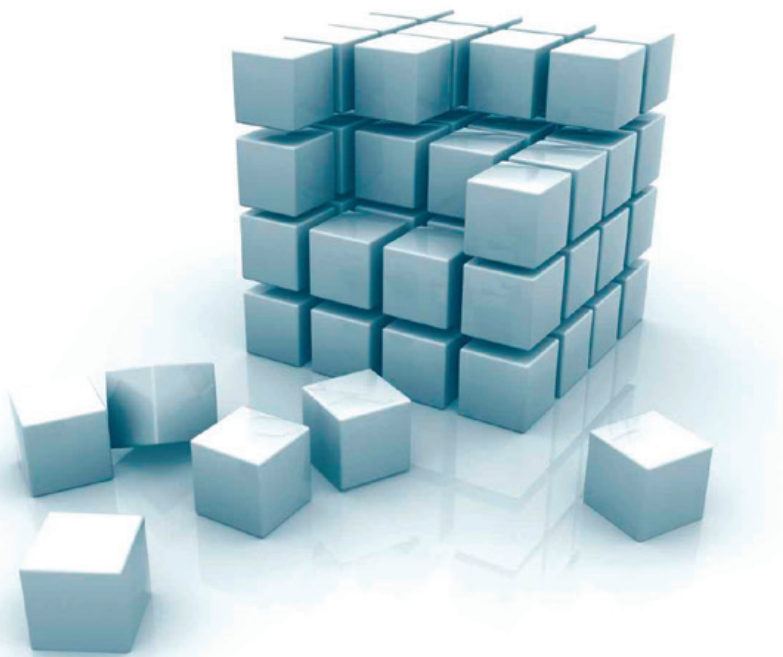


SDGs in the Eyes of Yemeni Youth

Report

On the outcomes
of series of activities
on SDGs



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Abstract

This report aims to highlight the event series that was conducted by IYCY regarding sustainable development goals assessment in Yemen. The assessment first illustrates the setting of the sustainable development goals priorities in Yemen from different perspectives. Secondary data was gathered from variety of INGOs and NGOs sources while the primary data was collected through distributing questionnaires to government officials, private sector, academia, and civil society, and has been analyzed and interpreted. Report findings showed that Yemen was off track from MDGs and is expected to be off track from SDGs achievement due to reasons stated in the report. Thus, the report provided some of major recommendations that might contribute to the achievement of SDGs in Yemen. Noting that, IYCY conducted an event titled “Achieving SDGs from Yemen perspective” promoting the 17 SDGs and the possibility of achieving SDGs in Yemen.

Table of Contents

Introduction	0
Humanitarian context	0
Methodology	2
The online Group discussion	3
Questionnaire analysis	8
Feedback and Findings	10
The event of International Youth Day August the 12th.	11
Snapshot of the discussion groups:	12
Recommendations	14

Introduction

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals form a cohesive and integrated package of global aspirations the world commits to achieving by 2030. Building on the accomplishments of their predecessors the MDGs, the SDGs address the most pressing global challenges of our time, calling upon collaborative partnerships across and between countries to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion.

SDGs are relatively looming dimension to international and national development as they were adopted just in September 2015. The 17 objectives collectively represent very ambitious goals that need efforts, funds and collaborative efforts from all stakeholders as well as time to achieve. The participation of civil society is core to both drafting and implementation of plans regarding SDGs. Youth, as has been the case for decades, are neglected from awareness and/or discussion on the work plans that are prepared as a strategy for international priorities for interventions or the national development plans. Therefore, it was vital to take the lead to discuss and allow all stakeholders especially youth think critically about SDGs as a step forward towards engagement in shaping national policies and strategies as well as thinking of means of achievement and contribution of youth in this respect.

