realm of policy processes. While the transport sector has a catalytic role in regards to many goals and targets, it is still considered a minor sector. This simply explains why there are so few conversations taking place about the transport sector.

Imagine if the climate scientists were the only people talking about climate change (which in fact was the case in the past). It would have certainly been impossible to demand climate action from so many national governments. The mainstreaming of climate issues in policy

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<sup>2</sup> SLOCAT Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport (2019) Sustainable Transport: Critical Driver to Achieve the SDGs. Available at: [https://slocat.net/wp-content/uploads/legacy/u13/vnr\\_2019\\_infographic.pdf](https://slocat.net/wp-content/uploads/legacy/u13/vnr_2019_infographic.pdf).

discussions was done thanks to a large mass taking to the streets, different agencies considering climate as a central theme, some governments pushing progressive policies, consumers and investors scrutinising companies' portfolios, etc. It was gradual, but progressing to the tipping point of the 2015 Paris COP under the UNFCCC. This is a prime example of mainstreaming.

## **2. Establishing new partnerships and bolstering existing ones**

Many do not often see the true potential of integrating transport in different policy and development frameworks. By mainstreaming transport discussions, you can increase the number of actors paying attention to transport issues. Nowadays, the success of climate action becomes everyone's business. The SDGs (elaborated below) took a similar path and now many business sector representatives like to put the SDGs pin onto their jackets. Mainstreaming needs not only to globalise the issue, but also localise and contextualise the issue within the contexts and backgrounds of many stakeholders.

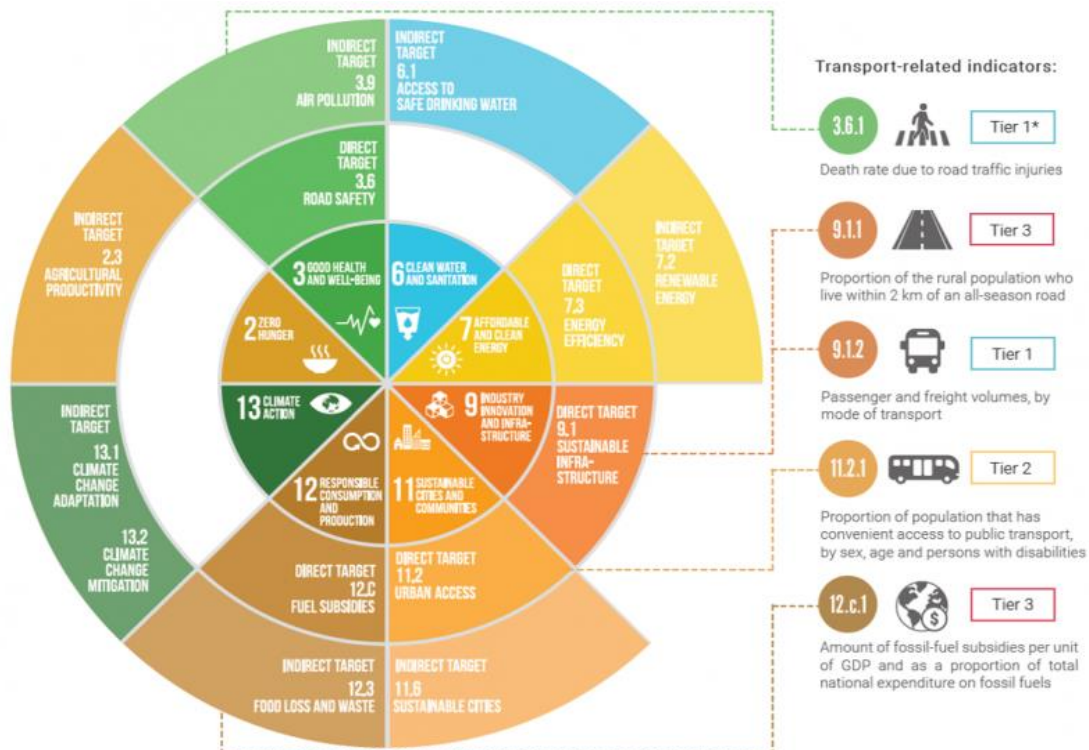
### 3. Effective Advocacy

However if you think you know well about transport, it is essential to know how to frame your arguments and advocacy based on the person of people with whom you are dealing. *“Knowing the enemy and yourself will keep you unscathed through a hundred battles.”* (idiom, from Sunzi’s *The Art of War*) As this guide is dedicated to advocacy for transport within the SDGs context, we will begin by touching the basics of the SDGs step-by-step: first, transport-related goals and targets, second, political and scientific processes, and third, stakeholders.

