



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A Human Rights
Based Approach



Working Paper Series Number 4: September 2018



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FORUM-ASIA Working Paper Series: Asian Perspectives on International Human Rights Landscapes

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Sustainable Development Goals – A Human Rights Based Approach

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ISBN: 978-616-7733-18-0

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Preface

The Working Paper Series of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) aims to foster research, knowledge and advocacy for human rights and development in Asia and beyond. In particular, it seeks to bring together theory and practice to build a new praxis for change, through knowledge-networking, advocacy and solidarity actions. Human rights based approach to sustainable development is a key thematic priority of FORUM-ASIA, and this publication aims to support our advocacy efforts at the national, regional and global levels.

Since the 50s and 60s, people and movements from the South have been advocating for the concept of development as a human right. However, it was in the 90s that the international community started to move away from a purely economic conception of development. The first Human Development Report, based on Amartya Sen's work, can be seen as a game changer in the way development is approached and measured, introducing the idea that economic growth cannot be separated or compromise the quality of human life.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all United Nations Member States have committed to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social

and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development envisages a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commit to tackling critical interconnected human rights issues such as poverty, inequality, gender, poor governance and discrimination, as well as climate and environmental ones. Addressing these issues is crucial to ensure that present and future generations live in a fair and sustainable world.

Since the SDGs and its 169 targets are designated to 'leave no one behind', it is crucial that communities and civil society organisations are able to protect and promote the rights of the most vulnerable, expose misconducts and hold governments to account. However, the safe space for civil society is rapidly shrinking across Asia, while human rights defenders and women human rights defenders face increasing threats for protecting some of the same fundamental rights addressed by the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. For this, protecting and promoting civic space and defenders is a crucial precondition for the realisation of the SDGs.

Following our previous Working Paper on business and human rights, this knowledge and advocacy tool aims to

provide a historical perspective of the concept of development as human right, as well as highlighting critical issues and ways forward in relation to the SDGs. From providing an overview of national and regional trends and progress, to analysing the role of national human rights institutions and the importance of gender

equality, the working paper reinforces the idea that peoples' rights should be at the center of the development agenda.

John Samuel

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



‘Leave No One Behind’: Human Rights Based Approach to Sustainable Development

John Samuel*

Abstract

Without supporting the poor and marginalised, a human rights based approach to sustainable development will remain just a promise. Looking at the major international development conferences and outcomes from the early 90s, this paper analyses the key features of the human rights based approach to sustainable development and the ways forward to truly connect human rights and the SDGs.

“As we embark on this great collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. Recognizing that the dignity of the human person is fundamental, we wish to see the goals and targets are met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. And we will endeavour to reach the furthest behind first”. (Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1, Introduction, Paragraph 4, 21 October 2015).¹

“I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words,

will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away.” Mahatma Gandhi, 1948.²

Introduction

At the core of the human rights based approach is the dignity of every human being and the obligation of the state to respect, protect, promote and fulfil human rights for all. Human rights encompass international standards and legal framework based on a set of normative principles. Human rights are inherently linked to freedom and hence deeply political. The ethics and politics of human rights are as important as the international standards. Often it is the unjust, unequal and dominant power relationship within the society and state that constrains freedom and hinders the

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realisation of human rights in multiple ways. The violation of human rights is often perpetuated by unjust and unequal powers and authoritarian regimes. Hence, the human rights based approach to development also needs to consider the issues of freedom, justice, accountability and political conditions in a given country as well as the political economy of development and democracy.

The promises of ‘leaving no one behind’ and the talisman of Mahatma Gandhi provide a strong moral and political basis for a human rights based approach to sustainable development that stresses on equality and justice, as well as a commitment to ensure that development, democracy and human rights are real to the most marginalised people and those who are at the receiving end of discrimination and denial of rights. It also stresses that without a commitment to support the poor and marginalised, human rights based approach to sustainable development will remain promises of language and standards of human rights. ‘Leave no one behind’ approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stresses on ‘ending extreme poverty, reducing inequalities and addressing discriminatory barriers that could arise from geography or social identities’.³ This approach of putting the ‘worst off first’ is known as progressive universalism.⁴

The basis of all the international standards of human rights is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948. The UDHR formed the basis of the new discourses on democracy and development in

the post-Second World War era. While human rights became the topic of major contestation during the cold war era, they stood the test of time, and provided both the legal and moral basis of new discourse on sustainable development and democracy. The new social contract⁵ that emerged in the early 1990s included the right to development, participation, accountability, social and environmental justice and democratic governance. The World Conference on Human Rights hosted by the United Nations (UN) in Vienna in 1993, once again reaffirmed that human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible and interdependent. The Preamble of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action stated: “Invoking the spirit of our age and the realities of our time which call upon the peoples of the world and all the States Members of the United Nations to rededicate themselves to the global task of promoting and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms so as to secure full and universal enjoyment of these rights”.⁶

Right to Development

While the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) most coherently articulated the link between development and human rights, the discourse on right to development has a long history. Many of the core issues of development are inherent in the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as clearly articulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs) include rights to education; health; adequate standard of living;

housing; and science and culture. A state party is expected to respect, protect and fulfil economic, social and cultural rights, and take ‘progressive’ action towards its fulfilment. Drawing upon the ICESCR, various conventions such as Convention on Rights of Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) also recognise economic, social and cultural rights in relation to children and women. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination clearly articulates against discrimination on the basis of racial and ethnic origin, including a number of ESCRs.

Based on the provisions in the UDHR and ICESCR the discourse on the right to development emerged in the 1980s. In 1981, the right to development was first recognised in the Article 22 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Article 22 (1) stresses: “All peoples shall have the right to their economic, social and cultural development with due regard to their freedom and identity and equal enjoyment of common heritage of mankind”.⁷ When the UN proclaimed right to development in 1986, it acquired a clear status among the international human rights standards. The UN General Assembly (UNGA), in its Resolution 41/128, for the first time introduced the Declaration on the Right to Development, making it a mandate of the United Nations and its Member States.⁸

The Preamble of the Declaration on Right to Development states: “Development

is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free, and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom”.⁹ The right to development was once again articulated in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. The right to development, Principle 3, is one of the 27 principles of the Declaration and mentions: “The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the developmental and environmental needs of the present and future generation”. The Rio Declaration claims that human rights to development was linked to environment and sustainable development “needs of present and future generations”.

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA)

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna Conference) is a milestone in the history of human rights, influencing the discourse on human rights, democracy and development in a substantive manner. As indicated earlier, human rights was one of the most contested issues during the Cold War. After the Cold War, the Vienna Conference reaffirmed the values and principles of human rights and brought out a new discourse on human rights, paving the way for the human rights based approach to development – and

very clearly articulating the link between human rights, democracy, poverty, exclusion and right to development. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) is a milestone in the larger discourse on human rights, underlining issues of participation, accountability, equity, poverty eradication and development. In many ways, the VDPA has provided a conceptual, political and moral basis for a new social contract.¹⁰

The VDPA has very lucidly expressed the link between human rights, democracy and development: “Democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Democracy is based on freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural system and full participation in all aspects of their life. The international community should support the strengthening and promoting of democracy and development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the entire world”.¹¹ The VDPA further reiterates the link between exclusion, poverty and human rights stating: “The existence of widespread and extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights; its immediate alleviation and eventual elimination must remain the high priority of the international community”.¹² The VDPA further affirms: “Extreme poverty and social exclusion constitute violation of human dignity and the urgent steps are necessary to achieve better knowledge of extreme poverty and its causes,

including those related to the problems of development, in order to promote human rights of the poorest and to put an end to extreme poverty and social exclusion and to promote the enjoyment of the fruits of social progress. It is essential for the States to foster participation by the poorest people in the decision making process of the community in which they live, the promotion of human rights and efforts to combat extreme poverty”.¹³

The VDPA has provided a conceptual framework on the right to development and human rights based approach to sustainable development, further reaffirming the Declaration on Right to Development: “The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirms the right to development as established in the Declaration on the Right to Development, as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights. As stated in the Declaration on the Right to Development, the human person is the central subject of development. While development facilitates the enjoyment of all human rights, the lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of internationally recognized human rights. States should cooperate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development. The international community should promote an effective international cooperation for the realization of the right to development and the elimination of obstacles to development. Lasting progress towards the implementation of the

right to development requires effective development policies at the national level, as well as equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level.”¹⁴

Human Rights and Human Development

The broader conceptual international framework as articulated in 1993 in the VDPA, along with the ICESCR, provided the basis for a strategic political shift in terms of the human rights based approach to development. Such a shift signified two important aspects: development was seen as a state-centric process consisting of largely economic and infrastructure development. And economic growth was seen as the basic driver of such a perspective on economic growth. The human rights based approach to development dramatically changed this perspective. It is after the UN Declaration on Human Rights to Development that a new discourse on human development began. Human development is seen much more than economic growth that is more about expanding peoples’ choices. Human development signified a paradigm shift where development was linked to freedom, entitlement and rights. Human development is more of a process of enlarging peoples’ freedom and opportunities and improving their well-being. The theoretic premise for the human rights based approach to development and human development was proposed by Amartya Sen¹⁵ and Mahbub ul Haq and Üner Kirdar. At the

core of this theoretic premise is the *human capability approach*.¹⁶ Capabilities and “the substantive freedoms [a person] enjoys to lead the kind of life [they have] reason to value”.¹⁷

Thus the term ‘human development’ signified an expansion of human capabilities, widening choices and enhancement of freedom, and fulfilment of human rights. Based on this and with the support of Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) developed the Human Development Index that has become the basis of the annual human development report of the UNDP. Human development as defined by the UNDP is “the process of enlarging people’s choices”, allowing them to “lead a long and healthy life, to be educated, to enjoy a decent standard of living”, as well as “political freedom, other guaranteed human rights and various ingredients of self-respect”.¹⁸

Human Rights Based Approach and People-Centred Advocacy

The human rights based approach to development is both a normative and conceptual framework, based on international human rights standards and ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights for all. The core of human rights based approach is to ensure that there are no discriminatory practices in development while addressing the causes of poverty, particularly injustice and inequality.

The emergence of human development and human rights approach to development changed the whole paradigm of the international development. In the first 40 years, particularly during the Cold War, international assistance was perceived as ‘overseas’ aid from rich countries in the North to the poor countries in the South. ‘Aid’, debt’ and ‘trade’ was a three-pronged strategy used by most of the rich countries, particularly former colonial countries to their erstwhile colonies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. And the international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were more perceived as charities involved in relief work or charitable work. Both bilateral and multilateral aid was seen more as support for economic growth, developing infrastructure and developing a market for the rich countries. However, the paradigm shift and human rights based approach shifted the discourse in relation to aid, debt and trade. The ‘overseas aid’ based on patronisation and charity model shifted to an international development cooperation framework where financial support began to be seen as the responsibility and obligation of the international community to ensure a world without poverty, injustice and environmental degradation. And international NGOs too moved from a relief and charity mode to adopting more a human rights based approach to development where financial support was seen more in terms of human rights, justice and sustainable development rather than as ‘band-aid’ for the poor.

This was a major shift in terms of political theory and ethics. While the former development model was based on welfare model by the ‘commanding heights’ of the government and as state-driven top-down process, the new shift focused on the ‘agency of people’ where people moved from a ‘state-centred’ welfare approach to a ‘people-centred’ human rights based approach. And the right to development was seen in terms of the entitlement of the people. In human rights parlance, people were seen as rights holders, and rights are inalienable and indivisible. At the same time, the state was seen as the duty-bearer with an obligatory role to protect, promote and fulfil human rights. In the earlier economic development model, the primary agency was with the bureaucratic state – and the government is expected to know what is good for the people. In the human rights based approach, people are the alpha and omega of development. And the human rights based approach to development is expected to ensure freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of expression and freedom of belief. And all these freedoms are linked to international human rights standards and entitlement. Hence the government needs to be accountable and answerable to the people. And participation of the people in the policy making and implementation become crucial. In the earlier paradigm of state-centred development, people are expected to ‘receive’ a favour or support from the government. In the human rights based approach, people have a ‘claim’

and right to demand accountability. Thus accountability, participation and freedom of expression, association and assembly became crucial for advocacy. It is the human rights based approach to development that provided political legitimacy for policy advocacy and people-centred advocacy.

The human rights based approach to development and democratic governance are two sides of the same coin on freedom and democracy. It is not merely about liberal values, it is about accountability. And accountability is a function of power-relation in a society. It is this accountability and participation framework that is at the core of human rights based approach to development and people-centred advocacy for change.

People-centred advocacy encompasses a rights-based approach to social change and transformation:

- People are not passive beneficiaries or charity seekers of the state or government. The state's political and moral responsibility is to guarantee all human rights to all human beings; particularly the right to live with dignity. Hence people have a right to demand that the state ensures equitable social change and distributive justice.
- Citizens are the owners of the state. Hence, the state should be transparent and accountable to citizens and defend human rights.¹⁹

Human Rights Based Approach to SDGs

The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development indicates a substantial departure from the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The agenda for sustainable development, adopted by all Member States of the UN on 25 September 2015, “for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership” with its 17 goals and 169 targets provides a more comprehensive framework for development to all the countries of the world.

While MDGs did provide an overall development framework for the world, the scope of the MDGs in terms of human rights and democracy was rather limited. The MDGs were seen more like a specific development framework largely developed by a set of experts. However, the SDGs emerged out of a participatory process with a large number of national and international consultations with civil society, academia, government and other stakeholders, ensuring a great collective ownership to them. Hence, the SDGs are more comprehensive and address issues related to poverty, exclusion, social and economic rights as well as issues related to environment, urbanisation, inequality, climate change and governance.

The 2030 agenda, based on international human rights standards, promises to leave no one behind and stresses on equality and non-discrimination at its core. Though there are still some gaps

in terms of human rights perspective, SDGs certainly go beyond MDGs in encompassing civil and political rights besides the right to development based on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCRs). Unlike the MDGs, meant for less developed countries, SDGs are universal and interdependent, stressing on gender justice, equality, peace and governance.

SDGs are “grounded in the UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties”, as well as the Declaration on Right to Development.²⁰ The Preamble of the 2030 Agenda very clearly states that SDGs aid to “realize human rights for all” and stress “the responsibilities of the States to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedom for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability and other status”. The 2030 Agenda goes even further stating the SDGs are “to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the ... obligations of the states under international law”.²¹ Thus human rights are at the very core of the 2030 Agenda not only in terms of conceptualisation but also in terms of implementation.

Goal 16 of SDGs on peaceful and inclusive societies also implies many aspects of civil and political rights, including access to justice, personal security and ‘fundamental

freedoms’. Though each of the SDGs is not explicitly framed in the language of human rights, most of the goals and targets implied a link with human rights, particularly economic and social rights. Some of the targets have a clear link with human rights. However, many of the targets such as for e.g., Target 5.6 on sexual and reproductive health are limited to the national law. This means in many countries such rights will be rather restricted.