Humanitarian context

As the talks in Kuwait faltered the dire humanitarian and economic situation in Yemen continued to worsen. UN agencies warned this week that a vast majority of Yemeni governorates, 19 out of 22, are facing severe food insecurity. According to a new joint assessment by the UN and its partners, the situation within affected areas is likely to deteriorate if the current conflict persists. The latest 'Integrated Food Security Phase Classification' (IPC) analysis reports that over half of the country's population is living in "crisis" or "emergency" levels of food insecurity, with some governorates seeing as much as 70 per cent of the population struggling to feed themselves. At least 7 million people are living under 'Emergency' levels of food insecurity (Phase 4 on the five-tiered IPC scale), a 15 per cent increase since June 2015, and a further 7.1 million people are at 'Crisis' level (Phase 3). Warnings about the country's economy were also highlighted in MOPIC socio-economic update. The report said that due to the blockage of oil and gas export, the outstanding balance and burden of the public debt has grown to "alarming levels". The total public debt increased significantly in 2015, rising from \$22.1 billion in 2014 to about \$25.9 billion in 2015¹.

Sixteen months since the escalation of the conflict, the humanitarian situation in Yemen continues to deteriorate. Around 51 per cent of the population (14.1 million people) is suffering from food insecurity and malnutrition. This is an increase of nearly 10 per cent since June 2015².

1- OXFAM YEMEN Humanitarian .Response, 30 June 2016.

2- Humanitarian Bulletin Yemen, 31 July 2016.

While the conflict continues, concerns about the state of Yemen's formal economy continue to grow. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) reports that the exchange rate in the parallel market has fluctuated at around YR 300 per 1USD in May 2016, compared to YR 225 per 1USD in May 2015. The public debt as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has reached an alarming level of 94.4 per cent in 2015, exceeding the safe limit of 60 per cent. In such an economy, the ability of commercial food importers to access lines of credit and place orders for basic goods remains severely limited³.



Figure (1): SDGs Event Banner

Methodology

Giving the facts mentioned above, the International Youth Council - Yemen (IYCY) conducted a SDGs research, in a way to address the issue of sustainable development as one of the core issues regarding Yemen. IYCY has carried out an online group discussion for three days on sustainable development goals across the board on its social media mainly at Facebook page. A team from IYCY including some volunteers followed and managed discussion through social media means. Then, the team summarized the discussions and come up with three reports (one each day). In addition, IYCY has distributed 1,000 surveys on SDGs for government, private sector, academia, civil society. Survey is multifaceted whereas it serves more than one objective. It explored young people opinion in Yemen as well as raising awareness on the importance of such goals and their impact at national level. A team consisted of 6 staff (3 male and 3 female) distributed 1,000 surveys into government, private sector, academia, civil society. The survey was collected in 15 days; and analyzed using SPSS software. The Findings were presented accompanied with major recommendations.

Data Analysis

This section highlighted the data collection, analysis. The results of analyses are also presented in tables, graphs, and texts.

The online Group discussion

Table (1): Comparison of the reactions on the online discussion

Questions	Comments	Likes	shares	Views
Q1	107	25	38	1608
Q2	67	45	28	1985
Q3	56	50	20	3221

According to table 1, it indicated the statistics as shown by the participant in IYCY’s Facebook page regarding sustainable development goals, Yemen perspectives.

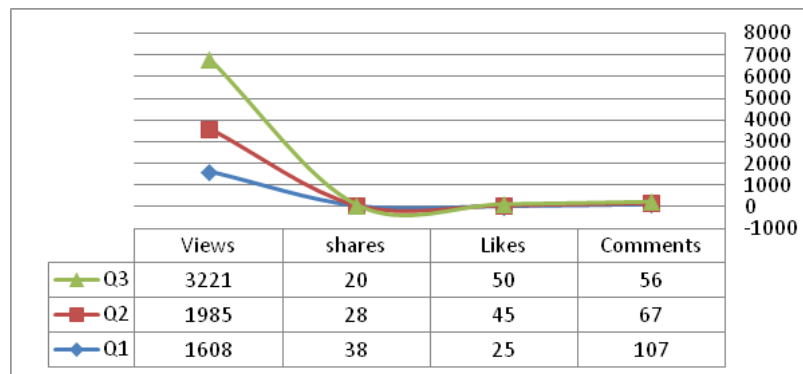


Figure (2): Chart for reactions

The overall assessment of the activity is very good giving the fact that the posts were not sponsored and the conflict has taken most of people’s time arguing either in social media or in real life and has entirely forgotten about development. In the online discussion, different society factions participated in the discussion over the three days period. On the one hand, It can be conceived by showing the gap between the number of views and participation through like, share or comments features which maybe a way of seeing this subject as luxury issue by those who did not participate or maybe they were not interested in the issue. On the other hand, internet accessibility and effectiveness with the lack of electricity can play a big role as one of the barriers for the majority of youth hindering them from participating in this imperative issue. There have been three main questions to discuss on SDGs hereinafter a brief on each as follows:

SDGs as a new concept for the new Yemen

The post reached 1491 view, 15 comments, 28 likes , and 18 shares. This could be a baseline for the outreach and online discussion activity.

