

OUTCOME REPORT

Capacity Needs Assessment of Government Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Identification of Priority Areas for Capacity Development in the Asia and Pacific Region and Eastern Africa

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government
United Nations Project Office on Governance



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Executive Summary



1 Executive Summary

This *Capacity Needs Assessment of Governmental Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Identification of Priority Areas for Capacity Development in the Asia and Pacific and Eastern Africa Regions* (hereafter “Capacity Needs Assessment”) was conducted by the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), from 2017 to 2018.

The main objective of the Capacity Needs Assessment is to assess public institutions’ capacity needs and priorities in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 47 Member States in Asia and the Pacific and Eastern Africa with focus on three group of countries: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs)/Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Low- and Middle-Income Countries (MICs). This exercise helps identify institutional capacity gaps, challenges and capacity needs in developing countries for achieving the 2030 Agenda and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The outcome of this Capacity Needs Assessment could help UN DESA/DPIDG to better develop capacity development programme activities in line with the demands of the Member States and contribute to the strengthening of capacities of public institutions in developing countries, to translate the SDGs into strategies and programmes at the country level in achieving the SDGs.

The Capacity Needs Assessment was conducted through an extensive research and analysis on the country responses to the Questionnaire prepared and distributed by the DPIDG/UNPOG (See *Annex 1*), the Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports, as well as desk review of other documents and resources available. For analytical purpose, the 47 countries were grouped into three country groups – 1) Small Island Developing States (SIDS), 2) Least Developing Countries (LDCs)/Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and 3) Low- and Middle-Income Countries (MIC).

National Development Strategies

All countries included in the assessment have integrated the SDGs into their national development plans. This has enabled alignment of the strategic directions of national development plans with the SDGs, and has created a single track, rather than a dual track of national plans and the SDGs. This has been essential to enable access to the national government budget for SDG implementation and the allocation of human resources from government agencies.

LDCs usually have their national development strategy underpinned by the aim of becoming an Middle-Income Country (MIC). The focus on MIC status is reflected in attention to economic growth as a goal of many development strategies and programmes, often viewed in terms of inclusive growth. For SIDS, all states have systematically incorporated their responses to climate change in national development strategies and plans. Also, MICs have integrated the SDGs into their development plans and often mapped out the SDGs against the objectives of their national plans.

Institutional Arrangements

There have been two approaches to institutional arrangements. One concerns the installation of a high level cross sectoral committee or council to lead the SDG implementation process. Leadership in most cases is provided by the Prime Minister or the President. The other approach to institutionalizing the SDGs is through the use of existing Ministries or Divisions, like the Ministry of Planning in Cambodia, the National Planning Commission in Ethiopia and the National Planning Division in Tonga. In all cases, responsibility for the oversight over the 2030 Agenda is located at a high level of government, which is beneficial to secure the need for continuous high-level political support to the SDG implementation process.

Given the complex relations between the SDGs and national development goals and objectives, several countries have started mapping out the support requirements of line ministries and other government agencies for each of the SDGs. This has resulted in a relatively complex set up of inputs and responsibilities from multiple line ministries and government agencies for each of the goals.

Engagement with Non-Government Actors

Given the scope and complexity of the SDGs, there is a need to mobilize a broad range of stakeholders beyond government actors, including civil society organizations, the scientific community and the private sector as well as UN agencies, development partners, philanthropical organizations and citizens. In some countries, the media are explicitly included as a stakeholder. These non-government actors are usually part of the technical level working groups and task forces, which provide advice to the policy level committees and councils that guide SDG implementation. Non-governmental actors provide a way to link the aspects of the development process with the concrete needs of people at the local level, in particular in terms of underserved areas and groups to which civil society and private sector can at times have better access.

Financing of the SDGs

In LDCs, financing of the SDG through domestic financial resources is usually not sufficient, though many of the countries concerned have engaged in tax reform to increase domestic resources. In addition to Official Development Assistance (ODA), many countries look for foreign direct investment (FDI) as an external means of resource generation for SDG achievement, although the volatility of related capital flows does not necessarily align with longer term SDG achievements.