#### a. Transport-Related Goals and Targets

The 2030 Agenda states that “sustainable transport systems, along with universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services, quality and resilient infrastructure, and other policies that increase productive capacities, would build strong economic foundations for all countries” (paragraph 27). Yet concretely, which goals are directly or indirectly related to transport?

SLOCAT has conducted an analysis of the 2030 Agenda and identified five targets that are directly relevant to transport and seven targets that are indirectly relevant. This is illustrated below:



Source: "Transport and SDGs", (SLOCAT, 2019)

We should not limit ourselves to these targets. Certainly, many other targets cannot be achieved without sustainable modes of transportation. For example, access to transport affects both educational and job opportunities and can limit people, especially those marginalised, from accessing public services.<sup>3</sup> Safe public transport is vital to addressing gender inequality, too.<sup>4</sup> The transport sector plays a key role in the achievement of specific goals, such as SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5 and more. Therefore, we can arguably link the transport sector to other areas of sustainable development.

To this end, networks between those working on the transport issue are essential. Communities of transport actors, such as SLOCAT, can provide a range of expertise around connecting transport and help you develop a robust argument.

## b. Political Processes Relevant to the SDGs

The next step is to understand where you can voice your concerns, priorities, and findings to influence the policy-making processes. The SDGs contain 17 goals and 169 targets, with more than 200 indicators to track progress. Although consensus has not been reached regarding some indicators, many countries have begun the implementation process. To ensure that countries are on track with their implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the UN established the HLPF to monitor progress and allow member states, UN agencies, and other stakeholders and organisations to share good practices and lessons learnt.

The HLPF is the main UN platform on sustainable development and has a central role to play in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level. It is tasked with providing political leadership and policy guidance and to identify new and emerging issues. As the founding General Assembly Resolution 67/290 mandates, the HLPF must review "the implementation of sustainable development commitments," which means it is not limited to the 2030 Agenda alone. It certainly has a very wide scope.

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<sup>3</sup> Gates, S. et al. (2019) Transport and inequality: An evidence review for the Department for Transport. London. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/843487/Transport\\_and\\_inequality\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843487/Transport_and_inequality_report.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Economic Commission for Europe Executive Committee on the Implementation of the Priorities of the UNECE Reform for Strengthening Some Activities of the Committee - The Inland Transport Committee and gender issues in transport. Geneva.



To raise the visibility of transport within SDG discussions, the simplest solution would be to increase the relevance of and attention to the transport sector within the HLPF and its associated processes. But how? It is important to understand the lengthy process that leads up to the HLPF.



Source: “The relationship between different fora and goal-specific conferences in the context of Asia-Pacific”, Author

There are basically two tracks in parallel going towards the HLPF (as of when this document was produced), one of those tracks is around specific “Goals Under Review.” In the first four years of the HLPF (2016~2019), 4-5 dedicated goals were under review each year. Another track of the HLPF revolves around sub-regional and regional meetings that build up to the global level, with a larger focus on national efforts. For example, the UN Economic and Social Commissions for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) organises five sub-regional meetings that build towards the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), which, in turn, feeds into the HLPF.

Now, we are going to look into each track in detail.

### “Goals-Specific Track”

While this is not an official term, we shall call this track the “Goals-Specific Track” for convenience. This track has a variety of styles and means of conducting review of goals,

as each goal has its own unique community. However, in general, each goal has: 1. A meeting on the Goal and; 2. An outcome document from that meeting. The meeting could be an expert group meeting with limited participations, or a conference with relatively open engagement. In the beginning, after the 2015 SDGs Summit, there were more “expert group meeting”-style gatherings. Recently, there have been more conferences. Perhaps this reflects the growing interest of a wider audience and the intent to bring more stakeholders into the process.

The outcome documents from these meetings are, in principle, supposed to feed into the HLPF. Of course, there is a valid concern regarding to what extent these discussions actually influence the outcomes of the HLPF itself. The UN lists all of them every year. (For HLPF in 2019, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019#docs>).

Below is a compilation of the preparatory meetings, available online. Surprisingly, there is no such compiled list available elsewhere. If these pieces of information are not accessible to even those like myself who have engaged in this world for some time, I can only imagine how difficult it is for anyone who is relatively new to these processes. If you find any missing meetings, please do let us know!