The SDGs have two goals that seek to combat inequality. Goal 10 seems to combat inequalities and discrimination and promises to ‘leave no one behind’, while Goal 5 is on achieving gender equality. Thus, these goals and their respective targets also seek to ‘reach those furthest behind first’.²² The agenda also provides for the follow-up and review process of SDGs based on evidence and data disaggregated by “income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts” (Target 17.18). Many of the targets clearly mention various groups of marginalised people including migrants, and people living with HIV/AIDS, people with disability, etc. There is a clear stress on migrants calling upon the Member States to welcome a positive contribution of migrants and ensure that migration takes place with “full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and displaced persons”.²³

Opportunities and Challenges to Human Rights Based Approach to Development

A series of UN Conferences in the 1990s, starting from the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Conference) in 1992, and Vienna Conference in 1993, culminating in the Millennium Declaration in 2000, paved the way to MDGs setting the way for a global discourse on human rights based approach to development. This global discourse also provided an unprecedented opportunity for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to engage with the UN and also get involved in the larger people-centred advocacy linking from grassroots to national and to the regional and global levels. This also resulted in the formation of a whole range of international CSOs both at the regional and global levels.

The Vienna Conference informed and mainstreamed human rights in the context of international development and international development cooperation. Following the series of UN conferences in the 1990s, there were more international, bilateral and multi-lateral financial resources available for the human rights based approach to development. The UN system adopted a human rights based approach in all of its agencies. In the 1990s, all the major international civil society and non-governmental organisations adopted a human rights based approach in their work. It is in this context that a whole

range of practices on human rights based approach to development emerged. This was further reinforced by a series of knowledge initiatives on human rights and the human rights based approach in universities, with new courses producing better skills and knowledge in the area of human rights based approach to development.

While this also resulted in the new movement for social accountability, social audit, participatory planning, range of advocacy and multiple forms of innovation, there were also major challenges to these approach. The UN system, international CSOs, NGOs and the bilateral and multi-national donors adopted the human rights based approach, but beyond the institutionalised development and human rights practitioners who are often paid staff of these agencies, this did not evoke a shift in the political paradigm in many countries.

It is one thing for the development experts to understand the shift and it is an entirely different thing for the ordinary people to understand and accept the shift in the political paradigm. Professionalisation of the human rights based approach created apolitical technical experts who saw this more as a part of their job-description and skills set, even though the most important aspect of the human rights based approach to development is that it sought to change both the politics of human rights as well as that of development. However, the professional technical approach often depoliticised both development and human rights,

where instead of shifting grassroots politics, a large number of human rights and development practitioners were seen more in the international 'echo-chambers' of the UN and its conferences. And this shift to a meta-international discourse often ignored the complexities of the grassroots political process and issues that drive them.

Another major challenge was that while many sought to promote the agency and politics of the state, in several countries the state simply did not have systemic or financial resources to deliver development as demanded by the people. Most of the economically less developed countries and many countries at the receiving end of the debt trap did not have the capability to respond to the need of the people. This too created a credibility crisis for the human rights based approach to development.

The further difficulty was that while the international as well as the bilateral donor agencies promoted the human rights based approach, the shift to a much more conservative politics made them shift from Rights to Results. The Rights based approach to the Result based approach pushed once again the old logical framework for management, without often addressing the issues of political empowerment as the basic conditions for realising human rights. This template-driven approach in terms of 'output' and 'outcome' did not add up to the politics of human rights. While most of the international development

organisations and NGOs were busy in filling templates and following templates for results, politics on the ground went exactly in the opposite direction to human rights. This overtly technical approach to human rights and stress on template driven results often ignored the political economy of development and political economy of human rights. Such a technical approach that often uses the language and rhetoric of human rights standards and norms does not directly address the core issues of democratic deficit and oppressive political conditions that undermine human rights at the national and grassroots levels. This gap between meta-level technical discourse at the UN and international arena, and the lack of politics of and for human rights at the national and grassroots levels, pose a great challenge for the real realisation of real human rights to all on the ground.

Democratic governance and the human rights based approach to development reinforce each other as they are inter-dependent. Hence, with an increasing lack of democratic governance, many of the nominal electoral democracies undermine the human rights based approach to SDGs. The rise of illiberal democratic practices in many countries poses a great challenge for genuine democratic and civic spaces required for the human rights based approach to development. The rise of populist authoritarianism based on new forms of aggressive nationalism poses a challenge to human rights, democracy and sustainable development. There

are increasing instances of enforced disappearances, extra judicial killings as well as curtailment of the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and associations in many countries. CSOs involved in the human rights approach to development are increasingly under pressure without access to funding resources and are at the receiving end of state surveillance, threatened of being closed down. All these pose substantial political hurdles to make the promises of human rights real on the ground at the national and sub-national levels. This lack of substantive democratic governance and rise of nationalist populist authoritarian regimes undermined democratic space for human rights systems and spaces at the international arena as well.

While the erstwhile democratic countries in Asia moved to populist authoritarianism, many of the rich and powerful countries still remain undemocratic without commitment to human rights and freedom for all. The rich and powerful countries that lack democracy often manage to use economic leverage to push most of the SDGs without the necessary conditions for human rights. Countries such as China and Vietnam have a commitment to SDGs without a commitment to the human rights based approach to SDGs or democratic governance required to realise the full potential of SDGs. This non-democratic approach to SDGs often gains legitimacy at the international level due to an increasing Beijing Consensus that stresses on economic development and a new aid politics that in effect undermines

democracy and human rights both at the national and international levels. This shift from a Vienna Consensus on Human Rights to an emerging Beijing Consensus on the economic development paradigm at the cost of human rights poses a great challenge for human rights based approach to democracy and development in Asia and beyond.

While there is an increasing trend of young people strategically using technology to reach out to other young people across the world, it also provides space for a new generation of leadership to emerge. The new online civic and human rights activism is crucial for the future of democracy and development in Asia. The emergence of social media offers possibilities for new democratic and human rights advocacy, though the very same social media also poses a great challenge to democracy and human rights. Increasing instances of fake news, threat campaigns and strategic use of big data by populist authoritarian regimes and parties undermine the very same democratic possibilities of social media.

The challenges to human rights and democracy also provide an opportunity to use innovative methods of advocating for human rights and human rights based approach to development. This requires investing in a generation of young leaders. Along with a revitalised civil society alliance, there is a need to work more with actors in the private sector, media and academia to adopt a multi-stakeholder advocacy approach. Young people and women can play an important

strategic role in promoting human rights based approach to development and democracy in Asia and beyond. This also requires new initiatives and partnership at the grassroots, national, regional and international levels. A critical challenge is to bring back politics into the human rights discourse, bridging the increasing gap between the human rights discourse at the grassroots level and the increasingly technical and rhetorical approach to human rights at the international level.

If there is a consonance between the promises and performance of the SDGs, the world will indeed be transformed. However, the real challenge of the SDGs is precisely the increasing gap between the promises and performance on the ground, in a fast changing political economy of trade, aid and development. The SDG 10 promises to decrease inequality. However, there is an unprecedented level of social, economic, political and environmental inequality within the countries and among the countries. A whole range of studies indicates the high concentration of wealth in most of the countries of the world.²⁴ Unless there are drastic changes in fiscal policies, there will still remain a gap between the rhetoric and reality of decreasing inequality.

With the rise of crony capitalism, indirect taxation and lack of progressive taxation, there will be serious challenges to realise SDG 10. This is also connected with the lack of adequate budgetary provisions to realise SDGs in many countries. The SDG 17 on international partnership and cooperation does not often translate into increase in the volume of international development cooperation. Many of

the least developed countries and also few of the developing countries may not have adequate financial resources to realise all SDGs. With decreasing international financial transfer for SDGs and consequent changes in the overall development assistance, many countries may not have the institutional or budget capacity to realise SDGs. While the lack of adequate financial resources dedicated to realisation is indeed a problem, a bigger challenge is the rise of illiberal politics and populist authoritarianism that undermine human rights, freedom and core values of sustainable development. Without vibrant civil society and freedom, it is indeed difficult for citizens to demand accountability for the promises and commitments included in the 2030 Agenda. For this, its most important aspect is the political will to put the SDGs at the core of governance and budgetary allocation. A mere technical approach to SDGs with customary lip-service will only create a mirage about sustainable development. Without freedom, human rights and concerted efforts to decrease inequality, SDGs may continue to remain a set of promises that get postponed.

Endnotes

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Implementing the SDGs: A Challenging Context in Asia

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Abstract

Sustainable development in Asia has to overcome ‘immense challenges’ nowadays, from poverty to inequality, passing through environmental degradation, corruption and shrinking civic space. Analysing the challenging context in which SDGs have been introduced in Asia, this paper stresses that for the SDGs to be realised there is a need for an enabling environment for civil society to express itself, monitor and hold governments accountable to their commitments.

Introduction

When on 25 September 2015 the 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) along with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global community committed to “achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner”.¹

In the meetings and studies leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the UN, along with sustainable development advocates, has been flagging the need for a development model where social inclusion, economic growth and environmental sustainability are balanced.² Through its

17 goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators, the SDGs will have to be the driving force to integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions.

A multi-dimensional approach to development is needed. UN bodies, in particular the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), have developed frameworks and toolkits on this matter,³ and drawn attention to the concepts of system and holistic thinking, as well as multiple capitals.⁴

In addition to looking at qualitative and quantitative tools to support economic, social and environmental development dimensions, the UNESCAP reinforced the message that in the Asia-Pacific region, “a development trajectory that continues

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to allow trade-offs between the objectives of social progress, economic growth and environmental protection is increasingly inappropriate”.⁵ For this, while looking at the future of the region, UNESCAP highlighted the importance of overcoming several interconnected development challenges such as: persistent poverty, widening income gaps, gender and other inequalities, resource constraints and climate change, among others.⁶

In this context, the Asia-Pacific region integrated approach to development is described by UNESCAP as one in which “there is dignity for all, leaving no one behind, with the full realisation of human rights, equality, social justice and protection of the natural environment”.⁷ As noted by John Robinson, a human rights-based agenda for sustainable development addressing economic, social and environmental issues “implies that three imperatives are met: (a) to stay within the biophysical carrying capacity of the planet; (b) to provide an adequate standard of living for all; and (c) to provide systems of governance that respect the basic needs of all and propagate the values by which people want to live”.⁸ When it comes to ‘leaving no one behind’, Oxfam points out that this requires the “participation of the most vulnerable and marginalised people so that they can hold their governments to account and claim their rights”.⁹

Since a mono-dimensional approach has been the most common practice in the past,¹⁰ a three-dimensional approach to

development represents a challenge for most countries as well as national and international bodies, while the whole concept of ‘leaving no one behind’ sets extremely ambitious standards and high expectations. Unlike the SDGs, 2030 Agenda does not shy away from consistently using the term ‘human rights’. In fact, it envisages “a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realisation of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity”.¹¹

More than two years on since the SDGs went live on 1 January 2016, this ambitious scenario clashes with the reality of the Asian context where multi-dimensional development progress can be particularly challenging to achieve, and the respect of human rights and rule of law is threatened throughout the region.

Context

The ambition and latent sense of optimism of the 2030 Agenda leaves also space for the awareness of the ‘immense challenges’¹² that sustainable development faces nowadays, from poverty to gender inequality, passing through natural disasters and environmental degradation. Asia is no exception, and the following indexes portray the context in which UN Member States are committed to achieving the SDGs.

Human Development

Since 1990, the UN publishes a yearly report on human development defined as “the development of the people through building human capabilities, by the people through active participation in the processes that shape their lives, and for the people by improving their lives”.¹³ By focusing on the “richness of human lives rather than on simply the richness of economies”,¹⁴ the human development approach also informed and influenced the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The global *Human Development Report 2016* includes the latest values of the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI integrates three basic dimensions of human development: life expectancy at birth, reflecting the ability to live a long and healthy life; mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling, and reflecting the ability to acquire knowledge; and gross national income per capita, reflecting the ability to achieve a decent standard of living.¹⁵

Among developing regions in the last 25 years, South Asia¹⁶ made the fastest human development progress, followed by East Asia and the Pacific.¹⁷ South Asia had an average annual HDI growth rate score of 1.4 per cent, while East Asia and the Pacific had 1.3 per cent, compared to 0.7 per cent of the rest of the world.¹⁸

The *Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2016* highlights how in recent decades countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao People’s

Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Myanmar and Nepal made the most rapid progress, although starting from a lower base.¹⁹ At the same time, despite significant progress, 19 Asia-Pacific countries are still below the global HDI average.²⁰ Furthermore, comparing with other regions, both South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific scored a lower HDI value in 2014 than Latin America and the Caribbean, while still higher than Sub-Saharan Africa.²¹

Looking at specific issues, there are few findings worth highlighting.

In all the regions, women can expect to live longer than men, and in most regions girls can expect similar years of schooling to those of boys,²² with South Asia, together with North Africa, showing the greatest improvement in youth literacy, especially among young women.²³ However, in all regions women consistently have, on average, a lower HDI value than men. This is particularly true in South Asia that has the largest difference with the female HDI value being 20 per cent lower than the male one.²⁴ Among the 28 Asia-Pacific countries,²⁵ Afghanistan has the highest gender gap in human development, while the lowest is in Thailand. Mongolia sets a positive example, with it being one of the 14 countries out of 148 where there is a reverse gender gap favouring women when it comes to human development.²⁶

Regarding poverty, the global report highlights how the decrease has been particularly remarkable in East Asia and

the Pacific, where people living on less than US\$1.90 a day (extreme poverty rate) fell from 60.2 per cent in 1990 to 3.5 per cent in 2013, largely thanks to the diverse progresses in China. Similarly, in South Asia the proportion fell from 44.6 per cent to 15 per cent.²⁷ There is also a significant improvement in global health, as people are living longer. The increase in life expectancy at birth from 2000 to 2015 was greatest in Sub-Saharan Africa (8.8 years), followed by South Asia (5.5 years).²⁸

The scenario is less encouraging when looking at multidimensional poverty²⁹ since the region still has the largest portions of people living in this condition. In South Asia, over half of the population of Afghanistan, Bangladesh and India lived in multidimensional poverty in 2010, while in East Asia and the Pacific the population of Timor-Leste is the most affected. The lowest for South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific are the Maldives and Thailand, respectively.³⁰ Urban poverty and social exclusion remain a critical issue in the Asia-Pacific region. While rural poverty has declined by 2.5 per cent points annually, urban poverty, despite being lower, fell only by 1.5 per cent points.³¹ Urban poverty is also linked with infrastructural problems, with many towns and cities suffering poor standards of water supply, sanitation, drainage and waste management services, while slum areas are usually disconnected from main road and transportation facilities, communications technologies and energy grids.³²

Inequality is a global issue, but a particularly concerning one for the

Asia-Pacific region. In South Asia, the average human development loss due to inequality is 28.7 per cent, compared to 22.8 per cent for the world. East Asia and the Pacific record greatest losses due to inequality when it comes to income, while the losses for education and longevity are the highest in South Asia.³³ Similarly, the issue of income inequality and workers' condition remains critical in the region. When looking at manufacturing wages, data show how average manufacturing wages in China, India and the Philippines are under US\$2 per hour, compared to nearly US\$13 in Singapore, and just over US\$18 in Japan. The situation of wage workers is particularly dire in Nepal (US\$73 per month in 2008), Pakistan (US\$119 per month in 2013) and Cambodia (US\$121 per month in 2012), with the last two countries recording the highest incidences of working poverty in the world.³⁴