In MICs, access to ODA has decreased with domestic resource mobilization to obtaining the financial means needed for SDG achievement. This is done in a variety of ways, including tax reform, public-private partnerships, attraction of FDI and prevention of capital outflows. Resources are being tapped from civil society, philanthropy and business, in particular in MICs.

For SIDS, ODA remains important as a funding source, with the need for developed countries that are part of the OECD DAC to abide by the 0.7 per cent of GNI to be allocated towards ODA.

Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

Many countries have conducted mapping of existing data and assessed the number of indicators versus the total of 232 indicators to identify data gaps. Monitoring data are used in annual reporting on the SDGs, which is usually shared with the Parliament, and which informs the next national budgeting cycle.

Monitoring of SDG achievement is usually coordinated by the agency leading the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with actual data collection conducted by the statistical office, in terms of census and survey data and by the various line ministries and government agencies, in terms of administrative data. The process is supported to varying degrees in the various countries by the scientific community and civil society organizations.

Challenges Faced

Looking at the challenges faced across the three country groups, a relatively consistent pattern emerges. Most important challenges concern capacities for monitoring, review and follow-up, the lack of sufficient financial resources and the limitations in terms of human resource capacities.

Other constraints identified include difficulties in coordination and in the localization of the SDGs and their sub-national implementation. Coordination refers both to bringing together government agencies as well as creating linkages between government and non-governmental stakeholders. These coordination mechanisms are required to bring together the inputs of all stakeholders concerned in an organized way which is important for SDG realization.

Specific challenges mentioned in SIDS include the difficulty in longer term and strategically oriented development programming, in part made more difficult due to political instability in some countries. The specific geographical context of the SIDS further adds specific constraints as does the limited size of their populations spread over a wide area.

Priority Areas for Capacity Support

When identifying priorities for support, the issues concerned broadly overlap with the challenges identified, with a focus on support for monitoring, review and follow-up, capacity development, resource mobilization and South-South knowledge sharing and exchange of good practices. What stands out is the explicit mention in the LDCs of capacity development of the public sector, which is an important enabler for SDG achievement.

Recommendations for Future Capacity Development Programmes of UN DESA/DPIDG to Better Assist the Member States with Their Implementation of the SDGs

- 1) Support the development of capacities of public administration at national and sub-national levels, to incorporate Goals in national and sub-national development plans and to mainstream them throughout government development planning and implementation;
- 2) Development and implementation of innovative funding mechanisms at national and sub-national levels, tapping into domestic and international resources as well as public and private resources;

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- 3) Support the development of mechanisms to enhance coordination across government stakeholders as well as between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the implementation of the SDGs;
 - 4) Development of capacities for monitoring of SDG indicators, including data gathering, analysis of development results and the analysis and use of data and information to inform the SDG implementation process, in order to enhance results; and
 - 5) Support peer learning on SDG achievement across countries in the Asia-Pacific and East Africa region, in a systematic way

Capacity Needs Assessment of Subnational-Level Government Institutions

The Capacity Needs Assessment is also supplemented by the analysis on the capacity needs of subnational-level government institutions. A separate Questionnaire was prepared by the UN DESA/DPIDG and was distributed the occasion of the 2nd International Mayors Forum held in Lilongwe, Malawi in May 2018 (See Annex 2).

The result of the 44 survey responses from the Forum participants, most of whom are officials from cities, municipalities and districts, was analyzed. This analysis provides an important analytical contribution to understanding the progresses, challenges and priorities in SDG implementation at local level. It also offers an overview on the demands at the local level for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as the level of cooperation between the central-local level governments which is crucial to achieving the SDGs.

In this subnational assessment, it was shown that a majority of the cities and districts have taken steps as well as specific policies and measures to implement the 2030 Agenda at the local level. It was also shown that a great number of the respondents have adopted measures to improve the well-being of the poorest and most vulnerable and to ensure that no one is left behind. The assessment also provided an analysis on the key challenges identified in implementing the SDGs at local level. While financial challenge is mentioned as the great challenge, there are other major challenges such as the lack of capacity building and political power. The priority areas in SDG implementation identified by the respondents also include: building infrastructure, ensuring clean water & sanitation and providing quality education.