Year	Goal	Meeting Details
2017	1	11 May 2017 - 12 May 2017, Expert Group Meeting on SDG 1, UN City, Copenhagen, Denmark, <a href="https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2017/03/21/ending-poverty-the-road-to-2030">https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2017/03/21/ending-poverty-the-road-to-2030</a>
	2	12 Jun 2017 - 13 Jun 2017, Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Achieving SDG 2 in Preparation for the HLPF, UNHQ, NY. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=2443&amp;menu=2993">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=2443&amp;menu=2993</a>
	3	15 June 2017 - 16 June 2017, Expert Group Meeting on Integrated Approaches to Implementing Sustainable Development Goal 3, UNHQ, NY. 2017 <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2K_9-fowH8GQ1FmbjM1YkNVazA/view">https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2K_9-fowH8GQ1FmbjM1YkNVazA/view</a>
	5	30-31 May 2017, Expert Group Meeting on SDG 5, UNHQ, NY. <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2K_9-fowH8GeEp5UkVuXy1NNVE/view">https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2K_9-fowH8GeEp5UkVuXy1NNVE/view</a> <a href="http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/5/announcer-experts-meet-at-the-un-ahead-of-high-level-political-forum">http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/5/announcer-experts-meet-at-the-un-ahead-of-high-level-political-forum</a>
	9	Not found
	14	Not found
	17	Nothing specifically designated. Possible to consider the FfD Forum as such.
2018	6	Not found
	7	21 Feb 2018 - 23 Feb 2018, Global SDG 7 Conference: a global preparatory meeting in support of the review of SDG 7 at the 2018 UN High-level Political Forum, Bangkok, Thailand <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=2488&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=2488&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634</a> <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/EnergyConference">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/EnergyConference</a>
	11	Not found
	12	3 May 2018 - 4 May 2018, Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Development Goal 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production, UNHQ, NY. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018/egmsdg12">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018/egmsdg12</a>
	15	14 May 2018 - 15 May 2018, Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Development Goal 15: Progress and Prospects, <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=2717&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=2717&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634</a>
	17	Nothing specifically designated. Possible to consider the FfD Forum as such.

2019	4	3 Dec 2018 - 5 Dec 2018, "Expert Group Meeting on SDG 4: Thematic review" or "The Global Education Meeting", Brussels, Belgium. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=2946&amp;menu=35">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=2946&amp;menu=35</a> <a href="https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/globaleducationmeeting2018">https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/globaleducationmeeting2018</a>
	8	3 Apr 2019 - 5 Apr 2019, Expert Group Meeting on SDG 8: Thematic review, Geneva, Switzerland. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=3054&amp;menu=1634">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=3054&amp;menu=1634</a>
	10	2 Apr 2019 - 3 Apr 2019, Expert Group Meeting on SDG 10: Thematic review / Reducing Inequalities: SDG 10 Progress and Prospects, Geneva, Switzerland. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=3069&amp;menu=1634">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&amp;type=13&amp;nr=3069&amp;menu=1634</a> <a href="https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/12/17/reducing-inequalities-progress-and-prospects">https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/12/17/reducing-inequalities-progress-and-prospects</a>
	13	1 Apr 2019 - 3 Apr 2019, Climate and SDGs Synergy Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark. <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=3045&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&amp;nr=3045&amp;type=13&amp;menu=1634</a> <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/climate-sdgs-synergies2019">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/climate-sdgs-synergies2019</a>
	16	27 May 2019 - 29 May 2019, "Conference in preparation for HLPF 2019: "Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies: SDG 16 implementation and the path towards leaving no one behind", Rome, Italy UN website: <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019/SDG16Conference2019">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019/SDG16Conference2019</a> Conference Website: <a href="https://www.idlo.int/SDG16Conference2019">https://www.idlo.int/SDG16Conference2019</a>
	17	Nothing specifically designated. Possible to consider the FfD Forum as such.

Source: Author

## *“Regional Track”*

The origin of the regional conferences is from GA resolution 67/290 stating that the HLPF “shall benefit from regional preparatory processes” (paragraph 7 [f]). Taking the examples of 2019, the following regional fora were organised:

1. The Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (6APFSD), 27-29 Mar 2019 (Bangkok, Thailand).
2. The Third Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region, 21-22 Mar 2019 (Geneva, Switzerland).
3. The Fifth Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (5ARFSD), 16-18 Apr 2019 (Marrakech, Morocco).
4. The Third Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, 22-26 Apr (Santiago, Chile).
5. The Sixth Arab Forum for Sustainable Development, 9-11 Apr 2019 (Beirut, Lebanon).