The Asia-Pacific region is also unfortunately known for its environmental sustainability issues. Fourteen Indian cities are among the world's 20 most polluted cities in the world,³⁵ while four out of the five most polluted megacities (population of or over 10 million people) are from India, Bangladesh and China.³⁶ This data should also be analysed in light of the region's demographic transition, as the population size in the Asia-Pacific has tripled in the last 65 years, expecting to reach 4.84 billion in 2050. The region is already the world's most populous, with – 6 of the 10 most populous countries – China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Japan.³⁷ In addition to pollution, megacities in the region are also

threatened by rising sea levels, especially in the coastal zones like in the cases of Dhaka in Bangladesh, Mumbai in India, Shanghai in China and Tokyo in Japan, or by other natural disasters such as cyclones and earthquakes, like in the case of Manila in the Philippines. In 2011, 70 per cent of Asia-Pacific cities with more than 750,000 people were considered at high risk of natural disaster, translating into 562 million vulnerable people, with greater risks for the poor who are often settled in areas with the least protection from dangers.³⁸ Among vulnerable groups, the refugees are particularly at risk. In Asia, a dramatic example is the more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees in the camps of the Cox's Bazar District of Bangladesh. After escaping from the violence and atrocities perpetrated against them in the Rakhine state of Myanmar, they are now exposed to natural disasters in an area made even more unpredictable by climate change.³⁹

There is a strong correlation between human development and human rights. The *Human Development Report 2016* notes how “a free press, a vibrant civil society and the political freedoms guaranteed by a constitution underpin inclusive institutions and human development”.⁴⁰ These aspects are crucial to ensure the quality of human development outcomes. However, the same report also flags that it is possible for a country to have high HDI value and a low score on indexes looking at civic space, fundamental freedoms and free media.⁴¹ Singapore for example is among the very high human development

countries group, ranking 5th together with Denmark. But it is also a country where fundamental freedoms are threatened by repressive laws that violate international human rights standards, and human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) are yet to be signed.⁴²

Civic Space

The earlier mentioned discrepancy identified by the *2016 Human Development Report* also applies to the Asian context.⁴³

The *2017 State of Civil Society Report* published by CIVICUS highlights how “the restriction on civic space has become the norm, rather than the exception”, with restrictions taking place around the world from South to North, and with them stricter in Africa and Asia.⁴⁴

Based on the CIVICUS Monitor,⁴⁵ Taiwan is the only country in Asia to be currently classified as ‘open’. While Japan, Papua New Guinea and South Korea rate as ‘narrowed’ where violations still take place, the large majority of countries such as Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste rate as ‘obstructed’. This means that in these countries fundamental human rights are constrained by legal and practical measures by power holders, while citizens can be vulnerable to use of excessive force by law enforcement agencies during

peaceful protests. More worrying are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Thailand ranking as ‘repressed’, implying that although civil society organisations (CSOs) exist, their advocacy work is regularly challenged. They face threats of de-registration and closure by the authorities, while independent voices are routinely targeted through legal harassments or physical attacks. Finally, China, Lao PDR, North Korea and Vietnam rank as ‘closed’, being civic spaces completely closed in law and practice, and any criticism of the ruling authorities is severely punished.⁴⁶

Data about the people protecting civic space are equally worrying. In 2015 and 2016,

the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) documented 554 cases of violations and abuses against human rights defenders (HRDs) in Asia.⁴⁷ HRDs were particularly exposed to judicial harassment and criminalisation; intimidation and threats; arbitrary arrest and detention; imprisonment; and enforced disappearances.⁴⁸

While the SDGs aim to also address the most critical environmental issues, land and environmental defenders are risking their lives throughout Asia. Only in 2016, 58 defenders were killed in 9 Asian countries, majority of them in the Philippines (28) and India (16) according to Global Witness.⁴⁹

Table 1

CIVICUS Monitor Rate (As of 28/8/2018)	Country	Human Development Rank (Out of 188)	Corruption Perceptions Rank (Out of 180)
Open	Taiwan	N/A	29
	Japan	17	20
Narrowed	South Korea	18	51
	Papua New Guinea	154	135
	Singapore	5	6
Obstructed	Brunei Darussalam	30	32
	Malaysia	59	62
	Sri Lanka	73	91
	Mongolia	92	87
	Maldives	105	87
	Indonesia	113	96
	Philippines	116	111
	India	131	81
	Bhutan	132	26
	Timor-Leste	133	101
	Nepal	144	122

CIVICUS Monitor Rate (As of 28/8/2018)	Country	Human Development Rank (Out of 188)	Corruption Perceptions Rank (Out of 180)
Repressed	Thailand	87	96
	Bangladesh	139	143
	Cambodia	143	161
	Myanmar	145	130
	Pakistan	147	117
	Afghanistan	169	177
Closed	China	90	77
	Vietnam	115	107
	Laos	138	135
	North Korea	N/A	171

Source: CIVICUS Monitor, UNDP, and Transparency International

Data from Table 1 indicate how the majority of the Asian countries ranking among the top 100 when it comes to human development, have a civic space condition rated as ‘obstructed’, while Thailand and China represent an even more problematic case, being ‘repressed’ and ‘closed’, respectively. This indicates how in the majority of Asian countries the development progress did not go hand in hand with a better civic space condition.

Corruption

Table 1 takes into account also corruption, a serious impediment to human development. Corruption compromises growth and the availability of resources to support pro-human development policies. In light of this, it has been specifically addressed in target 16.5 of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).⁵⁰

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2017 released by Transparency International, more than half of the

countries in the Asia Pacific score less than 50 out of 100 on the index, where 100 means very clean and 0 reflects a deep rooted, systemic corruption problem.⁵¹ Globally, none of the countries score 100, while Cambodia (21), North Korea (17) and Afghanistan (15) are among the worst scorers out of the 180 countries ranked. The score determines the rank showed in the table, with only Singapore being in the top 10 among all Asian countries, despite the civic space condition rated as obstructed.

In the region the scenario is quite grim. While there have been small incremental changes for Afghanistan (from 8 to 15) and Indonesia (from 32 to 37), and a persistent stagnation for South Korea (54), there is a declining trend affecting mainly India (40), the Philippines (34), and Maldives (33).

These countries score high corruption and have negative trends when it comes

to press freedom and protection of journalists. Emblematic is the case of the murder of Yameen Rasheed, prominent Maldivian blogger and human rights defender, known for criticising the Maldivian Government's corruption and human rights violations.⁵²

Unsurprisingly, the analysis from Transparency International indicates that countries with lowest protection mechanisms for the press and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are more prone to worst rates of corruption. In the last six years, in countries that score 45 or less, more than 9 out of 10 journalists were killed.⁵³ In the region, particularly dramatic is the situation of India in South Asia, where seven journalists have been murdered since 2017, and the Philippines in Southeast Asia, with two cases.⁵⁴ Cambodia, one of the worst scorers, has intensified its crackdown on dissent throughout 2017 and 2018, forcing the closure of NGOs and newspapers, and ensuring the disappearance of any form of strong opposition to President Hun Sen's regime.⁵⁵

Countries' Performances so far

The Asian countries' performances on the 17 SDGs seem to be influenced by the challenging context portrayed by the indexes and studies on human development, civic space and corruption.⁵⁶

According to the *2017 Asia Pacific SDG Progress Report*, the region made some progresses on eradicating poverty

(SDG 1), and promoting good health and well-being (SDG 3), and at the current rate of progress, quality education for all should be achieved (SDG 4). At the same time, the Report highlights insufficient progress on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11), with very little progress on water and sanitation (SDG 6) and life on land (SDG 15).⁵⁷

More recent data from the *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018*⁵⁸ indicate that only Japan (15 rank, score 78.5) and South Korea (19 rank, score 77.4) are among the top 20 countries in the SDG Index. Other ten Asian countries make it to the top 100, with a large majority of them being from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region.⁵⁹ According to this report, Asian countries face persistent challenges related to zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and well being (SDG 3), industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), life below water (SDG 14) and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16). Critical environmental issues such as climate change in SDG 13, the conservation and sustainability of oceans, seas and marine resources in SDG 14 and the protection and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems in SDG 15 still require greater efforts, as none of the countries have reported being on track or even making progress in all of the three goals.⁶⁰ Trends about gender equality (SDG 5) are also worrying, as none of the countries is reported on track, except for Mongolia and the Philippines.

Looking specifically at the ASEAN region, according to the *2017 UNESCAP ASEAN*

SDG Baseline, ASEAN countries made great progress in eradicating poverty (SDG 1), quality education for all (SDG 4), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), and life below water (SDG 14). At the same time, the report highlights how the situation deteriorated for food security and zero hunger (SDG 2), decent work and equitable economic growth (SDG 8), inequality within and between countries (SDG 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and life on land (SDG 15). For all the remaining goals, except climate action (SDG 13) that does not have data for any of the indicators, the progress is reported as slow or stagnant.⁶¹

SDG 16 has a strong correlation with human rights, namely the right to life, liberty and security of the person; protection of children from all forms of violence, abuse or exploitation; right to access justice and the due process; right to legal personality; right to participate in public affairs; and the right to access to information. Its targets are also related to several crucial human rights instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

(CEDAW).⁶² As highlighted by the TAP Network, “Goal 16 underpins the other 16 SDGs, all of which rest on institutions that are capable of responding to the needs of the public transparently and accountably”.⁶³

Regrettably, the *UNESCAP Asia and the Pacific Progress Report 2017* makes it clear that “efforts towards achieving Goal 16 at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels have stalled”.⁶⁴ Also the *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018* data shows important shortfalls in relation to SDG 16 in Asia, with only Brunei Darussalam reportedly being on track, and Singapore maintaining the same level.⁶⁵ The fact that two countries with poor ratings from the CIVICUS Monitor, and sadly known for their human rights abuses and repression of civic space can be evaluated being on track or on the same level when it comes to SDG 16 is worrisome.⁶⁶ While this can be partially explained by the fact that the *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018* takes into account a limited number of indicators based on the availability of data, it also clearly showcases the risk for SDGs indexes and performances evaluation to portray a scenario disconnected from the reality on the ground.

Fig. 1: Progress made by countries in **South and South-West Asia** – source: UNESCAP⁶⁷