Another important lesson learned from the analysis outcome is about the cooperation and policy coordination between national and sub-national governments in pursuit of SDG implementation. According to the responses, there need more engagement of central-level government with sub-national level authorities. Some of the challenges in central-local coordination include: lack of funding, incomplete decentralization and lack of capacity building for human resources, lack of commitment by political leaders and exclusion of the vulnerable groups.

2

Introduction

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. This includes not only sales and purchases but also any other financial activities that may occur. Proper record-keeping is essential for determining the correct amount of tax liability.

In addition, the document emphasizes the need to understand the various tax laws and regulations that apply to the business. This knowledge is crucial for identifying opportunities for tax savings and for avoiding penalties and interest charges.

The second part of the document provides a detailed overview of the different types of taxes that a business may be required to pay. This includes income tax, sales tax, and property tax, among others. Each type of tax is explained in detail, including the methods for calculating the tax liability and the procedures for paying the tax.

Finally, the document discusses the various strategies and techniques that can be used to minimize the tax liability. This includes taking advantage of tax deductions and credits, as well as using other tax planning techniques. The document provides a comprehensive guide to these strategies, helping businesses to make the most of their tax resources.



2 Introduction

2.1 Objectives and Scope of the Report

The current report presents the results of the capacity needs assessment of government institutions to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was conducted from 2017 to 2018. The initiative is meant to contribute to the strengthening of capacities of public institutions in developing countries to translate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into strategies and programmes at the country level and to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other agreements, notably the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the SAMOA Pathway. The capacity needs assessment has also aimed to promote policy coherence and the strengthening of institutional coordination amongst ministries and different levels of government. It aims to develop national capacities to ensure that government services i) benefit and engage the most vulnerable groups, ii) advance innovation in service delivery across sectors and iii) adhere to the principle of leaving no one behind.

The assessment was administrated by the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG). DPIDG is mandated to assist the Member States in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda of the SDGs, including through fostering effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, inclusive and innovative public governance, administration and services for sustainable development.¹ UNPOG, as subsidiary office, has a particular focus on developing countries, least developed countries, land-locked developing countries, small-island developing states and middle-income countries in Asia and the Pacific, as well as other regions around the world. The focus of UNPOG is on the governance and institutional arrangements, country strategies and programmes in support of achieving the SDGs. For areas of UNPOG support, see Box 1 below.

Box 1. Areas of UNPOG Support

- o Promoting policy coherence and strengthening institutional coordination among ministries and levels of government; galvanizing efforts to update the institutional frameworks to the SDGs, mobilize institutions around the SDGs and other agreements, notably the Climate Change Agreement and the SAMOA Pathway and improve their functioning, and promote change in support of the SDGs;
- o Building governments' capacity to ensure that services benefit the poorest and most vulnerable and to promote innovation in service delivery across sectors as one of the main drivers to advance the SDGs and ensure that "no one is left behind";
- o Strengthening government capacity to develop open innovation systems to engage societies, including the poorest and most vulnerable, in designing, delivering and implementing policies for realizing SDGs and to design and implement effective partnerships.

Source: <http://www.unpog.org/overview/overview03.php>

¹ <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/About/Us/Who-We-Are>

The purpose of the capacity needs assessment is to identify existing capacities as well as capacity gaps and support needs of developing countries to enable public institutions to translate the SDGs and other internationally agreed goals into strategies and programmes at the country level and to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In order to be able to address these issues, the capacity needs assessment is designed to address the following key questions:

- What are the institutional challenges related to implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Climate Change Agenda? What capacities do the various types of institutions require in relation to SDG achievement? What efforts have been made to engage parliament, local governments, civil servants, civil society and the private sector in order to widen support for the SDGs?
- What kind of institutional and other mechanisms and reforms have been used to spearhead the localization and implementation of the SDGs, integrate policies and review progress so far? How effective and inclusive are the current institutional mechanisms?
- How can institutions deliver quality public services to all and truly improve the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable?

