

We are pleased with the analysis of progress on the SDGs and targets in the categories of the 5Ps. And we applaud the government for clearly showing whether it is on track or not to achieve the respective SDG. Bosnia and Herzegovina is on track to achieve only two SDGs. For 6 goals, the current pace remains insufficient to achieve the respective SDGs by 2030. For 4 SDGs, the trend is actually going the wrong direction. Clearly, the government has started late with implementing the Agenda 2030. We note with concern that the SDG Framework will only be launched this year, four years after the adoption of the SDGs.

More urgency, political will and stronger political leadership are needed for a comprehensive approach to achieving the promise of the 2030 Agenda for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this context, we would like to offer three concrete points of constructive criticism that should be used to improve SDGs implementation back at home:

1. Better address the inter-linkages of the SDGs and better tackle cross-cutting barriers to achieving the SDGs;
2. Heavy focus on private sector involvement, inadequate attention to civil society;
3. Lack of attention to the needs and potential of young people.

The report mentions “young people” on only seven pages. In comparison, “private sector” is mentioned on 19 pages. This is troubling because youth are leaving the country looking to live healthier, more fulfilling, hopeful lives and to be able to live up to their full potential abroad. The report acknowledges this loss of human resources. But how is the government planning to better and more systematically solve this problem, involving youth?

How is the government following and coordinating SDGs implementation on municipality and cantonal levels and increase public awareness of the SDGs?

Statement 2

In elaboration of our constructive criticism we would like to address in more detail the point that inter-linkages between the SDGs should be better address and that tackling cross-cutting barriers to achieving the SDGs offers an evidence-based way forward. For instance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, pervasive alcohol harm is not only affecting health.

The report highlights that alcohol consumption is the number one cause for cardiovascular disease – the leading cause of death in the country! But the report does not highlight that addressing alcohol harm also helps reduce inequalities, helps promote economic productivity and development and helps make families, communities, and society more peaceful.

There are these common barriers and determinants of multiple SDGs and tackling those is a cost-effective, evidence-based approach to achieving the promise of the Agenda 2030 in all its dimensions: people, prosperity, planet, peace, partnerships. How is the government planning to better identify such cross-cutting barriers and how is the government planning to tackle these?