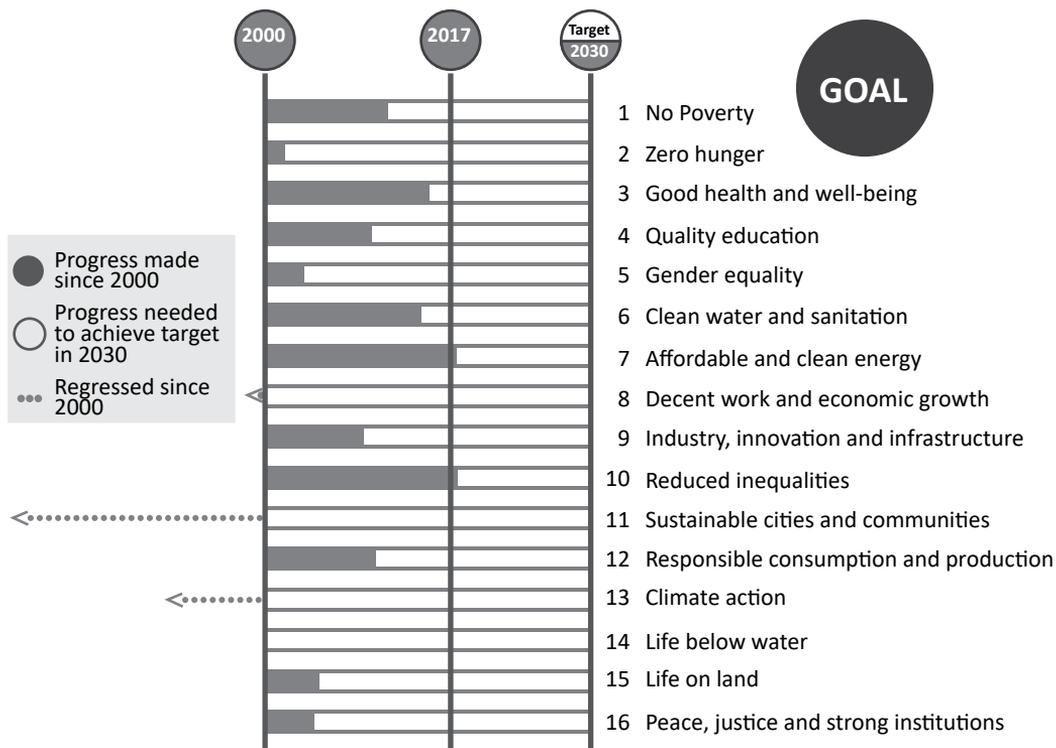


Fig. 2: Progress made by countries in **Southeast Asia** – source: UNESCAP⁶⁸

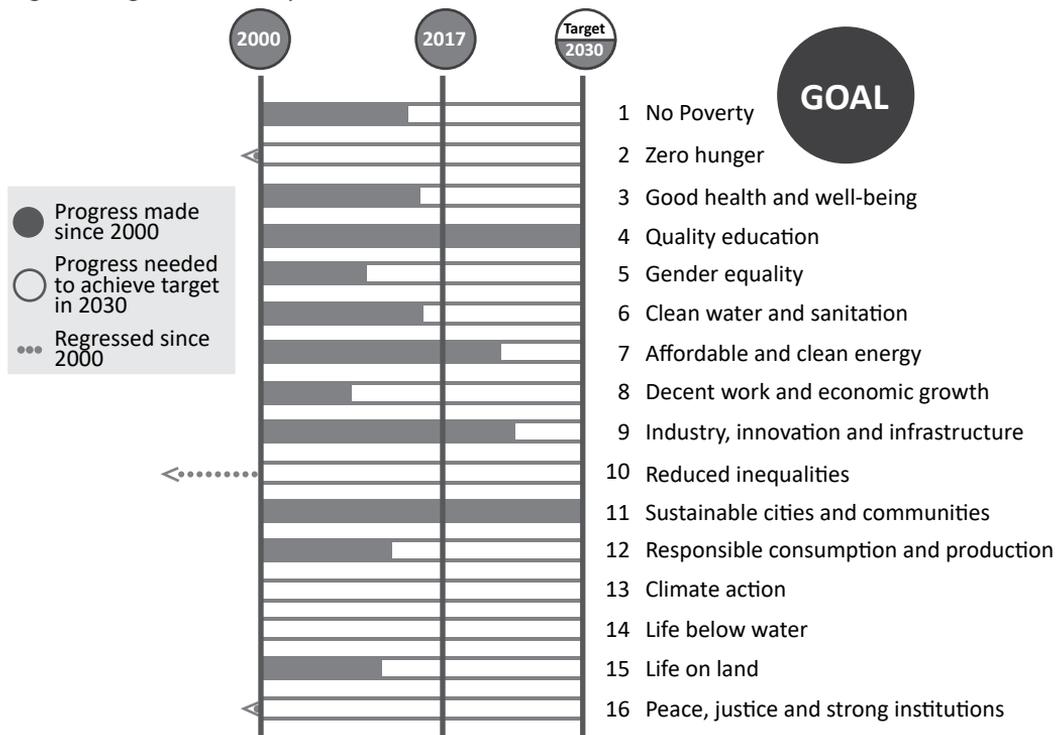
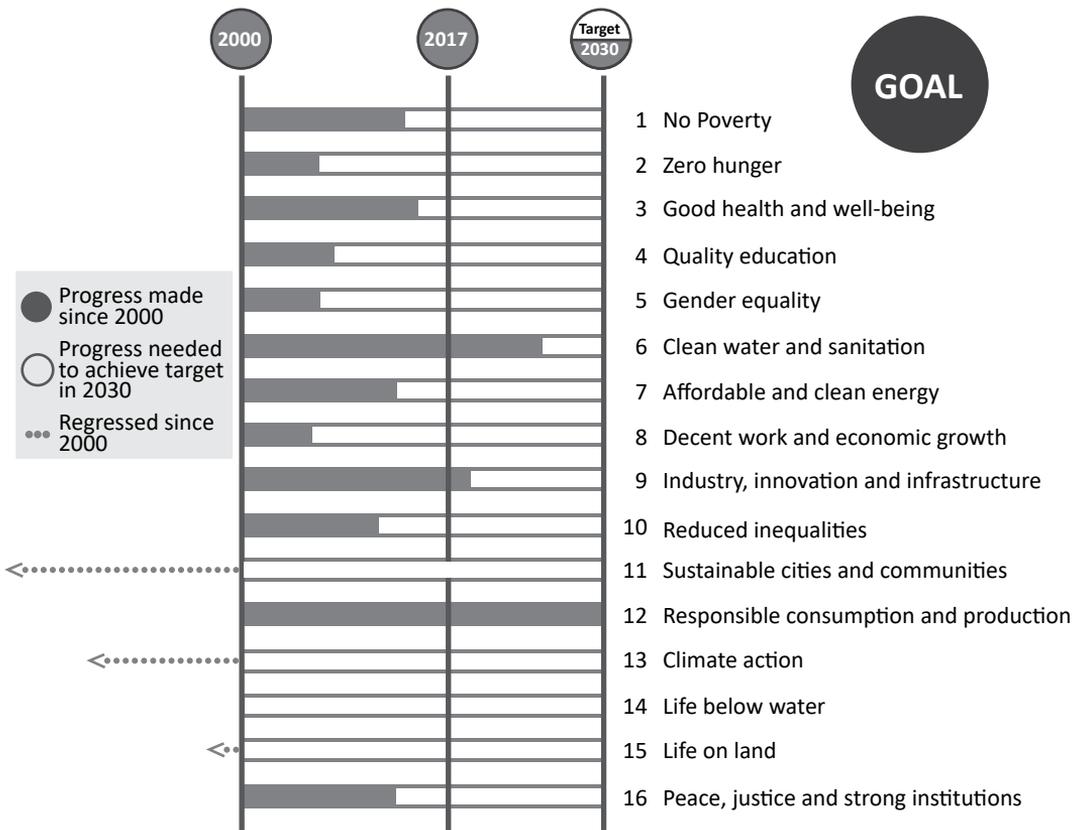


Fig. 3: Progress made by countries in: **East and Northeast Asia** – source: UNESCAP⁶⁹

The progress of the countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs are addressed during the annual High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) that oversees the follow-up and review process. A key element of the HLPF is the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) defined as “regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels that are country-led and country-driven”, that should draw on “contributions from indigenous people, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities”.⁷⁰ The contribution from civil society would be particularly

challenging in Asia. Looking at the Civic Monitor Ratings of the 48 countries that participated in the July 2018 HLPF, Bhutan, Singapore, and Sri Lanka are currently rated as ‘obstructed’, and Lao PDR and Vietnam are ‘closed’. This implies that in none of these countries there is a safe space for any CSO to operate without risk of being monitored or harassed.⁷¹ In Vietnam for example, politically motivated measures have been used against peaceful dissidents and WHRDs/HRDs who are subjected to a wide-range of human rights violations, from arbitrary detention to unfair trials and violent assaults.⁷² Oddly, this same country states on its VNRs to have “fulfilled its

international commitments on ensuring civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights as well as citizen's rights under the SDGs in general".⁷³ In light of examples like the one of Vietnam, the integrity and veracity of the follow-up and review process of the SDGs can be highly controversial.

A total of 17 Asian UN Member States have submitted VNRs so far, although not all of them reported on all 17 SDGs and indicators.⁷⁴ This is in line with a global cherry picking trend that ultimately challenges the interconnection of the SDGs. Moreover, the different format of VNRs reporting makes it challenging to compare the progress and challenges across countries.⁷⁵

Conclusion

Although it is possible to draw some observations on the SDG progress looking at data and trends, the availability of data represents a challenge. According to the UNESCAP, SDGs 10 (Inequality), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) are particularly data-poor in the region, with less than 15 per cent of the official SDG Indicators available for a regional progress assessment.⁷⁶ CSOs can play a major role in supporting the collection of data and track progress.⁷⁷ In particular, when it comes to SDG 16, national, regional and international CSOs can contribute by providing data and recommendations on

targets related to rule of law, free media and NHRIs, as they already do for existing human rights mechanisms. For this, countries should draw on existing reports and recommendations for their VNRs – including those submitted by different stakeholders to Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies – ensuring that CSOs are able to meaningfully participate in consultations and review processes, and speak out without fear of reprisal.

On the one hand, available indexes and data show how a large number of Asian countries are performing relatively well when it comes to issues such as poverty reduction and life expectancy at birth. On the other hand, performances on issues such as urban poverty, gender inequality and pollution indicate that there is still a long way to go for the SDGs to support the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions. As noted by UNESCAP, "while the region may have achieved an economic miracle, it has not yet attained a human development miracle".⁷⁸ Some of the remarkable development progresses achieved by most Asian countries in the last 25 years, certified by the fastest growth rate in HDI value among developing regions worldwide,⁷⁹ have not been matched by progressive improvements on the promotion and protection of civic space and fundamental freedoms, as the condition of civic space in the large majority of the Asian countries is rated as obstructed or repressed.⁸⁰

There can be no human development miracle without a safe space for civil

society to express itself, monitor and hold governments accountable to their commitments. For this, an enabling environment for CSOs is key pre-condition for the realisation of SDGs. Alas, as shown by civic space and corruption indexes and ratings mentioned earlier, the safe space for CSOs in several Asian countries is rapidly shrinking. As a result, expressing dissent, exposing misconducts and advocating for accountability can expose CSOs, WHRDs/HRDs to severe threats and risks. In this context, UN Member States will never be able to implement a 2030 Agenda that is “of the people, by the people and for the people”.⁸¹

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Holding Governments Accountable for SDGs Implementation: Role of National Human Rights Institutions

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Abstract

National Human Rights Institutions can bring together different duty-bearers, rights-holders, and other key actors at the national level including governments, parliaments, and civil society by promoting inclusive and meaningful participation of all groups. This paper sheds light on the potential role that NHRIs can play for the implementation of the SDGs, highlighting the case of Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM).

Human Rights as a Central Component of the SDGs

Building upon the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), on 25 September 2015, the 193-Member United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a global consensus affirming a collective political commitment to sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda,¹ unlike its precedent MDGs, claims to be grounded in international human rights norms and standards given the explicit reference to the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties'.²

While the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 associated targets, and 230 indicators provide no explicit reference to human rights nor substantial reflection of human rights obligations, it can be argued that the SDGs are indeed based on the fundamental human rights principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion, and accountability. A transformative human rights-based development agenda can only be achieved by ensuring the integration of such principles in the follow-up and review processes at the global, regional, and national levels.³

The paradigm shift towards a comprehensive international human rights framework with sustainable development

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as its goal creates a synergetic relationship between the SDGs and human rights. The mutually reinforcing relationship between SDGs and human rights that recognises and builds on the universality, interconnectedness, and interdependence of all human rights, works in both directions. On the one hand, grounding the multidimensional goals of the 2030 Agenda in a human rights framework would ensure stronger accountability of the government. On the other hand, the SDGs can be used as a results-oriented instrument for the realisation of human rights.⁴

Accountability is key to delivering on development commitments agreed on in the 2030 Agenda. The Agenda makes an explicit call for the establishment of “a robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework”⁵ at national, regional, and international levels. From a human rights perspective, accountability is a defining characteristic of the human rights framework. Thus having a strong accountability framework in place is vital in ensuring the realisation of the political commitments made by the government. In this context, Goal 16⁶ is particularly important given its focus on improving institutional accountability and effectiveness.

Ensuring Accountability of SDGs National Implementation

Two years prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution encouraging the Paris Principles compliant National

Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) “to continue to participate in and to contribute to deliberations in all relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes in accordance with their respective mandates, including the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda”.⁷ Furthermore, in December 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/70/163, reaffirming the importance of the inclusion and participation of the Paris Principles compliant NHRIs in the discussions, negotiations, and outcomes of the 2030 Agenda.⁸

The adoption of indicator 16.a.1 refers to the “existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles”,⁹ and suggests the relevance of independent NHRIs to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. It is expected that this would generate a multiplier effect on the efforts to integrate human rights principles into the implementation of SDGs, contributing to an enhanced level of human rights protection for all.

As state institutions with either a constitutional or legislative mandate to promote and protect human rights, NHRIs have a crucial role in ensuring that political commitments made by governments are adapted to national contexts and effectively implemented at the national level with human rights as the central focus of the implementation.

Positive attitudes toward the important role of NHRIs in the promotion and protection of human rights have increased over recent decades with more and more states establishing NHRIs as part of their national human rights architecture.¹⁰

Many NHRIs are even vested with a quasi-judicial function to ensure the observance of human rights and to handle complaints alleging violations of human rights.¹¹ However, the lack of governments' receptiveness to human rights arguments put forward by NHRIs undermines the enforceability of recommendations taken by NHRIs, creating accountability gaps in remedies for human rights violations. There needs to be a firm assurance from governments to create conditions for NHRIs to be able to perform their functions, let alone promoting the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions lay down the basic features of NHRIs and their core functions.¹² The full compliance with the Paris Principles is based on the following six main criteria:¹³

1. Mandate and competence
2. Autonomy from Government
3. Independence guaranteed by statute or Constitution
4. Pluralism
5. Adequate resources
6. Adequate powers of investigation.

These six minimum standards serve as a basis to assess the independence and effective functioning of NHRIs and further determine their accreditation status. Indicator 16.a.1 is clear in its message that the creation and fostering of NHRIs compliant with the Paris Principles shows the government's commitment toward national incorporation and implementation on international human rights norms and standards. Independent and effectively functioning NHRIs act as

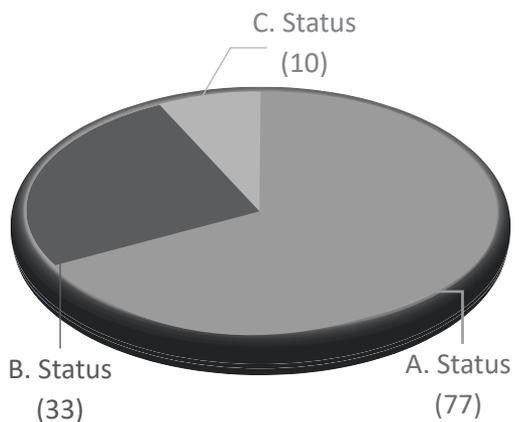
a catalyst to uphold the human rights-related aspects of the SDGs.

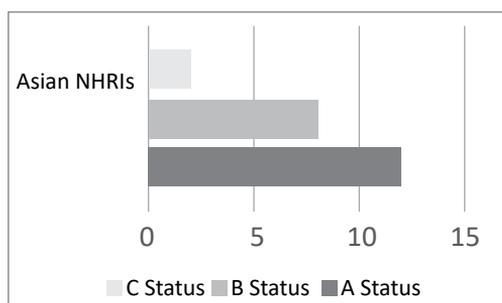
NHRIs' level of compliance with the Paris Principles is regularly assessed by the Sub-Committee of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) – previously known as the International Coordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions (ICC) – an international association of NHRIs established in 1993 “to promote and strengthen NHRIs to be in accordance with the Paris Principles, and to provide leadership in the promotion and protection of human rights”.¹⁴ Thus, the accreditation process of NHRIs should be the basis of indicator 16.a.1.¹⁵

As of February 2018 there are 120 NHRIs worldwide accredited with the GANHRI:¹⁶

Fig. 1

Classification	Number of NHRIs reviewed (worldwide)	Number of NHRIs reviewed (Asia)
A Status	77	12
B Status	33	8
C Status	10	2
Total	120	22





Source: www.nhri.ohchr.org

It should be noted that this indicator is a multipurpose indicator. It can be used to measure other SDGs targets, notably targets 16.a (strengthen national institutions), 10.3 (eliminate discriminatory laws), and 16.b (promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development).¹⁷

Mérida Declaration

The adoption of the Mérida Declaration¹⁸ at the 12th International Conference of the ICC (now GANHRI) in October 2015 reaffirms the pivotal role of NHRIs as accountability institutions in the SDG implementation at the national level. The Declaration recognises that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs “directly or indirectly reflect human rights standards, and integrate cross-cutting human rights principles such as participation, accountability, and non-discrimination”.¹⁹

The unique bridging role of NHRIs within the inclusive monitoring and accountability frameworks that underpin the 2030 Agenda is particularly important as the NHRIs can bring together different duty-bearers, rights-holders, and other key actors at the national level including governments, parliaments, and civil society.²⁰ Further, the Declaration

reaffirms the role of civil society in realising the Agenda, highlighting the need “to ensure full civil society participation in monitoring and implementation [of the 2030 Agenda]”.²¹

The Mérida Declaration, in line with the mandates accorded to the NHRIs under the Paris Principles, outlines the following core functions of NHRIs in the context of SDGs implementation at the national level:

- Provide advice to national and local governments, rights-holders and other actors to promote a human rights-based approach to implementation and measurement of the Agenda;
- Develop and strengthen partnerships for implementation by promoting transparent and inclusive processes for participation and consultation with rights-holders and civil society at all stages of the implementation of the Agenda;
- Engage different stakeholders at the national level to raise awareness and build trust and promote dialogue and participation;
- Assist in the shaping of global national indicators and sound data collection systems;
- Monitor progress in the implementation of the Agenda at the local, national, regional and international levels;
- Hold governments to account for poor or uneven progress in the implementation of the Agenda;

- Respond to, conduct inquiries into, and investigate allegations of rights violations in the context of development and SDG implementation;
- Facilitate access to justice, redress and remedy for those who experience abuse and violation of their rights in the process of development.²²

Komnas HAM and its Role in the SDG Implementation in Indonesia

Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) was established in 1993 by Presidential Decree No. 50 Year 1993 on National Human Rights Commission that was superseded by Law No. 39 Year 1999 on Human Rights. The Law provides Komnas HAM with a broad human rights mandate. Its main tasks include human rights education and dissemination of information about human rights, monitoring of international human rights treaties, and investigation into human rights violations.²³

The review of Komnas HAM's accreditation status in March 2017 has resulted in it receiving an 'A' status from the GANHRI's Sub-Committee on Accreditation.²⁴ The 'A' status of Komnas HAM suggests that Komnas HAM has demonstrated

compliance with the Paris Principles. Therefore, it obtains participation rights in regional and international meetings, including meetings of various UN human rights bodies like the sessions of the UN Human Rights Council.