The geographical scope of the capacity needs assessment included a total of 47 countries in the Asia and Pacific region and Eastern Africa, in line with the mandated geographical areas of UNPOG. The 47 countries were divided into 3 groups: 16 Small Islands Developing States (SDIS) (Group A), 19 Least Developed Countries (LDCs)/Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) (Group B) and 12 Low - and Middle-Income Countries (MICs) (Group C). The selected countries include 12 landlocked countries. An overview of the countries concerned is provided in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Three Country Groups of the Capacity Needs Assessment
(A total of 47 countries)**

Group A: Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (16 Countries)	Group B: Least Developed Countries (LDCs) / Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) (19 Countries)		Group C: Low- and Middle-Income Countries (MICs) (12 Countries)
	Asia & Pacific Region (7 Countries)	Eastern Africa (12 Countries)	
Comoros	Afghanistan*	Burundi*	Brunei
Fiji	Bangladesh	Djibouti	China
Kiribati	Bhutan*	Eritrea	DPR Korea
Madagascar	Cambodia	Ethiopia*	India
Maldives	Laos*	Malawi*	Indonesia
Marshall Islands	Myanmar	Mozambique	Malaysia
Micronesia	Nepal*	Rwanda*	Mongolia*
Nauru		Somalia	Pakistan
Palau		South Sudan*	Philippines
Papua New Guinea		Tanzania	Sri Lanka
Samoa		Uganda*	Thailand
Solomon Islands		Zambia*	Viet Nam
Timor-Leste			
Tonga			
Tuvalu			
Vanuatu			

* Indicates Landlocked Countries

2.2 Methodology

The process of data collection for the present assessment made use of a mixed-methods approach, using qualitative as well as quantitative data collection techniques. Methods included a desk review of existing materials in order to make use of existing knowledge and to provide a basis for the assessment.

A survey questionnaire was sent to senior management of government agencies, mostly in charge of SDG implementation in the country, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country offices in all countries of the three country groups, in order to get a grounded overview of existing capacities in terms of SDG implementation, lessons learned and good practices identified, as well as details on capacity needs and priorities. Survey questions focused on how government agencies take the SDGs on board in their national strategies and plans, the institutional arrangements concerned, mobilisation of non-state actors, resource use and arrangements for monitoring, review and follow-up. Moreover, support needs for capacity development were identified, in particular in the areas of governance, public administration and institutional development. For details on the components of the survey questionnaire, see Box 2 below. The complete questionnaire can be found in Annex 1.

In addition, some face-to-face interviews were conducted with several selected countries during the UN DESA Symposium on “Building Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions and Public Administration for Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” held in Incheon in December 2017.

Box 2. Contents of the Questionnaire of the Capacity Assessment Survey

- Part I:** Integration of the SDGs in the National Development Process
- Part II:** Public Administration and Public Service in SDG Implementation
- Part III:** Mobilising Civil Society, the Private Sector, Scientific Community and Citizens
- Part IV:** Resources and Technology
- Part V:** Monitoring, Review and Follow-up
- Part VI:** UN DESA Expected Role in Supporting Capacity Development Efforts of Countries in Special Situations

Limitations to the methodology included the risk of a low response rate to the survey questionnaire. This was addressed through easy online access to the questionnaire and regular follow-up by UNPOG staff to country stakeholders concerned, including government agencies and UNDP offices, in order to ensure a substantial response rate. Moreover, the desk review of many existing documents, such as Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), provided the means to fill in gaps in the response to the questionnaire. For an overview of the use of the various methodologies across the three country groups, see Table 2.

Table 2. Methodologies Used Across the Three Country Groups

Group A: Small Island Developing States (16 Countries)				Group B: Least Developed Countries (LDCs) / Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) (19 Countries)						Group C: Middle Income and Low Income Countries (12 Countries)									
				Asia & Pacific Region (7 Countries)			Eastern Africa (12 Countries)												
Country	1	2	3	Country	1	2	3	Country	1	2	3	Country	1	2	3				
Comoros				Afghanistan				Burundi				Brunei Darussalam							
Madagascar				Bangladesh				Djibouti				China							
Fiji				Bhutan				Eritrea				DPR Korea							
Kiribati				Cambodia				Ethiopia				India							
Maldives				Lao PDR				Malawi				Indonesia							
Marshall Islands				Myanmar				Mozambique				Malaysia							
Micronesia				Nepal				Rwanda				Mongolia							
Nauru								Somalia				Pakistan							
Palau								South Sudan				Philippines				Sri Lanka			
Papua New Guinea								Tanzania				Uganda				Thailand			
Samoa								Zambia								Viet Nam			
Solomon Islands																			
Timor-Leste																			
Tonga																			
Tuvalu																			
Vanuatu																			