As you can see, some regional fora are older than the SDGs themselves. These regional fora intend to take stock, exchange views, learn, and address emerging issues beyond the SDGs, integrating all other sustainable development commitments. For the sake of easy understanding, we would call these “regional HLPF” because they meant to follow up and review the progress made towards the Agenda 2030 at the regional level.

Although not all, the regional commissions organise sub-regional and/or thematic preparatory meetings towards the regional HLPF. Below is a list of meetings that took place and meant to feed into a respective regional forum as a preparatory meeting.

### **ESCWA (in the case of 2019)**

- ✧ [Regional Consultation on Climate Change for the 2019 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development and High-Level Political Forum.](#)
- ✧ [Second Arab High-level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.](#)
- ✧ [Regional Consultation on the Environment and Natural Resources for the 2019 Arab Forum for Sustainable Development and High-Level Political Forum.](#)

- ✧ [Arab Region Parliamentary Forum on the 2030 Agenda.](#)
- ✧ [The International Conference on “Financing Sustainable Development: Curbing Illicit Financial Flows \(IFFs\).](#)

## ESCAP (in the case of 2018)

- ✧ North and Central Asia Forum on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, 3-4 September 2018, Tbilisi, Georgia.
- ✧ North-East Asian Multi-stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development Goals, 5-6 September 2018, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- ✧ South East Asia Forum on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, 11-12 September 2018, Bangkok, Thailand.
- ✧ South and South West Asia Forum on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, 4-5 October 2018, New Delhi, India.
- ✧ Pacific Forum on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, (followed by VNR workshop), 24-25 September 2018, Nadi, Fiji.

## c. Scientific Processes Relevant to the SDGs

In the context of scientific analysis of the SDGs, there is the GSDR. It originated in the Rio+20 and plays a role to “strengthen the science-policy interface and could provide a strong evidence-based instrument to support policymakers in promoting poverty eradication and sustainable development” (Agenda 2030, paragraph 83).

In the Ministerial Declaration (outcome document) from HLPF 2016, the member states agreed that the GSDR is an important component of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and will inform the HLPF. It was decided that the report would be produced every four years<sup>5</sup> by an independent group of scientists, composed of 15 experts who represent a variety of backgrounds, disciplines, and institutions. For each report, experts are appointed by the Secretary-General.

One caveat: There is a similar and complementary, but different report produced by the UN Secretary-General every year. It is called the “Sustainable Development Goals Progress

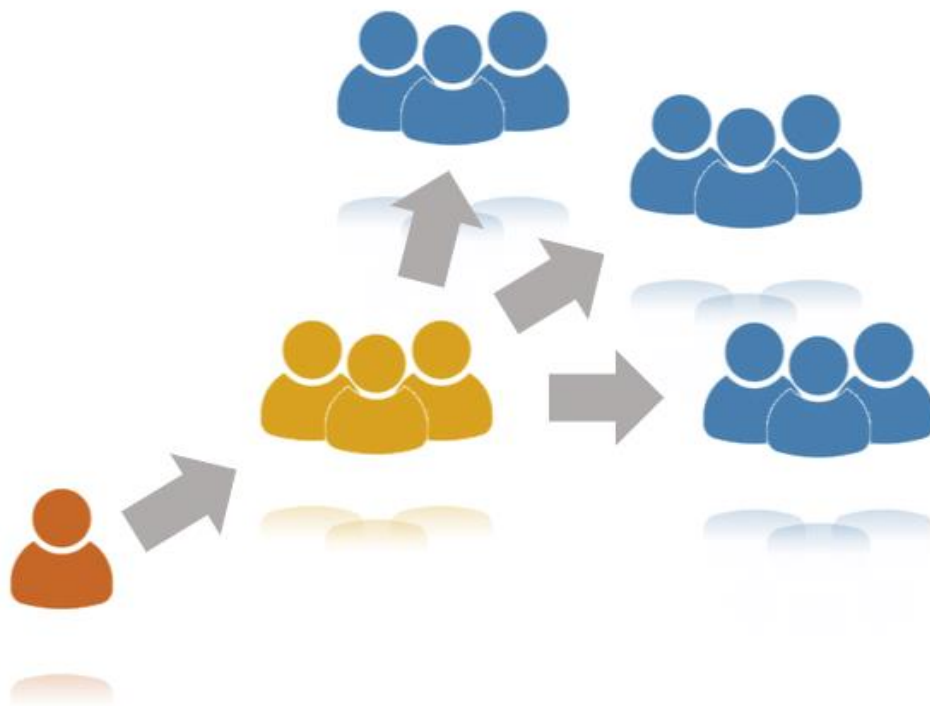
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<sup>5</sup> The latest 2019 version is here: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/gsdr2019>.