The Presidential Decree No. 59 Year 2017 on the Implementation of SDGs was issued by President Joko Widodo in July 2017. It serves as the legal basis for the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. While the issuance of such a Decree has been appreciated, the fact that references to international human rights standards were not reflected in the Decree suggests a disconnect between Indonesia's commitments to the realisation of SDGs and the assurance that human rights will be embedded throughout the SDGs.

The Decree, together with its Annex, outlines the roles of the ministries, government institutions, and other stakeholders including civil society at the preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages of the implementation of the SDGs.²⁵ To ensure synergies with the SDGs, most of the global targets have been integrated into the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2015–2019 – a framework that outlines Indonesia's development strategy, policy and national priorities.

Table 1. SDGs Mainstreaming into Development Agenda²⁶

Goal	Global Target	RPJMN Target	National Priorities
Social (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	47	25	Poverty reduction; welfare of the population; increase in food sovereignty; implementation of 'Program Indonesia Pintar dan Indonesia Sehat'; protection of children, women, and marginalised groups.
Economy (7, 8, 9, 10, 17)	54	30	Energy sovereignty; acceleration of the national economic growth; increase in the labour competitiveness; national connectivity; equity in regional development; implementation of independent and active foreign politics.
Environment (6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)	56	31	Water resistance; development of houses and residential areas; climate change and information on climate and disaster; development of the maritime and marine economy; preservation of natural resources, environment and disaster risk reduction; action plan and strategy for Indonesia biodiversity.
Justice and Governance (16)	12	8	Increase quality of the protection for the people; law enforcement; transparency and accountability of the government.

This list of national developmental priorities focuses on, among others, poverty reduction, protection of women, children and marginalised groups, climate action, and promoting transparency and accountability. These priorities have direct relevance to Indonesia's human rights obligations under the national laws and international human rights treaties.

On paper, the role of Komnas HAM at different stages of the SDGs implementation can only be seen in Goal 5 (gender equality), targets 5.2 and 5.3, and Goal 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions), targets 16.1, 16.3 and 16.10.²⁷ As a Paris Principles compliant NHRI, Komnas HAM is well placed to advise the Government on how to realise

human rights in the implementation processes at the national level. Hence, there is an obligation on the part of the Government to ensure Komnas HAM involvement in such processes. This can be done, among others, by promoting inclusive and meaningful participation of all groups, identifying crosscutting achievements or challenges across civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, converting relevant human rights monitoring data into SDG-relevant data, and coordinating and providing advice to the development of national implementation plans.²⁸

In June 2017, Komnas HAM and the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Cooperation to Promote Linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and Human Rights in Indonesia. The MOU emphasises on “the need for a human rights-based approach to collection, production, analysis, and dissemination of data for the monitoring of progress towards SDGs, especially in regards to individuals and groups suffering discrimination”.²⁹

An analytical framework focusing on the alignment between the human rights framework and the SDGs was developed to monitor the progress using human rights-based indicators. It underlines the importance of adopting human-rights based indicators given the gaps identified between Indonesia’s human rights obligations and the national targets and

indicators. In this regards, it is of critical importance that Komnas HAM plays its role in bridging the national context and the international human rights system. This will help the process of adapting human rights to SDGs and measuring the implementation progress. Given the mutually reinforcing relationship between human rights and SDGs, it will also contribute to measuring Indonesia’s compliance with its international human rights obligations.

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Are the SDGs Doomed to Fail?

The Cost of Inaction on Gender Equality

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Abstract

Gender inequality affects not just women and girls, but families, communities and societies at large. This paper highlights the central role played by gender equality throughout the SDGs, as a prerequisite for the realisation of both human rights and development. Looking at the previous experience from the MDGs and the progress made so far with the SDGs, the paper stresses how failing to address gender equality can compromise the SDGs.

Gender inequality comes at a huge cost to and across the world. Not just for women and girls, but for their families, communities and societies at large. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have put great emphasis on gender equality – both through a stand-alone goal and targets included throughout the rest of the agenda – the reality when it comes to implementation so far does not bode well for realising these ambitions. This could not only prove detrimental for the SDGs themselves, it would confirm once again that the lack of concerted and transformative efforts to address the gender gap are standing in the way of the realisation and protection of human rights and sustainable development.

More than Just a Women's Issue

When the issue of gender comes up, the tendency of many, including within the human rights and development fields, is to point at women: they are perceived as the ones that either need to address gender equality or are supposed to be the only ones benefitting from closing the gender gap. The token session on gender mainstreaming with a room full of women and a handful of men is still an all too familiar sight during many development and human rights' summits.

On other occasions, the well-intended reason given to promote gender equality is based on the argument that as women

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and girls represent 50 per cent of the world's population, they cannot be left behind. The thinking is that without half of the global population wholly included and participating, it is impossible to fully realise human rights and sustainable development. And this should be reason enough to close the gender gap.

While in itself not entirely untrue, the reality is much more complex. It is not just a simple one-plus-one solution. The way gender inequality affects not just women and girls, but families, communities and societies at large, makes for a much more complicated equation.

More so, gender inequality affects men and boys too. Not including men and boys in conversations and actions related to gender, besides increasing the risk of defensive and obstructive responses by men and boys, also inhibits the possibility to address toxic forms of masculinity that are harmful to all. Examples of this range from stereotypical expectations on how men should behave or what responsibilities they have, to the reality that men die of suicide more frequently than women.¹

The picture becomes even more complex when considering a wider spectrum of gender. Moving away from a traditional binary understanding of gender forces us to look even more critically at traditional and restrictive gender roles and expectations. Gender conformity is at the heart of gender inequality. This makes it impossible to truly address gender equality without accepting and embracing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) people

and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) rights.

Real Cost of Gender Inequality

The true impact of gender inequality becomes clearer when looking at some specific examples and data on what the real-life implications of the gender gap are. This means we need to look beyond widely held oversimplifications of reality.

However, before doing so, we must note that most data related to gender inequality focusses primarily on women and men, leaving important insights into the position of other genders out.

When it comes to poverty, the long held assumption is that 70 per cent of the global poor are women.² Not only has this proven to be untrue, the simplicity of this message is deceiving. The reality is more complex. There are significant differences between the two sexes across different ages. To begin with, children account for 44 per cent of the global extreme poor. However, among them, there are 105 girls for every 100 boys living in extreme poor households. As they get older, the differences become starker. Of women between the ages of 25 and 34, 122 live in poor households, while the same is only true for 100 men in the same age group. Between the ages of 40 and 65, there seem to be little differences in poverty rates between the genders, but this changes in reverse once reaching the elderly years.³

Having more such complex data is crucial to be able to understand how gender issues manifest themselves in major

global challenges, such as poverty. The need for research and data collection disaggregated by gender, age and other distinguishing factors is not just crucial in itself, it needs to be constantly monitored and updated.

In a more straightforward fashion, research from 2015 showed that two-thirds of the 781 million illiterate adults in the world were women.⁴ The consequences of this do not only relate to their dependency and their involvement in their community, it has also been proven that literacy of women causes improved livelihoods, better child and maternal health, and enhances girls' access to education. Data from 219 countries collected between 1970 and 2009 indicated that for every additional year of education, women of reproductive age had child mortality decreased by 9.5 per cent.⁵

Gender inequality also plays a role in humanitarian emergency situations. Natural disasters, including droughts, floods and storms, kill more women than men. This is likely due to structural gender inequality in the societies they affect.⁶ In Aceh, Indonesia, for example, more than 70 per cent of the people who died in the 2004 Asian tsunami were women.⁷

A similar pattern is discernible when it comes to human rights. Even though the recognition that all women's rights are human rights is gaining ground, human rights violations in many instances still disproportionately affect women and girls. Not assuring gender mainstreaming

is included in any effort striving for the promotion and protection of human rights, guarantees its failure. This applies to a wide variety of concerns related to human rights.

For example, 35 per cent of women worldwide are estimated to have experienced either physical or sexual intimate partner violence, or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives.⁸

In 2012, a global study estimated that of all female homicide victims worldwide, almost half were killed by an intimate partner or family member, while for only six per cent of men the same was true.⁹

In 2016, another global study found that 51 per cent of all human trafficking victims globally are adult women. When girls are added, it even comes to 71 per cent. Nearly three out of every four child trafficking victims are girls, and almost three out of every four trafficked women and girls are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.¹⁰

Data collected between 2006 and 2010 showed that female voters are four times as likely as men to be intimidated during elections in fragile and transitional States.¹¹

Could Gender Equality be the Silver Bullet?

The good news, however, is that the reverse is also true. Working on gender equality has proven to have great benefits for our communities and societies. This will require time, investments,

comprehensive and holistic efforts, and lasting commitment. But it is a prerequisite for realising sustainable development and human rights anywhere.

Investing in gender equality, for example, is enormously beneficial for women's political, economic and social rights, and for achieving inclusive economic growth. The 2007 Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific estimated that gender equality could gain the region nearly US\$80 billion a year, primarily stemming from closing gender gaps in employment and education.¹²

In a similar vein, in 2011, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations calculated that access for women to agricultural resources at the same level as men could lead to a production increase on women's farms in developing countries of up to 20–30 per cent. Potentially this could lead developing countries to an increase of agricultural production of 2.5–4 per cent that could reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12–17 per cent, or 100–150 million people.¹³

Similarly, in 2015, it was estimated that if the employment participation gap and wage gap between women and men were closed, women could increase their income globally by up to 76 per cent, representing a global value of US\$17 trillion.¹⁴

When it comes to human rights and justice, data from a 2012 report that looked at 40 countries showed a positive correlation between the proportion of female police and reporting rates of sexual assault.¹⁵

Gender Equality Across the SDGs

The recognition of the importance of addressing gender inequality has increased steadily in the last decades. This has been reflected in several global resolutions, conventions and agendas, among them the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, arguably, all of these previous references fell short of putting gender equality front and centre as a holistic and all-encompassing objective.

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs do. Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are referenced throughout the Preamble and the narrative text of the Declaration itself. More importantly, Goal 5 aims to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Additionally, there are explicit targets related to gender equality in nine out of the 17 goals, specifically in Goals: 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 17. Gender equality has even been identified as an enabler and accelerator for all the other SDGs.

It is noteworthy that Goal 16 aims to “Promote peace and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”, yet does not include such an explicit reference to gender equality among its targets. However, it does, as do other goals, refer to it implicitly when utilising terms such as ‘for all’ or ‘significantly reduce all forms of violence’ that would also impact gender-based violence or violence against women and girls.

The SDGs do stand by a fairly traditional understanding of gender, as there is no reference to LGBTIQ people or SOGIE rights in neither the narrative declaration nor in the SDGs and targets.

Have We Learned from the MDGs?

The comprehensive inclusion of gender equality in and across the SDGs is in line with the knowledge that without addressing the gender gap sustainable development, and thus the SDGs are unattainable. It also means realising gender equality and all the challenges that come with it, have become a prerequisite for fulfilling the entire agenda.

Experience from the MDGs has taught us that much less ambitious objectives have already proved difficult to realise. The MDGs focussed primarily on much more narrow goals, specifically related to improving gender equality in education and improving maternal health. These still proved to be very challenging to attain. One of the main findings was that to close the gender gap, it is needed to address the fundamental and structural causes of gender inequality.¹⁶

Status Alert: Not Enough Progress to Date

Just a few years into the implementation of the SDGs, much focus has been on initial results and on assessing whether implementation plans are likely to lead to the full realisation of the goals and targets. When it comes to Goal 5 and

other gender related targets, it seems clear fundamental changes in strategies and policies are needed.

While the Sustainable Development Goals Reports for 2017¹⁷ and 2018¹⁸ – reviewing progress – show some advancements in certain areas related to education, maternal mortality and the participation of women in politics, overall progress has been challenging. Reasons for this sound eerily similar to the challenges the MDGs faced.

The 2017 report explicitly says, “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will require much more vigorous efforts, including legal frameworks, to counter deeply rooted gender-based discrimination that often results from patriarchal attitudes and related social norms.”¹⁹

In 2017, the session of the UN High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) reviewed six different goals, including Goal 5.²⁰ In the lead up to this review, several expert meetings, policy briefs and other assessments identified both key challenges and recommendations for moving forward.

One of the primary obstacles identified was the lack of dedicated investments in addressing gender inequality in a comprehensive and transformative manner. Too often gender equality is added on, many times at the last minute, to broader development or human rights projects. This means that it becomes a side-objective to the primary goals

of any activity or project. Meaningful participation of women becomes a token exercise rather than a central component. And this results in substantive analysis of the root causes of gender inequality being overlooked.

In the cases where gender inequality is at the centre of a given strategy or programme, far too often the focus is only on women's empowerment. While this is a crucial component of addressing the gender gap, such projects still keep the primary focus of change with and among women themselves, rather than structural and transformative change in our broader societies.

Lack of gender-sensitive data has been identified as another key obstacle to the realisation of Goal 5. This applies both to the lack of disaggregated data by sex, age and other characteristics, as well as to the lack of strategic monitoring of trends and challenges in the implementation of Goal 5. Similar challenges were identified with the MDGs.²¹

Of the over 230 indicators that were developed to globally monitor the implementation of the SDGs, 53 make explicit reference to women, girls, gender, or sex, including the 14 targets of Goal 5 itself. However, not all targets have internationally established methodologies or standards for monitoring. These have only been developed for 30 out of these 53.²²

The same applies to many strategies or programmes implemented to realise

Goal 5 or gender inequality at large. This not only makes it challenging to verify or monitor whether any progress is being made, but also implies that adjustments to strategies and programmes are based on presumptions and educated guesses. Given the importance of addressing gender issues, this is highly problematic.

Still, some interesting projects have been undertaken as part of the national plans. Such positive examples should be assessed and promoted, while lessons learned should be distilled and shared with other Member States.

When looking at the few highlights related to the implementation of Goal 5 in Asia Pacific so far, there are two areas that stand out according to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): improvements in women's participation in Parliament across the region; and demands for family planning.²³

There are some particular countries that are worth highlighting, such as: Nepal, where female parliamentary representation increased from 5.9 per cent in 2000 to 29.5 per cent in 2015; Kyrgyzstan saw an increase from 1.4 per cent to 23.3 per cent; and Singapore jumped from 4.3 per cent to 25.3 per cent. More so, in 2015, Timor-Leste, due to electoral law requirements, had the highest rate of female representation in the national parliament in the region at 38.5 per cent.

New Zealand came second with 31.4 per cent of seats held by women.²⁴

When it comes to the demand for family planning satisfied with modern methods, 86.3 per cent of women of reproductive age either married or in-union were being reached in Asia Pacific in 2015. This was slightly above the global average of 82.2 per cent. However, the report did note that this regional figure did not reflect differences across the region, nor did it reflect particular groups from rural or remote areas that were underserved.²⁵

Road Towards 2030

While only three years into the implementation of the SDGs, it can already be said with some certainty that if there is no fundamental change in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Goal 5, the entire SDG agenda will be in trouble. This means certain concerns need to be addressed now, rather than waiting for the eventual review in 2030.