Legend: 1=Voluntary National Review Report; 2=Questionnaire response; 3=Interview

3

Contexts of the SDGs and Their Implementation

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3 Contexts of the SDGs and Their Implementation

3.1 From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals

The Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Declaration² resulting from the Millennium Summit in September 2000 provided the basis for the Millennium Development goals, targets and indicators, which guided the international development process in the first 15 years of the 21st century. The formulation of a set of goals related to the Millennium Declaration was a response to the proliferation of multilateral conferences and their resulting declarations in the early 1990s.

The first list of international development goals was developed earlier by the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 1996 as part of the document “Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation”. This document included three overarching goals of economic well-being, social development and environmental sustainability and regeneration. The limited focus of the goals can be seen as reflecting the views of a relatively small group of politicians and aid experts from developed countries. In 1997, a working set of monitoring indicators was developed jointly with the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to assess progress compared to the 1990 baseline.³

An enhanced focus on poverty reduction in the World Bank, the IMF and the UN reform to enhance UN coherence provided the underpinnings for the agreement on common development goals in the Millennium Declaration, from which the eight MDGs and their targets were extracted. However, some aspects included in the Millennium Declaration did not end up in the MDGs, such as good governance and democratization. Based on the World Summit in 2005, four more targets were added to the MDGs, resulting in 8 goals with 21 targets. These goals and targets were officially recognized in the declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005.

The success of the MDGs is often attributed to its focus on poverty eradication and social development, as well as its efforts to address the fallacy of structural adjustment programmes that economic development in itself would be sufficient to reduce poverty and improve access to health and education. Moreover, the inclusion of Goal 8 and its introduction of mutual accountability played a significant role in its success, as well as the focus on enhanced public social services and the role of government leadership in country-level development processes. The MDGs, with their focus on targets and their lack of prescriptive content, rapidly became the dominant development discourse after 2005.⁴

2 United Nations: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration. September 2000.

3 OECD, ‘Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation’, Paris, May 1996.

4 Hulme, David, ‘The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): A Short History of the World’s Biggest Promise’, Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper 100, September 2009; United Nations Development Programme, Independent Evaluation Office: Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in Supporting National Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, May 2015.

Learning from MDG Implementation⁵

The MDGs, with their focus on the fulfilment of the most basic human needs, were mainly relevant for the least developed and low-income countries. However, a UNDP evaluation shows that UNDP's supports to MDG integration into national development strategies succeeded to a certain extent in about half of the countries, far below the target of three quarters. Competing political agendas on one hand, and crisis situations on the other, negatively influenced the inclusion and adaptation of the MDGs and their targets into national development plans.⁶

Most countries included all MDGs or a subset of them into their national development plans. The use of the MDGs, however, differed substantially across countries. For example, some countries integrated the MDGs as general, consensual objectives, while others integrated them as planned and monitored targets or even purely as a quote or reference. In a study conducted on 50 countries and the way these countries integrated the MDGs in national development planning, over time more countries appeared to integrate the MDGs and targets based on sharing the agenda concerned. Yet, even then, this differed substantially across the MDG targets, with water and sanitation, child and maternal health, poverty and primary schooling as the most integrated, while environmental targets and gender equality beyond education as the least integrated.⁷

Countries developed the MDG targets at a sub-national level, in particular once the MDG targets had been achieved at the national level. This was particularly the case in middle-income countries, in which some of the MDG targets were of little use at the national level. Nevertheless, countries that achieved targets at the national level always had remaining deprived areas where the concerned objectives had not yet been achieved, justifying a more focused sub-national level approach through the localization of the MDGs for underserved areas. While middle-income countries could finance such initiatives from government budgets, LDCs and low-income countries often depended on ODA funding. This tailored programming to conditions at the national as well as the local level proved important in order to enhance the effectiveness of development planning.⁸

