

Round Table 2 - “Assessing progress and addressing gaps and challenges in the implementation of the commitments of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action and giving momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

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Distinguished Chair, Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Thirty years after the **Copenhagen Declaration (1995)**, we must confront an uncomfortable truth: the world continues to fund defense faster than dignity. The **2030 Agenda** promised to “leave no one behind,” yet the architecture of global finance still rewards inequality.

Across the Global South, debt servicing exceeds social spending. West Africa’s social-protection systems, while evolving under frameworks such as Agenda 2063, remain hampered by narrow fiscal space, data deficits, and external dependency. Ghana’s initiatives like *LEAP* and *Planting for Food and Jobs* illustrate effort, but fragmented implementation and limited monitoring reveal a deeper structural fragility.

This contradiction is not purely national; it is systemic. Global development partnerships often replicate dependency, while social policies remain hostage to donor cycles rather than democratic priorities.

Starlight Foundation Ghana and other civil-society organizations provide a corrective lens. By localizing the **Sustainable Development Goals** through education, health outreach, and livelihood support, Starlight translates policy promises into tangible outcomes and insists on accountability for every unfulfilled commitment.

The path forward requires courage and redistribution:

1. Establish **South–South financing mechanisms** for social protection and human security;
2. Institutionalize **social-accountability indices** within national and regional governance frameworks; and
3. Redefine progress beyond GDP, using **human-security metrics** as the measure of development.

Declarations inspire; redistribution transforms.

We cannot build the future on declarations, only on redistribution.

Thank you.