Q1: What are the most important Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in regards of Yemen?

The post have achieved an increase in the average viewers as it reached 1608 viewers, 107 comments, 25 likes , 38 shares. This was a bit encouraging that people started to share their views and opinions on the SDGs and surprisingly most of them acknowledged it is very important issue indeed . However, most people do not pay attention to such issues. IYCY got a lot of praise on taking the lead to discuss this among a sample of society and youth. Most of the expressed views showed a scale for two main subjects which was predictable (quality education and poverty eradication).

Highlight of some remarkable comments:

“When we reflect SDGs on Yemen today, we will find that peace, justice and strong institutions are the pillars of potential sustainable development in our country, particularly in circumstances of war that leave no opportunity for the emergence of the rest of the goals and exclude from that goal of a good education, which is a right for all women and men, children as well as the elderly at all times. One of the relatively possible steps is to start investing in minds and raise awareness despite the current circumstances. And heading to building blocks of society culture and respect of right of expression without reverting to violence that is indicative of ignorance. The stability of a state in conflict starts with overall cooperation between all members of society hand in hand to overcome the differences that have strained the country.”

Hafid Nasser

“I went through the sustainable development goals. In order to realize sustainable development:

- In my opinion, one must first prioritize health and education because they are the foundation on which the rest of the goals will be achieved. I am personally surprised that education and health are not in the lead. How do you spend on poverty reduction and hunger before gets rid of ignorance and disease???

- Human is the foundation for the success of any endeavor in any place any time, and therefore must be given more care directly to enhance knowledge and technical and professional skills. Support creativity, innovation and a sense of responsibility towards oneself and environment in which all will live and work in is vital. And thus will be able to eliminate poverty and hunger and contributes towards achieving SDGs. I consider this point a very critical to the success of any development in any field, whether on a personal level or societal, regional and international levels.

- It does not need theorizing as such. What is needed is practicality and immediately support of implementation to goals connected to the special needs of each society according to its nature and demographic composition.

- CBMs can be applied to facilitate monitoring and evaluation and correction of any deviations from the intended targets, thus moving to a wider circle when success is achieved in the first stage, and so on.

- Human is the utmost priority.

Mohammed Ali Al Naeb

“Development has different dimensions. It must though starts based on capacities and needs of a country. In my opinion, we shall start with human development.”

Dr. Ali Kulaiab

“End poverty will achieve more than one goal, therefore I go for this goal as a priority”

Haroon Nabil Alhakimi

“End poverty and hunger are the utmost priorities and then education. That is a poor family perspective where the top priority is provision the basic livelihood for the members to survive first. Hence, promoting economic environment that allows for better welfare of society and citizens which will empower them endeavor for other development goals.”

Gawed Al-Awadhi

Q2: in your opinion, which of the following sub objectives is a priority in the current situation in Yemen? (With a list of quality education sub objectives).

The post attracted more interest and discussion. The post has reached 1985 viewers, 67 comments, 45 likes, 28 shares. The quality of discussion notably improved. Academia, activists, NGOs' members and young people participated in the discussion. However, some needed more information on how to give feedbacks especially youth from rural areas that sent some comments to the inbox instead of commenting directly on the post. Comments varied and different views were expressed. Most of the answers came in favor of sub-objective 4 which is related to internship. Most of the participants suggested provision and expansion of internship for youth as a priority due to the lack of opportunities in Yemen since the conflict is still ongoing and causing the postponement of educational institutions adding up to the number of new closed universities and schools.

Highlight of some remarkable comments:



Last but not least, the last question was on end poverty as the priority number 2 in the answers to the first question.

Q3: read as «How would we reach Yemen free of poverty by 2030 and achieving SDGs and by which means?»