Country-level MDG reporting has been an operational success. Between 2001 and 2014, approximately 450 country MDG reports were produced in 134 countries.⁹ The number of reports per country over this period varied substantially from 0 to 7, with most countries producing 2 or 3 reports, in particular around the MDG review summits of 2005 and 2010. In several African countries, sub-national reports were produced, of which 35 were from in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰ Although statistical capacities improved at the country level, resulting in higher quality data, important gaps in terms of capacities and data availability remained. Country-level monitoring was supplemented by reporting at regional and global levels. Reporting at the global level made use of the lists of the MDG targets and indicators, while country-level reporting made use of localized adaptations of these. This resulted in a disconnection in terms of monitoring the MDG achievement, even though country-level and global-level monitoring often tried to serve different purposes. The acceleration of selected MDGs that were lagging behind in the years towards 2015 showed mixed results, with related funding in particular in low-income countries slow to materialize.¹¹

5 United Nations Development Programme, Independent Evaluation Office: *Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in Supporting National Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals*, May 2015.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid. The integration across development priorities was based on a study on MDG targets and adaptation Strategies in 19 countries quoted in the evaluation report.

8 Ibid.

9 Available at undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/mdg/mdg-reports and at undp.org/index.cfm?P=87&f=A.

10 Available at <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/8657>

11 Ibid.

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

At the 2010 MDG Review Summit, the UN began to consider the ways to advance the development agenda beyond 2015, the end date foreseen for the MDGs. Informed by the call for an inclusive process from the June 2012 Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the UN Secretary-General established the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, an intergovernmental open working group and a UN system task team to prepare for the SDGs. Informed by a large consultation process at the country and global levels, and informed by regional propositions, the SDGs were developed and agreed upon by the General Assembly at the UN Sustainable Development Summit of September 2015.¹²

The 17 goals and 169 targets were adopted by 193 Member States. Different from the MDGs, they are universal and transformative in approach, meant to inform development processes in developed as well as developing countries and to include a substantial change in the way in which development is addressed. The 17 SDGs form an integrated and indivisible set of goals and targets, meaning that all of them need to be addressed, with their interrelationships taken into consideration.

The declaration makes an explicit commitment to “leave no one behind”¹³ and includes the endeavour to reach the furthest behind first. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is considered to contribute to progress across all goals and targets, a point of contrast with the MDGs. There is a recognition to pay special attention to the most vulnerable countries, including African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Finally, it is recognized that the primary responsibility for economic and social development rests with the country concerned, which has the policy space to implement the agenda towards poverty eradication and sustainable development, while respecting relevant international rules and commitments.¹⁴

The SDGs balance the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental. This requires harnessing synergies and opportunities, as well as averting unintended or conflicting outcomes and impacts. The combination of these three dimensions requires breaking down sectoral and other types of “silos,” and enhancing horizontal and cross-sector coordination in governments as well as in UN agencies. For the UN system, strengthened coherence and coordination is considered to be required in transitioning to the 2030 Agenda. Integration of disaster risk reduction for resilience¹⁵ is also required in order to ensure a risk-informed and integrated approach to sustainable development.¹⁶

3.2 Governance and Public Administration to Enhance SDG Implementation

Governance and public administration are critical aspects of success in achieving the SDGs, with the

12 United Nations General Assembly, ‘Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals’, Resolution 65/1, 22 September 2010; United Nations General Assembly: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, October 2015. Ref: A/RES/70/1.

13 Leaving no one behind includes a commitment to combat inequalities and discrimination, ensuring that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality in a healthy environment. United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council: Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system. March 2016. Ref: A/71/76-E/2016/55.

14 United Nations General Assembly: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, October 2015. Ref: A/RES/70/1.

15 As outlined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. United Nations, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, Geneva, 2015.

16 United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council: Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system. March 2016. Ref: A/71/76-E/2016/55.

primary responsibility for their implementation, review and follow-up belonging to governments. The ways in which the governance of countries is shaped and public administration organized are important means and opportunities to support and enhance the implementation of the SDGs.

Governance can be described as:

“the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development” (World Bank, 1992).

Good governance is considered to include enhanced levels of transparency, democracy and government capability. It includes effective and transparent governing with the public participation of citizens, civil society, business and academia.