To begin with, it is crucial that all UN Member States, and other stakeholders included in the realisation of the SDGs, focus on truly addressing structural barriers to gender equality. Gender inequality is engrained in our families, our communities and our societies. They are part of our cultural and societal standards, laws and traditions. We need to address the heart of the problem, instead of expecting change from efforts that only touch on the

consequences of these structural causes. Only through holistic, comprehensive and transformative change can gender equality, as aimed for across and throughout the SDGs, be truly realised.

To be able to do so, we need to hold accountable all stakeholders that committed to the SDGs, particularly on a national level. Member States unanimously adopted the SDGs, and in doing so, committed to gender equality. Tokenism or superficial efforts cannot be accepted.

Significantly, more targeted investments and funding to realise gender equality need to be demanded from all Member States, donors and business corporations. Not just because it is the right thing to do, but because the benefits of closing the gender gap would in the end affect us all. This needs to include extensive monitoring mechanisms to assure financial accountability, and promises made are actually realised.

A 2018 report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) stated that if there were no significant Government investments in care work across the globe, gender inequality would continue to increase by 2030. This will negatively impact our economies. As women tend to be care providers, and thus highly represented in unpaid work, our aging populations will drive many women out of the paid labour market. According to the report, investments need to be doubled to counter this trend.²⁶

The lack of reliable and comprehensive gender-sensitive data needs to be tackled. Without quality knowledge and information, all efforts to realise Goal 5 and other targets related to gender equality will be like throwing darts in the dark. We might end up hitting something by coincidence, but it is unlikely we will get full marks.

Finally, the traditional, binary view of gender implied in the SDGs needs to be addressed. While the United Nations (UN) is increasingly acknowledging LGBTIQ people and SOGIE rights, this is not reflected in what at the moment arguably is the most important development agenda in the world. Lack of gender diversity in the SDGs is not just unethical, it undermines the effectiveness of the entire endeavour.

Role of Other Stakeholders in Realising Gender Equality Through SDGs

Obviously, Member States are primarily responsible for the realisation of the SDGs. They need to be held accountable to commitments made. But that does not mean that the responsibility ends there. The SDGs were thought out as an agenda for the ‘people, planet and prosperity’, and as such, all people play a role in realising them, including the UN and civil society organisations.

There are several key tasks both various UN agencies along with civil society

organisations should prioritise, including: engaging in the development of national and regional action plans; promoting the prioritisation of gender equality; assuring adequate funding is allocated in budgeting; and monitoring progress and critically reviewing reporting.

However, they should also utilise the SDGs and their language to promote gender equality beyond the SDGs themselves. The SDGs are a tool of great significance to gain sustainable development and human rights, including gender equality, but the struggle should not stand or fall with the SDGs. Therefore, rather than seeing the SDGs as an end in themselves, they should be used to their full capacity to further the work on sustainable development, human rights and gender equality.

This also means both the UN and civil society organisations need to be self-critical when it comes to gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women’s rights. To be able to hold Member States accountable, they need to walk the talk themselves. If gender equality is not a central component of all they do and who they are – whether they work directly on the SDGs or more broadly on sustainable development and human rights – they end up undermining the sustainable development agenda themselves.

Recent incidents and stories coming out of the #MeToo Movement have made it abundantly clear that much remains to be done on that front, including within the UN system and civil society organisations.

Conclusion

The SDGs are ambitious and holistic. This is both their strength and potentially their weakness. The integration of gender equality across and throughout the SDGs is a primary example of this. The central role gender equality has within the SDGs showcases how important it is as a prerequisite for attaining sustainable development and human rights, but this might also end up being the downfall of the SDGs if it is not properly and comprehensively addressed.

The impact that gender equality will have on the realisation of human rights and sustainable development for our families, communities and societies, makes it that much more crucial that the SDGs do not fail. It is the responsibility of each one of us, of Members States, the UN, civil society organisations and many more, to make sure they will not.

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Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development: Pakistan's Stand on Implementation of SDGs after Two and a Half Years

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Abstract

Both Federal and Provincial Pakistan Governments have demonstrated their willingness and commitment to SDGs. However, the SDGs are still unknown to many of the organisations, private sector and even Government officials. This paper analyses how Pakistan has progressed so far in promoting, financing and tracking the SDGs, focusing on the important role that can be played by civil society organisations, private sector and local governments.

A retrospective review of the 15-year era of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reveals several issues and challenges that hindered Pakistan's progress. War against terrorism, earthquake in 2005 and heavy floods in 2010 were the main impediments in the proper implementation of the MDGs. While attainment of the MDGs was declared a national objective, they were not sufficiently embedded in the public policies and resource allocation processes. The localisation of the MDG agenda from Government and political

stakeholders not being up to the mark, and in addition the limited coordination between different tiers and sectors of the Government have resulted in low awareness of MDGs and consequently lack of effort.

With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the trend has been reversed and many positive initiatives have been undertaken. From the very beginning, the Government of Pakistan has demonstrated strong commitment towards the SDGs and proactively adopted them as National

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Development Goals through a unanimous National Assembly resolution.¹ Both Federal and Provincial Governments have also demonstrated their willingness and commitment to SDGs by allocating public resources to establish SDG Support Platforms – a joint initiative with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – within the planning institutions.

At the Federal level, in March 2018 the National Economic Council has approved the SDGs National Framework as a guiding document to achieve SDGs through a localised approach reflecting high priority targets for Pakistan.² The Provincial Governments have also initiated a consultative and research driven process to develop the Provincial SDGs Framework. Demonstrating political ownership at the highest level, these frameworks serve as a strategy document to guide future development plans and policies.

As lack of coordination was a major challenge in the MDGs era, this has now been addressed through a robust coordination mechanism that synchronises efforts across diverse stakeholders. While the SDG Support Platforms are at the centre of this coordination mechanism with the primary responsibility to coordinate, thematically focused committees have also been established to bring together Government, civil society, development agencies, academia and the private sector. With the provincial planning departments convening these meetings, it showcases the willingness of public institutions to listen to diverse

views and use a consultative approach to achieving SDGs.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluating progress are key components of the SDGs National Framework. It is important that the data ecosystem is strengthened by generating sufficient data and creating a robust mechanism to timely report progress for course correction. Pakistan's challenge is the lack of data availability, especially at the district level. This is a major impediment in the reporting of progress on the 244 SDG indicators. At the moment, the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) are the only two surveys that carry the bulk weight of SDGs indicators.

Another area of concern is not having sufficient financial resources to achieve SDGs. It is essential that the current processes and capacities to effectively invest public resources are reviewed and strengthened with regard to the priority development issues of Pakistan. Simultaneously, it is important to explore alternative sources of financing that can support public funds. This includes looking at the private sector and their pool of corporate resources that can be utilised to either improve business practices or invest in new development initiatives. Individual level philanthropic contributions can also play a role in investing in areas that can lead to long-term sustainable results.

Despite some progress Pakistan has made in creating an enabling environment

for SDGs, a lot more needs to be done. There is scope for far greater integration of the private sector given their leading role in achieving some of the most critical economic development goals related to employment, environment protection, sustainable production and others. Similarly, the role and potential of engaging civil society organisations (CSOs) has not been sufficiently explored. CSOs are a key stakeholder that can serve as a provider of citizen inputs to the Government and simultaneously, as a facilitator and catalyst to implement and advocate for SDG initiatives at grass-roots level. Finally, continuous progress review of SDGs is an important element in achieving the targets we aim for, and it is dependent upon online and offline reporting tools that should be fed with reliable and timely data.

The 2030 Agenda was adopted on 25 September 2015 by the heads of states of 193 countries under the aegis of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The UN has strengthened the structure at the international level across UN bodies tasked with supporting implementation of SDGs at national and sub-national levels, as well as various intergovernmental working groups at regional and global levels. UN bodies and related stakeholders including governments and CSOs have jointly set 17 goals with 169 targets and a total number of 244 indicators. Keeping in view the three principles of SDGs – Universality, Integration and Leave No One Behind – the UN agencies and other related stakeholders have divided

the indicators to be achieved at various levels. Therefore, 44 indicators are to be achieved at the global level, 45 at the national level, 90 at the provincial and 65 at the local level. The focus of SDGs implementation is domesticating each of the SDG targets and indicators so that locally calibrated plans can be developed and linked to indicators of achievement and realistic end points.

There is now increasing attention to processes at the national level, where, in the case of Pakistan, the Governments at federal and provincial levels are working with a range of stakeholders and struggling to establish a framework for implementation that identifies a realistic set of locally appropriate targets and indicators. In this context, there is a great deal of appreciation that the Government has already commenced the process of implementation of SDGs by approving the earlier mentioned SDGs National Framework targets and indicators, notifying Parliamentary Task Forces on SDGs to oversee implementation of the national priority framework, and establishing SDG Units in the Planning Commission of Pakistan and Planning & Development Department at the Provincial headquarters. However, most of the civil society, academics, private sector, local governments and other related stakeholders were unaware of these efforts.

Last year, on the eve of the 2nd anniversary of SDGs at UNGA in September 2017, Awaz Foundation Pakistan: Centre

for Development Services (AwazCDS-Pakistan)/Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA) held provincial and national level consultations with media and academia as well as with Parliamentarians including members of the Parliamentary Task Forces on SDGs both at the national and provincial levels. Unfortunately, most of them were not even exposed to MDGs, so addressing SDGs was even harder, although the Government has been claiming significant progress in terms of implementation of SDGs. At the same time, CSOs or their representative networks like PDA and others, are not being given ample opportunities to engage with national and provincial level interventions and processes for the implementation of SDGs.

As national and provincial work has already commenced in earnest, CSOs can benefit from systematically preparing to engage with national and provincial processes by identifying whom to work with and to what end. Such planning can help ensure that resources will be targeted towards efforts that will make the biggest impact.

Awaz Foundation Pakistan: Centre for Development Services (AwazCDS-Pakistan)/Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA) has carried out a mapping/assessment on the current status of the implementation of the SDGs that would identify the accomplishments, opportunities, challenges and gaps at the national and provincial levels.

The Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Pakistan and United Kingdom (UK) Aid

supported the mapping/assessment 'Where Pakistan stands on implementation of SDGs 2018'.³ The study connects and highlights the current status of the global commitment of the Pakistan Government on SDGs since September 2015. It is now being shared with government bodies, Parliamentarians and other related stakeholders. This is mainly through policy to action forums in order to generate a dialogue at the four provincial and national levels for greater accountability, better participation and increased financing for SDGs implementation and engagement of CSOs in the voluntary national reviews (VNRs) processes at various levels. Towards the beginning of general elections in 2018, these open forums will help mobilise political leadership for the implementation of SDGs in Pakistan, encouraging them to translate Agenda 2030 in their political manifestos. Presently, much of the planning for the implementation of SDGs is already set, but the main gap lies in the political will for implementation. One of the aims was to ensure that SDGs are timely translated into national development plans, with people and their organisations being included in this implementation from the start.

Alignment: Assessing National/Provincial/Local Priorities of SDGs

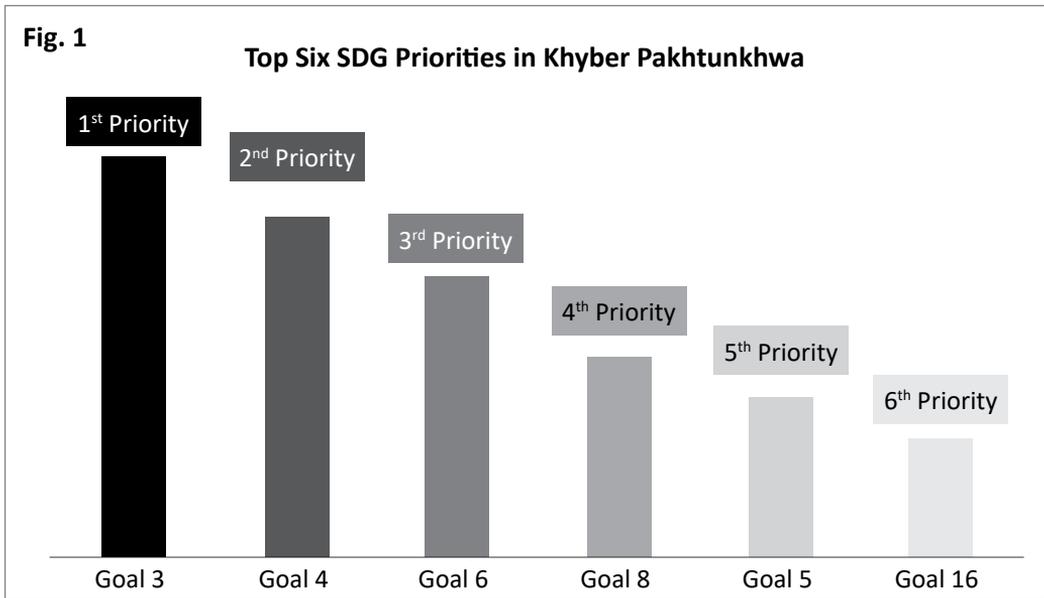
As a first step, the Government and other related stakeholders, including the CSOs and private sector, should jointly develop the national, provincial and local levels priority agenda for implementation of the SDGs. Once priorities are set, then

what is required is for them to be aligned with the respective SDGs, the targets, and indicators with a clear indication of time. The NEC, under the aegis of the Planning Commission of Pakistan, has set the National SDGs Framework that indicates national targets and indicators of the SDGs as well as the required policy support. The provincial and local Governments have yet to ponder upon the requirements of setting their priorities. Almost all the participants and key contributors from the national/provincial level, other than the representatives of the Planning Commission of Pakistan, were unaware of any such National SDGs Framework. But the Pakistan Government was the first to have adopted the SDGs and simultaneously established the SDGs Secretariat at the Parliament House, notified Parliamentary Task Forces at federal and provincial levels and set up the SDG Units at the Planning Commission Islamabad, as well as all the four Planning and Development Departments/Boards at the provincial level. SDG Units at Islamabad, Lahore and Quetta are sufficiently equipped, staffed

and functional whereas the rest of the SDG Units at Peshawar and Sindh are still in the process of being set up.

Furthermore, to tap into the local network of CSOs, the Federal and Provincial/Regional Governments partnered with UNDP to jointly undertake a comprehensive consultative process across all provinces and regions. The objective was to hear from the local communities and marginalised groups their most pressing development issues and address them accordingly in the framework for SDGs.

The consultations undertaken in the form of workshops, focus group discussions and key informant interviews allowed mapping of priority goals for each province and region. The findings revealed that at a national level, priority goals for Pakistan are Goal 4 (Quality education), Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). Similar priorities also prevail at the provincial and regional levels.⁴



Source: www.pk.undp.org

Defining Institutional Coordination Mechanism

Developing an institutional coordination mechanism is key to implement the SDGs successfully. But this institutional coordination is extremely weak at every level though certain coordination committees and steering committees are already established at the federal and provincial headquarter levels. The findings of the assessment revealed that there is hardly any coordination, if at all, among various ministries and departments at every level. Interestingly, there appears to be no coordination among the SDGs Task Forces and SDGs Units about the progress and challenges on the implementation of SDGs. Ms Azma Bukhari, Head of SDGs Task Force Punjab and Ms Rahila Hameed Durrani, Head of the SDGs Task Force Balochistan were keen on more coordination among the Government

bodies and assured their help in the coordination of institutional building at least among the Parliamentary Task Forces and SDG Units. This coordination needs to be further strengthened.