Report” or “Sustainable Development Goals Report.” This report is based on the global indicator framework and data from the national statistical systems as well as information gathered at the regional level. You can find about the annual progress report here: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/progress-report/>.

#### d. Engaging Major Groups and Other Stakeholders to Mainstream Transport Issues across Different Non-State Actors.

Very often experts feel a strong sense of ownership of their topic and have complex feelings about letting others speak about or present their work. It is indeed a tricky feeling for researchers to let someone else present their own work. However, the whole point of mainstreaming a particular issue in the broader global sustainable development agenda is to make everyone talk about it. It is often called “multiplier.”



Source: “Image of Multipliers”, Author

So now, how are we going to make everyone talk about it? Three actions could be taken.

1. Understand who plays a role in global agenda-setting as a stakeholder and their strength.
2. Prepare materials to convince them that transport issues are crucial for their constituency and that there are benefits for them to advocate.
3. Continue to work with actors to help articulate messages and illustrate public good, while respecting their ownership.

By so doing, you are fundamentally transforming those actors to be a strong supporter of sustainable mobility as a crucial driver for sustainable development and the achievement of the 1.5-degree target.

### *1. Understand who plays a role in global agenda-setting*

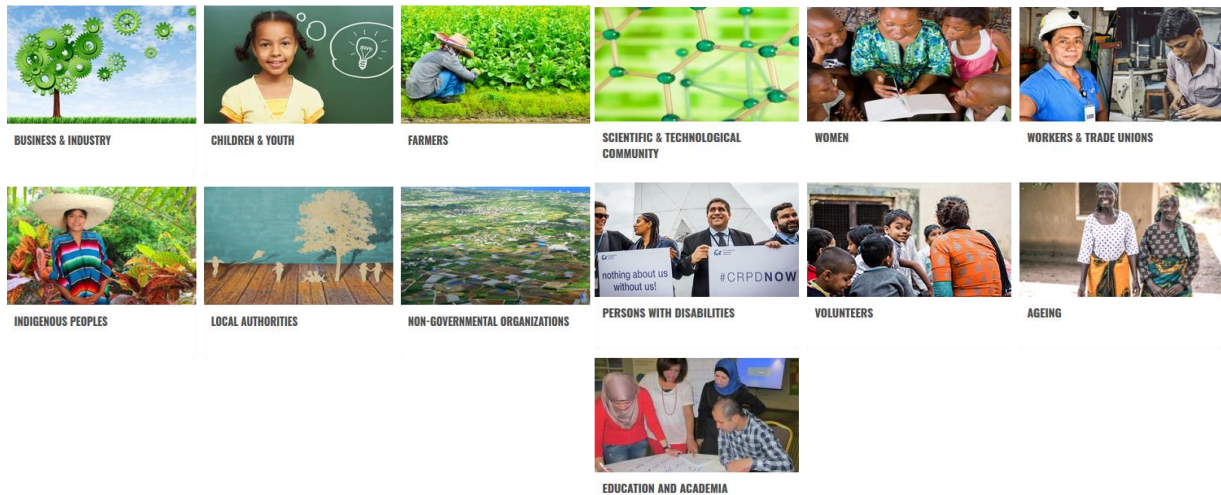
The member states are the most powerful actors to whom you can speak. There is no doubt about it. However, as the Agenda 2030 stipulates, the stakeholders play a key role in not only implementing the agenda, but also setting it. While the member states are the ones with the final say, there are many avenues available to engage local actors and these can be leveraged to advance your position.

For instance, many governments organise some sort of consultations at home with domestic stakeholders. Many did so in the process of negotiating the SDGs. Hence, mobilising stakeholders at the national, regional, and global levels can help push your agenda. As the importance of the role of stakeholders has been increasing, it is crucial to tap into this potential.