Public administration is concerned with the organization of government policies and programmes as well as the behaviour of officials (usually non-elected). It includes processes, organizations and individuals in their official positions and roles associated with carrying out laws, policies and other rules and regulations that are issued or adopted by legislatures, executives and courts. At the local level, it includes the management and implementation of the whole set of government activities dealing with the implementation of laws, regulations and decisions and the provision of public services, including social services.

With the primary responsibility of SDG implementation in the hands of the government, issues of governance and capacities of the public administration system are an important means of implementing and achieving the SDGs. These include a wide variety of related aspects, including the planning process, implementing enabling laws and policies and institutional arrangements, supporting coordination mechanisms across government and with non-governmental stakeholders, and reviewing results and following up on conclusions and recommendations concerned.

Governance and public administration are contextual and differ considerably across countries. As stated in the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) (2016):

“The discussions showed that there is no single possible approach to institutional innovations likely to facilitate policy integration.”

The SDGs provide common goals and objectives and a means of assessment, but processes to reach these are country-specific and adapted to the socio-economic, historic and political contexts concerned. Governance and public administration systems vary across countries and so do capacities. Enhancing such capacities and identifying and filling existing gaps, and taking into account of country contexts concerned are important means of supporting the realization of the 2030 Agenda, which is of particular importance in the early stages of the implementation process.

Public service and public administration perform important functions towards achieving the SDGs. Implementation of the 17 SDGs requires new ways of working, new capacities and a substantial amount of commitment from public institutions and public servants. They need capacity to support integrated policies, reach underserved areas and groups and collect and analyse relevant data and statistics, while enhancing transparency and accountability in their institutions and participatory decision-making processes. Yet, in many parts of the world, the public service sector seems to be in a crisis, with low levels of motivation and morale, in part related to low pay and austerity measures. Developing a “new public passion” seems to be needed to support the realization of 2030 Agenda in this respect.¹⁷

¹⁷ In the words of Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator this ‘New Public Passion’ is needed in order to: “nurture high job satisfaction by ensuring that all civil servants feel directly engaged in improving the lives of their fellow citizens ... [and] that our contributions can help instil and renew such a sense of passion for development in public officials around the world.” UNDP/Global Centre for Public Service Excellence: Public Service Motivation and the SDGs, An unacknowledged crisis? Notes on Public Service Excellence #13.

3.3 Global Level Institutional Arrangements for SDGs Implementation

The UN Resolution “*Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*” (A/RES/70/1) reaffirms the importance of revitalized and enhanced global partnerships, bringing together governments, civil society, the private sector, the UN system and other actors in order to support the SDG process. Achieving the ambitious 2030 Agenda requires the implementation and mobilizing of all available resources. In addition to setting goals and targets, the Resolution includes the basic means required to realize them. These focus in particular on the development of capacities, the use of improved and environmentally sound technologies and the mobilization of financial resources.

The 2030 Agenda is meant to be interrelated with other UN programmes of action, in particular those related to countries with special needs, including the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries,¹⁸ the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,¹⁹ and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024.²⁰ Moreover, the Agenda relates to development initiatives in Africa, including the African Union’s Agenda 2063²¹ and the programme of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development.²² All of these action plans are considered integral to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) was formally established through UN General Assembly Resolution A/67/290 in July 2013. This Forum is to provide high-level political guidance on the 2030 Agenda and its implementation, identify progress and emerging challenges and mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation. It has a central role in overseeing follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level. It carries out regular reviews of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), as well as thematic reviews of progress on the SDGs and cross-cutting issues.

Effective Institutions and Capacities at the Country Level

At the country level, there is a need for effective institutions and capacities in order to be able to implement the 2030 Agenda. Effective, accountable and transparent institutions are actually included as part of the agenda through the Target 16.6 and as one of the means of implementation that requires strengthening under the Goal 17 (see Box 3 below).²³

18 Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/7).

19 SAMOA Ref

20 Ref LLDC

21 Ref African Union’s Agenda 2063

22 Ref New Partnership for Africa’s Development

23 Ref UN Declaration

Box 3. Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development Objectives in the SDGs

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

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

Source: United Nations General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, October 2015. Ref: A/RES/70/1; Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, Annex IV: Final list of Proposed Sustainable Development goal indicators. March 2016, Ref: E/CN.3/2016/2/ Rev.1.