From Policy to Action: Prioritising SDGs Accelerator

Translating policies into actions would fetch meaningful results when they are implemented in letter and spirit. Governments in Pakistan are very active in policy formulations, particularly on the agendas that are required by regional or global bodies under certain treaties/accords or commitments. However, the situation is disappointing when it comes to implementation of these policies. The Government of Punjab has notified and added Annexure III of its Project Cycle 1 – the first administrative document for

the commencement of a project – to align the targets and indicators with that of the respective SDGs. The other provinces do not have this information. Mr Ali Raza, Director General SDG Unit, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was surprised to be informed that the PC1 document was amended by the Government of Punjab. For him, such a document could only be amended through NEC. This implies that a great level of coordination is required between all the units and related departments in order to share their respective good practices. The officials sitting in the Planning Commission and SDGs units have a clear understanding on prioritisation and setting SDGs accelerators and leverage points. But at the action level, lots more need to be done.

Integrating SDGs into Budgets and Financing SDGs Agenda

One of the major reasons for Pakistan's failure in achieving MDGs was its poor budgeting for provision of social amenities. The same situation is being observed now towards the implementation of SDGs. Why talk of increased financing for SDGs when majority of the allocation made at the time of MDGs for basic health, education, water and sanitation, etc., have been fully utilised, with more than 50 per cent of the allocated budget remaining unspent while the rest is not utilised effectively. The Federal Government has proposed exclusive funding for the Prime Minister's Special Programme for SDGs while providing matching grant to SDGs

Units with the collaboration of UNDP. But most of the members of the Task Forces of the SDGs, and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) were unaware of any such grant or fund. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has allocated 30 per cent of its Annual Development Programme resources to local Governments and most of them are being used to achieve targets/indicators related to some of the SDGs. The other provinces have not yet allocated resources for their respective local Governments. Punjab has been preparing an open budget index and doing budget transparency reviews in connection with the utilisation of allocated resources. For the realisation of SDGs, Pakistan has to allocate 10 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) every year till 2030, otherwise another failure awaits it.

Data, Monitoring and Reporting

There is no mechanism to track the progress of SDGs implementation due to lack of data availability at the central level. While various ministries and departments, NGOs/INGOs and private sector organisations are collecting data for their own purposes, there is no mechanism for the collection of authentic data at the central level, particularly for the purpose of monitoring the SDGs and reporting. The Planning Commission of Pakistan organised a Multi-Stakeholders Consultation on Data Gap Analysis on 10 April 2017.

None of the participants was satisfied with the data availability and its validity across Pakistan. Most of the participants believe that if they do not have fair results of the Census, it is going to be difficult to trust other data sources. A separate portal for data is to be launched shortly by the SDGs Unit/Planning Commission at Islamabad. This portal will provide links of all authentic data sources for clear monitoring and reporting of SDGs.

Advocacy, Resources and Partnerships

The SDGs are still unknown to many of the CSOs, private sector and even Government officials. The major reasons for this are no proper mechanisms for information availability and sharing of advocacy activities, resources and partnership opportunities.

The Punjab Government/SDG Unit at the Planning & Development Department Punjab has engaged some experts from the CSOs/social/economic sectors in their Advisory/Cluster/Sector Committees established for strategising SDGs implementation mechanisms. But most of the participants were unaware of all such engagements. SDGs sensitisation seminars were organised at the divisional level in Punjab but no such activity was organised at any of the other three provinces. On the one hand, the SDG Unit Punjab claimed that SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committees have been established at every district level with the Deputy Commissioner of the respective district

heading it. On the other hand, this information was not verified by any of the CSOs and other Government officials who participated.

UNDP has translated goals and targets in Urdu and Sindhi languages for dissemination through the SDG Units. But with the indicators yet to be translated into the local languages, a large majority of people are deprived of a better understanding of the SDGs. In short, at every level this great vacuum for advocacy and partnerships on SDGs is for the civil society sector to fill.

Private Sector Engagement and SDGs

The private sector has remained one of the key stakeholders in the formulation of the SDGs. They need to play their appropriate role in the implementation of SDGs by fulfilling their Corporate Social Responsibility. In Punjab, the Government has established a Public Private Partnership Cell in the Planning & Development Department. But the Cell has poor coordination with the SDG Unit. None of the members of the Chamber of Commerce & Industries from Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi understand the SDGs and even any engagement with SDGs units or Government/CSOs in relation to SDGs. This is the most important sector as far as the technical and financial resources are concerned, therefore both Government and non-government entities should engage the private sector in order to achieve SDGs at their earliest. There is great level

of willingness in the private sector to extend support for the common good. The Government should also initiate the mechanism for regularisation and monitoring of the private sector to ensure they are fulfilling their promises of a decent working environment, appropriate wages and social protection and security.

Local Governments and SDGs

The SDGs Unit/Planning Commission of Pakistan organised a national level Local Government Summit on SDGs in Islamabad in March 2017, looking at the localisation of SDGs in Pakistan in which representatives of various local governments from all the four provinces were present. The participants had promised that they could achieve SDGs if local Governments are given ample resources.⁶

The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has moved a step further and allocated 30 per cent of the resources of the Annual Development Programme to be utilised through the local Government. However, the local Governments in other provinces are still waiting for the resources. The Government of Punjab has selected Rajan Pur and Bhakkar as priority districts for the implementation of SDGs.

Goal 16 Indicators and Related Initiatives

According to the survey⁶ conducted by PDA in December 2016, more than 70 per cent of people set Goal 16 as one of the priority goals for Pakistan. Later on, UNDP

had similar results while prioritising the goals.⁷ The current mapping shows that Punjab is ahead when it comes to Goal 16 and its implementation. The Gender Parity Report, with authentic database on violence against women is published every year starting from January 2016 under the aegis of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). The other provinces are lagging behind, although Commissions on the status of women are also notified and somehow functional at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, whereas in Balochistan such a Commission is yet to be announced. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has also established a provincial level directorate for human rights apart from the regional office of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), whereas the other provinces have only regional NCHR offices. However, no agency has any data on human rights violations in their respective provinces except for some complaints lodged by Government officials or NGOs. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a highly professional and equipped Right to Information (RTI) Commission that has appointed more than 2500 RTI Officers in its 17 districts. They have a comprehensive system to address the complaints and ensure the information is provided at the right time. The RTI Commissions in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan are non functional. Open Government Partnership processes have already been initiated at the federal and Punjab levels, whereas the same process has yet to be initiated in other provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Sindh.

CSOs Engagement with Government and other Stakeholders

Most of the CSOs/NGOs/INGOs/media organisations, and forums of various civil societies that were engaged in the mapping and policy to action forums, were unaware of the efforts being made by the Government for the implementation of SDGs. Few cases of CSOs engagement were noticed in Punjab and at the federal level, where some of the leading organisations such as Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Pakistan and the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) were engaged in the advisory councils, cluster and sector committees. Most of the CSOs have not even been aware of the SDGs Task Forces and SDGs Units at the national and provincial levels. Most of the NGOs/CSOs/INGOs have been unhappy about the new regulations being imposed by the Government.⁸ They also rejected the No Objection Certificate (NOC) requirements for the implementation of their socio-economic development and political empowerment programmes at the grassroots levels. They have been of the view that the Government will not be able to achieve SDGs without the meaningful participation of people and engagement of CSOs/NGOs.

It is important to note that most of the NGOs/CSOs expressed their difficulties in translating SDGs in their routine

developmental interventions and programmes. Most of the CSOs/NGOs have been wanting to initiate joint efforts to hold the governments and private sector accountable for the implementation of SDGs in a timely manner.

Recommendations and Ways Forward to Government, CSOs, Private Sector and all Concerned Stakeholders:

- Connect the dots and breakdown the traditional silos;
- Inspire cross-sectoral collaborations;
- Enhance capacity to design and implement development pathways;
- Identify bottlenecks and address them;
- Prioritise and invest on interventions that can yield multiple dividends like education, health, women and girls empowerment, renewable energy, climate change and accessible water and sanitation, etc;
- Share and adapt good experiences and innovative solutions;
- Engage and sensitise the masses since the SDGs are known as the Peoples' Own Agenda;
- Eliminate disconnect between Government and other relevant stakeholders.

Endnotes

- 1 The National Assembly of Pakistan, unanimous resolutions no.301 to 309, Islamabad: Senate of Pakistan, 13 February 2017, available at http://www.senate.gov.pk/uploads/documents/resolutions/1487830752_705.pdf; Azam Khan, “UN’s development agenda endorsed”, The Express Tribune, 20 February 2016, available at <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1050810/uns-development-agenda-endorsed/>
- 2 Zia ur Rehman, Where Pakistan Stands on Implementation of SDGs 2018: Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Islamabad: AwazCDS-Pakistan, March 2018), available at <http://awazcds.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Where-Pakistan-Stands-on-SDGs-2018.pdf>
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 United Nations Development Programme Pakistan, Advancing Partnerships for Human Development, Islamabad: United Nations, 11 April 2017, available at <http://www.pk.undp.org/content/pakistan/en/home/presscenter/articles/2017/04/11/advancing-partnerships-for-human-development.html>
- 5 United Nations Development Programme Pakistan (SDGs Support Unit), Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Data Gap Analysis, Karachi: United Nations and Government of Sindh, 4 October 2017, available at http://www.sindhpn.gov.pk/uploads/SDG/2018/2017-10-04-Multi-StakeholderConsultationonDataGapAnalysisReport_ActivityReport.pdf
- 6 Pakistan Development Alliance, Provincial Consultation on “Leave No One Behind” with implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Multan: Pakistan Development Alliance, January 2017, available at <http://pda.net.pk/pda-servey/>
- 7 United Nations Development Programme Pakistan, SDG Prioritization: Citizens’ perspective, available at goo.gl/6NWuo5
- 8 “NPOs Reject Excessive Taxation On Non-Profit Sector”, Pakistan Development Alliance, 6 September 2017, available at <http://pda.net.pk/2017/09/06/npos-reject-excessive-taxation-on-non-profit-sector/>. The policy for regulation of International Non-Governmental Organisations in Pakistan is available at http://www.ead.gov.pk/userfiles1/file/EAD/2018/ngos/iii_%20NGOs%20Policy%202013.pdf. The policy for regulation of organisations receiving foreign contributions is available at http://www.ead.gov.pk/userfiles1/file/EAD/2018/ngos/iv_%20NGO's%20Policy%202015.pdf

Annex I: Linkages between the SDGs and Relevant International Human Rights Instruments

Source: OHCHR

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
1. No poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 11; CRC art. 27] • Right to social security [UDHR art. 22; ICESCR art. 9; CRPD art. 28; CRC art. 26] • Equal rights of women in economic life [CEDAW arts. 11, 13, 14(2)(g), 15(2), 16(1)]
2. Zero hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to adequate food [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 11; CRC art. 24(2)(c)] • International cooperation, including ensuring equitable distribution of world food supplies [UDHR art. 28; ICESCR arts. 2(1), 11(2)]
3. Good health and well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to life [UDHR art. 3; ICCPR art. 6], particularly of women [CEDAW art. 12] and children [CRC art. 6] • Right to health [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 12], particularly of women [CEDAW art. 12]; and children [CRC art.24] • Special protection for mothers and children [ICESCR art.10] • Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application [UDHR art. 27; ICESCR art. 15(1)(b)] • International cooperation [UDHR art. 28, DRtD arts. 3-4], particularly in relation to the right to health and children’s rights [ICESCR art. 2(1); CRC art. 4]

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
<p>4. Quality education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to education [UDHR art. 26; ICESCR art. 13], particularly in relation to children [CRC arts. 28, 29]; persons with disabilities [CRC art. 23(3), CRPD art. 24]; and indigenous peoples [UNDRIP art. 14] • Equal rights of women and girls in the field of education [CEDAW art. 10] • Right to work, including technical and vocational training [ICESCR art. 6] • International cooperation [UDHR art. 28; DRTD arts. 3–4], particularly in relation to children [CRC arts. 23(4), 28(3)], persons with disabilities [CRPD art. 32], and indigenous peoples [UNDRIP art. 39]
<p>5. Gender equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women [CEDAW arts. 1–5] and girls [CRC art. 2], particularly in legislation, political and public life (art. 7), economic and social life (arts. 11, 13), and family relations (art. 16)] • Right to decide the number and spacing of children [CEDAW arts. 12, 16(1)(e); CRC art. 24(2)(f)] • Special protection for mothers and children [ICESCR art. 10] • Elimination of violence against women and girls [CEDAW arts. 1–6; DEVAW arts. 1–4; CRC arts. 24(3), 35] • Right to just and favourable conditions of work [ICESCR art. 7; CEDAW art. 11]
<p>6. Clean water and sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to safe drinking water and sanitation [ICESCR art. 11] • Right to health [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 12] • Equal access to water and sanitation for rural women [CEDAW art. 14(2)(h)]

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
7. Affordable and clean energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to an adequate standard of living [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 11] • Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application [UDHR art. 27; ICESCR art. 15(1)(b)]
8. Decent work and economic growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work [UDHR art. 23; ICESCR arts. 6, 7, 10; CRPD art. 27; ILO Core Labour Conventions and ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work] • Prohibition of slavery, forced labour, and trafficking of persons [UDHR art. 4; ICCPR art. 8; CEDAW art. 6; CRC arts. 34–36] • Equal rights of women in relation to employment [CEDAW art. 11; ILO Conventions No. 100 and No. 111] • Prohibition of child labour [CRC art. 32; ILO Convention No. 182] • Equal labour rights of migrant workers [CMW art. 25]
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application [UDHR art. 27; ICESCR art. 15(1)(b)] • Right to access to information [UDHR art. 19; ICCPR art. 19(2)] • Right to adequate housing, including land and resources [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 11] • Equal rights of women to financial credit and rural infrastructure [CEDAW art. 13(b), art. 14(2)]

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
<p>10. Reduce inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to equality and non-discrimination [UDHR art. 2; ICESCR art. 2(2); ICCPR arts. 2(1), 26; CERD art. 2(2); CEDAW art. 2; CRC art. 2; CRPD art. 5; CMW art. 7; DRtD art. 8(1)] • Right to participate in public affairs [UDHR art. 21; ICCPR art. 25; CEDAW art. 7; ICERD art. 5; CRPD art. 29; DRtD art. 8(2)] • Right to social security [UDHR art. 22; ICESCR arts. 9-10; CRPD art. 28] • Promotion of conditions for international migration [CMW art. 64] • Right of migrants to transfer their earnings and savings [CMW art. 47(1)]
<p>11. Sustainable cities and communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to adequate housing, including land and resources [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 11] • Right to participate in cultural life [UDHR art. 25; ICESCR art. 15; ICERD arts. 5, 7; CRPD art. 30; CRC art. 31] • Accessibility of transportation, facilities and services particularly of persons with disabilities [CRPD art. 9(1)], children [CRC art. 23], and rural women [CEDAW art. 14(2)] • Protection from natural disasters [CRPD art. 11]
<p>12. Responsible consumption and production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to health including the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 12] • Right to adequate food and the right to safe drinking water [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 11] • Right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural resources [ICCPR, ICESCR art. 1(2)]