In the context of the SDGs, there are socio-economic groups that are vital to sustainable development and need specific recognition. These are:

- Women;
- Children and Youth;
- Indigenous Peoples;
- Non-Governmental Organisations;
- Local Authorities;
- Workers and Trade Unions;
- Business and Industry;
- Scientific and Technological Community;
- Farmers.





Source: "Stakeholders", UNDESA, available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/mgos>

In addition to those nine groups (the so-called "Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)") identified in Agenda 21, the outcome document of the Rio+20 "The Future We Want" also identified local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities as important stakeholder groups. Each group usually has "organising partners" or "focal points" that act as a liaison to the constituency and facilitates the constituencies' engagement within the UN spaces. The best way to communicate is by contacting them. You can find more about them here: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/mgos>.

One caveat: One assumption is that SLOCAT falls under the NGO Major Group. While this is true for SLOCAT engagement, it is necessary to engage with all groups to advocate for the inclusion of the transport sector in respective constituencies' policy documents.

Their rights within the HLPF are written in the General-Assembly resolutions 67/290. Paragraph 15 states that MGoS shall be allowed to:

- Attend all official meetings of the forum;
- Have access to all official information and documents;
- Intervene in official meetings;
- Submit documents and present written and oral contributions;
- Make recommendations; and
- Organise side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat.

In practice, they mean that MGOS can:

- Make oral interventions in the official sessions of the HLPF;
- Submit sectoral papers and its short summary to be integrated into the official UN document (as an annex);
- Have one guaranteed side event slot (this started from 2018) to each constituency; and
- Arrange 50 special passes to enter to the UN through the focal point ECOSOC-accredited organisation.

As you can see, the MGoS have more opportunities than just one NGO. It provides a great additional avenue for the transport sector to work with them to raise the transport portfolio.

## *2. Prepare materials to convince MGoS.*

How can we do convince MGoS? Although each group has a variety of organisations working for a diverse set of issues, they always welcome more help and articulation of issues that impact their constituency. It is necessary for you to prepare materials and try to see how you can get them on board. It is not only about bringing good research, but also about showing its impacts on the lives of constituencies. It is also advisable to work with an organisation working on the issue as part of constituency -- for instance, an NGO working on improving access to transportation for people with disabilities. It is nonetheless important to remember that individuals cannot do it alone. So collective engagement as a group is essential.

## *3. Continue to work with MGoS to articulate messages clearer.*

Stakeholders usually try to articulate messages in response to themes of conferences, recent trends, on-going discussion at the podium or floor, and other considerations. Hence, it is important to build the relationship and continue to work together. Influencing the agenda and global trend is a process. It needs to be continuous, and the momentum must be built up.

## 4. Way Forward

In summary, there are several entry points for the transport sector in raising its portfolio and gathering attention to the transformative nature of public transport. I described them as something that can be done by a community, not an individual, because I believe collective strength is necessary for advocacy work. Advocacy is not about individual voices, it's about a collective demand for sustainability.

As described above, **these sub-regional and regional HLPF** provide different, but complimentary, networks that you could build on at the global HLPF. More locally or nationally oriented organisations tend to be more present in these spaces than at the global level.

Firstly, presence is important. You must understand the environment, know people, and grasp how things work. The second step could be to organise a side event with partners. It is also a good idea to organise a gathering of regional practitioners in conjunction too. Importantly, you should try to work with member states to push through proposals. While the UN is open in principle, the political pressure and support of governments are always prioritised.

Similar approaches apply to the goal-specific conferences, if these continue to be organised. These conferences will provide a unique entry point to connect to thematic experts. Therefore, you can strengthen the breadth of your community by bringing up the transport sector as a cross-cutting theme and community, and then being a part of these spaces.

In addition, getting in touch with scientists who are part of the GSDR process would be useful. It helps you to understand the process and concerns of those members and provides opportunities to articulate the role of transport pertaining to their priorities, hence directly advocating your issues to them.

In closing, I would like to emphasise that these steps are just the beginning, and none will make any points heard per se. However, even experienced people take similar approaches as a given. It is important to strengthen the community to be capable to do the needed advocacy. Without an institutional setup to execute the plan, it is difficult to achieve any meaningful outcomes. The community with networks of experts can mobilise its expertise to outpace the dynamics of discussions and formulate the global discourse in a way that it has to be. Therefore, the final call on you is to join the SLOCAT Partnership and be active in any opportunities that present themselves to you.