The number of people reached in the last question is incredible comparing to the previous ones. It attracted 3221 views and 56 comments, 50 likes and 20 shares. The number of views for the post increased dramatically compared to the previous ones. More than half of the people in Yemen suffer from poverty which maybe explain why people pay more attention to potential solutions or options available for poverty. The discussion generated many ideas and views from different people irrespective of their background or political view.

Highlight of some remarkable comments:

Many participants have commented and expressed their opinion on the said subject from both genders.

"Yemen's problem is that it suffered from wars, and war end is not foreseen yet. And hence war effects are heavy on small projects which perhaps be either initiated by or granted for young people to lift them out of poverty. In my view, peace and restore security will absolutely help in the fight against poverty and develop a sustainable plan / strategy towards 2030 to create and support small businesses and the economic empowerment of young people in various areas."

Tareq Hassan

The problem of poorer linked closely associated with congestive Education which incase is advanced will be reflected in innovations and increments of work that would enhance opportunities of poverty elimination.

Abdulraqueeb Al-Abarah

From my point of view, all the goals are priorities and important to reach the desired targets.

Gury Alhdrami

“All are linked to shaping public awareness and its direction towards a culture of state-building , good governance, citizenship, justice, equality and the right culture quickly turns to a reality which is made by the people themselves, and here we can say that we will achieve sustainable development goals, or parts of them or even access to the its sound input”

Hesham Al-Asbahi

“The state is the protector of economic balance and responsible for economic and social policies aimed to eradicate poverty. With fragile institutions and corruption melting the state, it create hopeless situation where no success of any monetary or fiscal policies to reform the system and find the balance and development.”

Gawed Al-Awadhi

“Ambitious initiative. Do you think that Yemen by the year 2030 will have recovered from ongoing war? Is there an official channels and institutions will adopt these initiative?”

Abdulsamad Al-Salahi

Questionnaire analysis

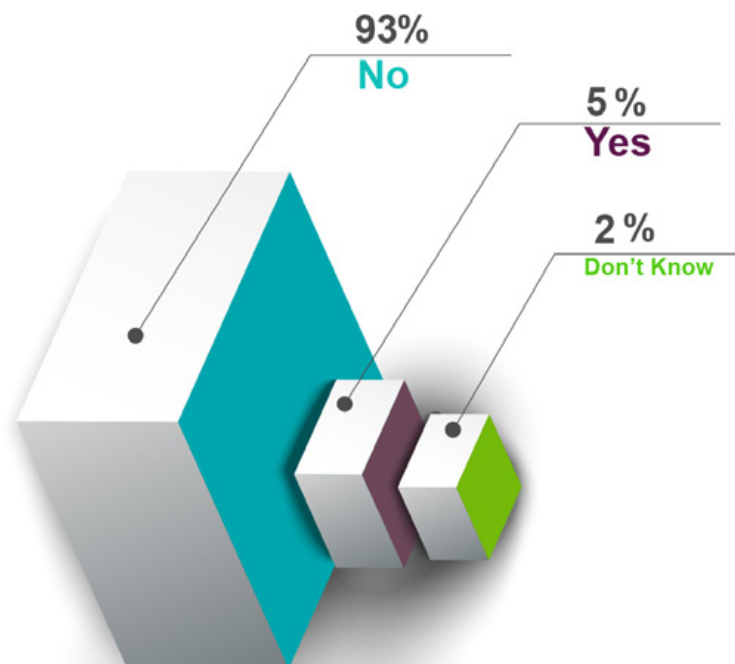


Figure (3): SDGs awareness

According to figure (3), 93% of respondents stated that they are not aware of sustainable development goals reflecting the lack of awareness promotion with SDGs. This indicate the importance of activities to raise awareness and empower different groups on the SDGs to allow them better participate in shaping policies that affect their livelihood and future. Only 5% out of 1000 surveyed who answered with yes which is very humble percentage.



Figure (4): SDGs priorities for Yemen

According to figure (4), the three prioritized SDGs list should be adopted to Yemen in order to reach Yemen 2030. The three SDGs are poverty, education, and health. And it was a little shocking that peace was not among the top three priorities among the surveyed, but apparently, from individual discussion with number of them, they believe that the ongoing war is fueled by ignorance and poverty that force many young men to participate in the conflict to gain a living or because they do not understand the consequences of such involvement on economy or social fabric.