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
<p>13. Climate action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to health including the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 12; CRC art. 24; CEDAW art. 12; CMW art. 28] • Right to adequate food & right to safe drinking water [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 11] • Right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources [ICCPR, ICESCR art. 1(2)]
<p>14. Life below water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p> <p>15. Life on land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to health including the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 12; CRC art. 24; CEDAW art. 12; CMW art. 28] • Right to adequate food & right to safe drinking water [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 11] • Right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources [ICCPR, ICESCR art. 1(2)] • Right to health including the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 12; CRC art. 24; CEDAW art. 12; CMW art. 28] • Right to adequate food & right to safe drinking water [UDHR art. 25(1); ICESCR art. 11] • Right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources [ICCPR, ICESCR art. 1(2)]

Sustainable Development Goals	Related Human Rights*
<p>16. Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to life, liberty and security of the person [UDHR art. 3; ICCPR arts. 6(1), 9(1); ICPED art. 1] including freedom from torture [UDHR art. 5; ICCPR art. 7; CAT art. 2; CRC art. 37(a)] • Protection of children from all forms of violence, abuse or exploitation [CRC arts. 19, 37(a)], including trafficking (CRC arts. 34–36; CRC–OP1)] • Right to access to justice and due process [UDHR arts. 8, 10; ICCPR arts. 2(3), 14–15; CEDAW art. 2(c)] • Right to legal personality [UDHR art. 6; ICCPR art. 16; CRPD art. 12] • Right to participate in public affairs [UDHR art. 21; ICCPR art. 25] • Right to access to information [UDHR art. 19; ICCPR art. 19(1)]
<p>17. Partnerships for the goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right of all peoples to self-determination [ICCPR, ICESCR art. 1(1); DRtD art. 1(1)] • Right of all peoples to development, & international cooperation [UDHR art. 28; ICESCR art. 2(1); CRC art. 4; CRPD art. 32(1); DRtD arts. 3-5] • Right of everyone to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application, including international cooperation in the scientific field [UDHR art. 27(1); ICESCR art. 15(1)] • Right to privacy [UDHR art. 12; ICCPR art. 17], including respect for human rights and ethical principles in the collection and use of statistics [CRPD art. 31(1)]

(*) This table is intended for illustrative purposes only. The listing of relevant rights is not exhaustive. Under international human rights law, and under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, data for all targets needs to be collected and disaggregated by the prohibited grounds of discrimination under international human rights law, including the respect, protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. Obligations regarding international assistance and cooperation also apply to all Goals.

List of international human rights instruments:

1948 – Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR)

1965 – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

1966 – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

1966 – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

1979 – International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

1984 – Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

1986 – Declaration on the Right to Development (UNDRTD)

1989 – Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

1990 – International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW)

1993 – Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW)

2000 – Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OP-1)

2006 – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

2006 – International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (ICPEP)

2007 – Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

For more information, please see the website of OHCHR: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MDGs/Post2015/SDG_HR_Table.pdf

Annex II: Global Indicator Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Goal	Target	Indicator
1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1.1. By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day	1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)
	1.2. By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age 1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
	1.3. Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable
	1.4. By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance	1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services 1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure
	1.5. By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters	1.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population 1.5.2 Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) 1.5.3 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 1.5.4 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

Goal	Target	Indicator
1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions	1.a.1 Proportion of domestically generated resources allocated by the government directly to poverty reduction programmes 1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection) 1.a.3 Sum of total grants and non-debt-creating inflows directly allocated to poverty reduction programmes as a proportion of GDP
	1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions	1.b.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment 2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
	2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons	2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age 2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
	2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment	2.3.1 Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size 2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status

Goal	Target	Indicator
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
	2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed	2.5.1 Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium- or long-term conservation facilities 2.5.2 Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk, not at risk or at unknown level of risk of extinction
	2.a. Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries 2.b. Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round	2.a.1 The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures 2.a.2 Total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector 2.b.1 Agricultural export subsidies
	2.c. Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate Timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility	2.c.1 Indicator of food price anomalies
	3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births

Goal	Target	Indicator
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births	3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate
	3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, waterborne diseases and other communicable diseases	3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations 3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population 3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population 3.3.4 Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population 3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions against neglected tropical diseases
	3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being	3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease 3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate
	3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol	3.5.1 Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders 3.5.2 Harmful use of alcohol, defined according to the national context as alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol
	3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries
	3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes	3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
		3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

Goal	Target	Indicator
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	<p>3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all</p> <p>3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination</p>	<p>3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access, among the general and the most disadvantaged population)</p> <p>3.8.2 Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income</p> <p>3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution</p> <p>3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)</p> <p>3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning</p>
	<p>3.a. Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate</p>	<p>3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older</p>
	<p>3.b. Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all</p>	<p>3.b.1 Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme</p> <p>3.b.2 Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health sectors</p> <p>3.b.3 Proportion of health facilities that have a core set of relevant essential medicines available and affordable on a sustainable basis</p>
	<p>3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States</p>	<p>3.c.1 Health worker density and distribution</p>
	<p>3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks</p>	<p>3.d.1 International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness</p>

Goal	Target	Indicator
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
	4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
	4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and nonformal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
	4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
	4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
	4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
	4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment

Goal	Target	Indicator
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.a. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)
	4.b. By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries	4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study
	4.c. By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
	5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence

Goal	Target	Indicator
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age
	5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location
	5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
	5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education
	5.a. Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure 5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control
	5.b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex
	5.c. Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services

Goal	Target	Indicator
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	6.2.1 Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water
	6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	6.3.1 Proportion of wastewater safely treated 6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality
	6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity	6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time 6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources
	6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate	6.5.1 Degree of integrated water resources management implementation (0–100) 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation
	6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes	6.6.1 Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time
	6.a. By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies	6.a.1 Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan
	6.b. Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management	6.b.1 Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services	7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity 7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology
	7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix	7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption

Goal	Target	Indicator
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency	7.3.1 Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP
	7.a. By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology	7.a.1 International financial flows to developing countries in support of clean energy research and development and renewable energy production, including in hybrid systems
	7.b. By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support	7.b.1 Investments in energy efficiency as a proportion of GDP and the amount of foreign direct investment in financial transfer for infrastructure and technology to sustainable development services
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
	8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors	8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person
	8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex
	8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead	8.4.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP 8.4.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP

Goal	Target	Indicator
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
	8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training
	8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms	8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age
	8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment	8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status 8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status
	8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate 8.9.2 Proportion of jobs in sustainable tourism industries out of total tourism jobs
	8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	8.10.1 (a) Number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults and (b) number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults 8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
	8.a. Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries	8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements
	8.b. By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization	8.b.1 Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy

Goal	Target	Indicator
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation	9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all	9.1.1 Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road 9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport
	9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries	9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita 9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment
	9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets	9.3.1 Proportion of small-scale industries in total industry value added 9.3.2 Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit
	9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities	9.4.1 CO ₂ emission per unit of value added
	9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending	9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP 9.5.2 Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants
	9.a. Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	9.a.1 Total official international support (official development assistance plus other official flows) to infrastructure
	9.b. Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities	9.b.1 Proportion of medium and high-tech industry value added in total value added
	9.c. Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020	9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology

Goal	Target	Indicator
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average	10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population
	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
	10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard	10.3.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law
	10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality	10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers
	10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations	10.5.1 Financial Soundness Indicators
	10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions	10.6.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations
	10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies	10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of yearly income earned in country of destination 10.7.2 Number of countries that have implemented well managed migration policies
	10.a. Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements	10.a.1 Proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff
	10.b. Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes	10.b.1 Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)

Goal	Target	Indicator
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	10.c. By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent	10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing
	11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons	11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
	11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries	11.3.1 Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate 11.3.2 Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically
	11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	11.4.1 Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage (cultural, natural, mixed and World Heritage Centre designation), level of government (national, regional and local/municipal), type of expenditure (operating expenditure/investment) and type of private funding (donations in kind, private non-profit sector and sponsorship)
	11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population 11.5.2 Direct economic loss in relation to global GDP, damage to critical infrastructure and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters
	11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	11.6.1 Proportion of urban solid waste regularly collected and with adequate final discharge out of total urban solid waste generated, by cities 11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted)

Goal	Target	Indicator
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months
	11.a. Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning	11.a.1 Proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city
	11.b. By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels	11.b.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
	11.c. Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials	11.c.1 Proportion of financial support to the least developed countries that is allocated to the construction and retrofitting of sustainable, resilient and resource-efficient buildings utilizing local materials
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.1 Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries	12.1.1 Number of countries with sustainable consumption and production (SCP) national action plans or SCP mainstreamed as a priority or a target into national policies
	12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	12.2.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP 12.2.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP
	12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses	12.3.1 Global food loss index

Goal	Target	Indicator
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement 12.4.2 Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment
	12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled
	12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	12.6.1 Number of companies publishing sustainability reports
	12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities	12.7.1 Number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans
	12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	12.8.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment
	12.a. Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production	12.a.1 Amount of support to developing countries on research and development for sustainable consumption and production and environmentally sound technologies
	12.b. Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	12.b.1 Number of sustainable tourism strategies or policies and implemented action plans with agreed monitoring and evaluation tools
	12.c. Rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities	12.c.1 Amount of fossil-fuel subsidies per unit of GDP (production and consumption) and as a proportion of total national expenditure on fossil fuels

Goal	Target	Indicator
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population 13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
	13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	13.2.1 Number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other)
	13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning	13.3.1 Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula 13.3.2 Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions
	13.a. Implement the commitment undertaken by developed country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible	13.a.1 Mobilized amount of United States dollars per year between 2020 and 2025 accountable towards the \$100 billion commitment

Goal	Target	Indicator
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	13.b. Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities Goal Target Indicator
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution	14.1.1 Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density
	14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans	14.2.1 Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches
	14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels	14.3.1 Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations
	14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics	14.4.1 Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
	14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information	14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas
	14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation	14.6.1 Progress by countries in the degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Goal	Target	Indicator
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism	14.7.1 Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries
	14.a. Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries	14.a.1 Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology
	14.b. Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	14.b.1 Progress by countries in the degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries
	14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of “The future we want”	14.c.1 Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources Goal Target Indicator
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land deflation and halt biodiversity loss	15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area 15.1.2 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type
	15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally	15.2.1 Progress towards sustainable forest management
	15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world	15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area

Goal	Target	Indicator
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land deflation and halt biodiversity loss	15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development	15.4.1 Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity 15.4.2 Mountain Green Cover Index
	15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	15.5.1 Red List Index
	15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	15.6.1 Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits
	15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products	15.7.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked
	15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	15.8.1 Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species
	15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts	15.9.1 Progress towards national targets established in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020
	15.a. Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems	15.a.1 Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems
	15.b. Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation	15.b.1 Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems
	15.c. Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	15.c.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked

Goal	Target	Indicator
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age 16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause 16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months 16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live
	16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children	16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month 16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18
	16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all	16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms 16.3.2 Unsented detainees as a proportion of overall prison population
	16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime	16.4.1 Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars) 16.4.2 Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments
	16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months 16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months

Goal	Target	Indicator
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar) 16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services
	16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group
	16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance	16.8.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations
	16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration	16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age
	16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months 16.10.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information
	16.a. Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime	16.a.1 Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles
	16.b. Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development	16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law Goal Target Indicator

Goal	Target	Indicator
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Finance 17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection	17.1.1 Total government revenue as a Proportion of GDP, by source 17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes
	17.2 Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries	17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI)
	17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources	17.3.1 Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget 17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP
	17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress	17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services
	17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries	17.5.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries
	Technology 17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism	17.6.1 Number of science and/or technology cooperation agreements and programmes between countries, by type of cooperation 17.6.2 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed

Goal	Target	Indicator
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed	17.7.1 Total amount of approved funding for developing countries to promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies
	17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology	17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet
	Capacity-building 17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation	17.9.1 Dollar value of financial and technical assistance (including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation) committed to developing countries
	Trade 17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, nondiscriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda	17.10.1 Worldwide weighted tariff-average
	17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020	17.11.1 Developing countries' and least developed countries' share of global exports
	17.12 Realize Amely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access	17.12.1 Average tariffs faced by developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States
	Systemic issues <i>Policy and institutional coherence</i> 17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence	17.13.1 Macroeconomic Dashboard

Goal	Target	Indicator
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Systemic issues <i>Policy and institutional coherence</i> 17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development	17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development
	17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development	17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation
	<i>Multi-stakeholder partnerships</i> 17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries	17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
	17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships	17.17.1 Amount of United States dollars committed to (a) public-private partnerships and (b) civil society partnerships
	<i>Data, monitoring and accountability</i> 17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, Timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts	17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics 17.18.2 Number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics 17.18.3 Number of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding
	17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries	17.19.1 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries 17.19.2 Proportion of countries that (a) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (b) have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration Goal Target Indicator

About FORUM-ASIA

The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) is the largest membership-based human rights and development organisation in Asia with a network of 58 members in 19 countries across the region. FORUM-ASIA works to promote and protect all human rights for all, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organisations and defenders in Asia and beyond. FORUM-ASIA seeks to strengthen international solidarity in partnership with organisations and networks in the global South.

FORUM-ASIA was founded in 1991, and established its Secretariat in Bangkok in 1992. Since then, other offices have been opened in Geneva, Jakarta, and Kathmandu.

FORUM-ASIA has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC Status) and a consultative relationship with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).

This publication has been made possible with the generous support of the European Union, Ford Foundation and Sweden International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

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“Without freedom, human rights and concerted efforts to decrease inequality, SDGs may continue to remain a set of promises that get postponed” – John Samuel, FORUM-ASIA Executive Director

The human rights based approach to sustainable development is a key thematic priority of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA). While fostering knowledge and advocacy in human rights and development, FORUM-ASIA’s Working Paper Series 4 aims to provide a historical perspective of the concept of development as human right, as well as highlighting critical issues and ways forward for the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 2030 Agenda envisages a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, and its 17 SDGs commit to tackling critical interconnected human rights issues such as poverty, peace, inequality, gender, poor governance and discrimination, as well as climate and environmental ones. With this set of ambitious goals and targets, the protection and promotion of civic space and human rights defenders are a crucial precondition for the realisation of the SDGs.

From providing an overview of national and regional trends and progresses, to analysing the role of national human rights institutions and the importance of gender equality, this working paper reinforces the idea that peoples’ rights should be at the centre of the development agenda, ensuring that present and future generations live in a fair and sustainable world.

ISBN: 978-616-7733-18-0



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