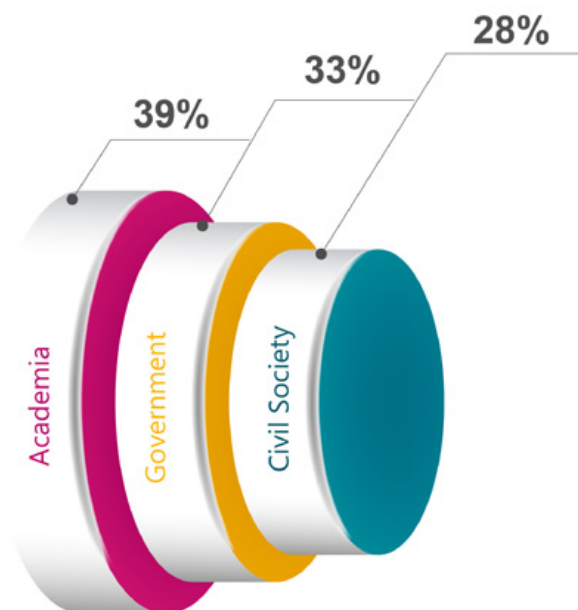


Figure (5): The role of stakeholders in SDGs implementation

According to figure (5), the most effective players in promoting SDGs in Yemen are academia, government and civil society. Civil society engagement in promoting SDGs is vital as the percentage is very modest and therefore there is a need to support NGOs and especially youth organizations to further understand and promote SDGs. As suggested, IYCY can play this role and take the lead.

Feedback and Findings

1. According to the data analysis, the most important areas should be considered regarding SDGs, Yemen are: End Poverty, Quality Education, Good Health and Inclusive Peace.
2. Yemen worked highly on National Dialogue Conference to bring the development; however, it is ignored since the crisis's start in early 2015.
3. The role of Academia is the most vital in creating and implementing the SDGs achievement plan.
4. Youth are neglected from being involved in policy making and awareness on SDGs.
5. There is a gap between the level of SDG awareness at the national level and among local communities/local authorities.
6. Lack of political commitment and internal political and security challenges experienced by the country which may hinder the work on SDGs.

The event of International Youth Day August the 12th." Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Plan"

August 12, 2016-Sana'a, International Youth Council-Yemen conducted the event titled "Sustainable Development Goals and the future of Yemen". IYCY carried out the event to celebrate the International Youth Day; where the event purposefully comes in a step to address and tackle the major development challenges encounter youth and Yemen in general. Through the event, number of INGOs (Yemen our Home-UNDP, GIZ, FES, OCHA, SAFERWORLD, CARE), NGOs, government and private sector participated in activities delivered by IYCY regarding Sustainable Development Goals. SDGs were presented and followed by group discussion on how Yemen can possibly implement SDGs in order to reach to the world of 2030.

Along with that, projects by Yemen Our Home-UNDP representative were presented indicating the positive impact on individuals in particular the youth all over Yemen. She acknowledged the support provided by IYCY. In addition, Dr. Walid Al-saqqaf, chairman of Internet Society Yemen was engaged into event activities through recorded video message. He spoke about the substantial role of Yemeni youth in country development and how proud of IYCY and its projects and activities as well as to Yodet organization that is a partner to IYCY.

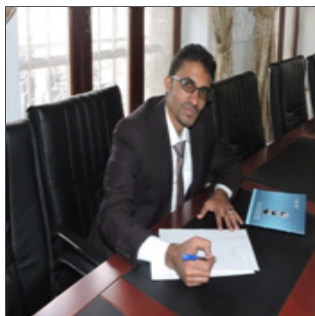
"I am eager to see such events promoting the concept of SDGs in Yemen, where it is off track of these goals"

Al-saqaf said.

IYCY intends to work with global partners to increase the awareness of SDGs among local communities, NGOs and government in order to play a significant role in line with sustainable development goals regarding economic disruptions, social exclusion, and environmental sustainability challenges.

"IYCY is highly committed to empowering the youth around the country representing their voices; as well as working with them to confront their surrounding challenges"

*Abdulrahman Alasli,
IYCY Executive Manager.*



IYCY has prepared interactive group discussions on the means of achieving SDGs from youth perspective as well as guidelines for the discussion. The discussion was held whereby all participants engaged constructively in groups to work on proposals for achieving SDGs in national context.

You are the kind of youth that we should all stand by and be proud of. I call upon all participants today in this great event to stand up and give a big hand for youth.

Mugib Al-Fatish

Director of Social and Labor Affairs Office in Amanat Al-Asimah (Sanaa)

Snapshot of the discussion groups:



The discussion was very fruitful as the participants handed over the lists of proposed actions foreseen as a means to achieve SDGs. The results are presented in the tables below.

During the event two types of activities were conducted:

1. An interesting presentation on the sustainable development goals and results of the two previous activities (the online discussion groups and the survey) by the council team.
2. Groups' discussion on top 3 priorities of SDGs.

Summary of opinions expressed on top 3 priorities of SDGs goals:

No	SDG goal	Votes
1	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	20
2	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	10
3	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	7
4	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	5

Recommendations

1. National policies should be crafted to adopt the SDGs which shall be integrated into Yemen's plans and policies. Meanwhile, Yemen should set up a process for incorporating SDGs into local work plans, including but not limited to leveraging resources and rethinking the smart city agenda.
2. Involving youth in general and youth organizations in shaping national policies and strategies regarding achievement of SDGs as well as engaging them in implementation actions.
3. A need for IYCY intervention with international partners to plan a project that could engage youth prioritize and suggest policies in different issues of interest for Yemeni youth based on common understanding of SDGs .
4. Regional and/or country-based technical workshops targeting national stakeholders are required to support the process of SDGs implementation.
5. There is a need for sharing available advocacy tools and good practices in the area, especially with regard to the engagement of the private sector and exploration of public-private partnerships for SDG achievement and social responsibility towards youth development and empowerment.
6. Call upon all INGOs and especially UN agencies to devote special funds and programs for youth organizations and initiatives to allow them play role at the national, regional and international levels.





*Sustainable Development Goals
Achievement
in Yemen
(Group Discussion Template)
2016*

International Youth Council- Yemen

Group Discussion workgroup

Participants are to be in groups includes five members. Each group will carry on brainstorming and discussion small sessions in order to come up with SDGs Achievement plan for Yemen context. The plan starts with SDGs priority identification, followed with interlink of the three dimensions of the SDGs (economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability). In addition, the key use for formulating SDGs is required elaborating the supportive information regarding SDGs and targets. It should be also explained how the proposed plan will be assessed; and ensured that key stakeholders are engaged in particular Academia and civil society. Finally, groups has to conclude listing the major challenges and issues might encounter the SDGs plan implementation.

All the best...

IYC-YEMEN

Work breakdown

Group Members	
Name	Position
	Leader
	Member
	Member
	Member
	Member
	Member

Please list three of the important priority areas that must be addressed through the SDGs to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in Yemen.

SDGs should:

- a) Address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their interlinkages.
- b) Coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 serving as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the United Nations system as a whole.

1.

2.

3.

After SDGs identification, How might the SDGs strive to balance the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development? Reflect social, economic and environmental dimensions within each SDG, possibly through the associated targets.

The SDGs must be: Global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

Based on your experience with development projects in Yemen, what would be the key use of SDGs for Yemen (select at most two)?

- a. Defining national policies
- b. Influencing national budget allocations
- c. Reviewing the impact of national policies
- d. Addressing key pressure leading to unsustainability
- e. Helping to balance economic, social and environmental pillars in policy making
- f. Guiding development cooperation
- g. Other (please describe)

Please explain your choices?

The SDGs are supposed to be “global in nature”. Should targets associated with those goals be:

- a. common to all countries?
- b. defined by each country? or
- c. common but differentiated depending on country characteristics and level of development? If c., please explain how.

How should assessments of progress toward the achievement of the SDGs to be carried out ?

What measures should be taken to make the process of developing a proposal for SDGs inclusive and participatory? How should civil society and Academia be engaged?

From your perspective, what are the main challenges that might encounter your proposed plan for achieving SDGs?



Des. Ibrahim 733344433

الجمهورية اليمنية - صنعاء - شارع عمان
أمام ارضية سفارة جمهورية العراق



00967 1 207892

E. Mail: info@iycy.org

Website: www.iycy.org



INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH COUNCIL

YEMEN 