In preparation for the 2030 Agenda, a public dialogue was conducted from 2014 to 2015 on strengthening capacities and building effective institutions for the successful implementation of the post-2015 agenda (UNDG, 2014). The goal of the dialogue was *“to develop a shared vision on, and ownership of, key strategies to build capacities and institutions in countries around the world”*²⁴. This was meant to lead in turn to the creation of more effective platforms for governments to deliver on public priorities. The consultation process included participants of selected countries as well as staff from UNDP, ILO and the governments of Germany and Moldova, and resulted in a number of key messages on institutions and capacities related to implementation of the post-2015 agenda. These messages reaffirmed the need to pay attention to the institutional capacities for SDG implementation, including public administration systems, the need for coordination and cooperation across agencies and stakeholders and the use of locally derived processes and solutions based on the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. For details, see Box 4 below.

Box 4. Key Messages on Dialogue for Effective Institutions and Capacities for the 2030 Agenda

1. A transformative development agenda requires upgraded, innovative and integrated institutions and capacities
2. Coordination and cooperation between agencies and stakeholders will make institutions more responsive
3. Inclusion should be the cornerstone of all capacity strengthening and institution-building efforts
4. Strategies, policies and solutions must be locally-derived, not merely transplanting best practices across countries
5. Public administration systems must strive for greater professionalism, accountability and transparency
6. Institutions must facilitate fair economic participation and greater employment generation for all
7. Post-conflict contexts require both short and longer-term approaches to address institutional weaknesses
8. Local authorities must be empowered to own and achieve development goals
9. Measuring progress in capacity development and institutional improvement is essential

²⁴ UNDG (2014). Delivering the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Opportunities at the National and Local Levels. United Nations Development Group. Available at: <https://www.worldwewant2015.org/dialogues2015>

UN Approach to Support the 2030 Agenda at the Country Level

The UN Resolution on the 2030 Agenda stipulates that UN 's support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is required to be coherent and integrated.²⁵ In order to enable a coherent UN approach, the UNDG has developed and adopted a strategic framework for UN support that will allow for a common methodological approach and facilitate effective and coherent UN support.²⁶ This is the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support framework, in short MAPS (see Figure 1). This framework is used to inform UN country teams in their advocacy, normative and policy support and technical assistance to operationalise the SDGs. MAPS is an enabling framework and is non-prescriptive, thus facilitating the inclusion of other UN initiatives in support of SDG achievement.²⁷

MAPS includes a set of tools that, together with UN expertise, is made available to governments, civil society and other partners in the areas of mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support, paying special attention to the crosscutting elements of partnerships, data and accountability.²⁸

In particular, the MAPS strategy aims to support countries in²⁹:

- applying the 2030 Agenda to national and sub-national policies, programmes and budgets
- identifying synergies and trade-offs across goals to identify and address the main bottlenecks in accelerating progress across multiple SDGs
- facilitating access to policy advisory support of the UN development system

The MAPS strategy moreover includes support in order to:

- raise awareness about the SDGs
- enhance countries' analysis of their own policies
- bolster country capacity to review progress on the SDGs

MAPS-related UN's support is guided by a set of principles, in which support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda must³⁰:

- a. be demand-driven and tailored to specific country conditions and needs;
- b. complement and build on existing capacities and resources available in the UN development system (UNDS);
- c. use more integrated approaches and teamed-up support in order for the UNDS to help countries deliver higher impact in achieving the SDGs.

A reference guide for mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was produced by the UNDG, focusing on eight practice areas to assist UNCT and member states to adapt the SDGs to national contexts.³¹

25 United Nations General Assembly Economic and Social Council. Report of the Secretary-General: Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system. 29 March 2016, Ref. A/71/76-E/2016/55.

26 See <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MAPS-Concept-Note-Oct-2015-ENDORSED-BY-UNDG-on-26.10.15.pdf>

27 United Nations Development Group: MAPS: Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for the 2030 Agenda, UNDG Concept Note. October 2015.

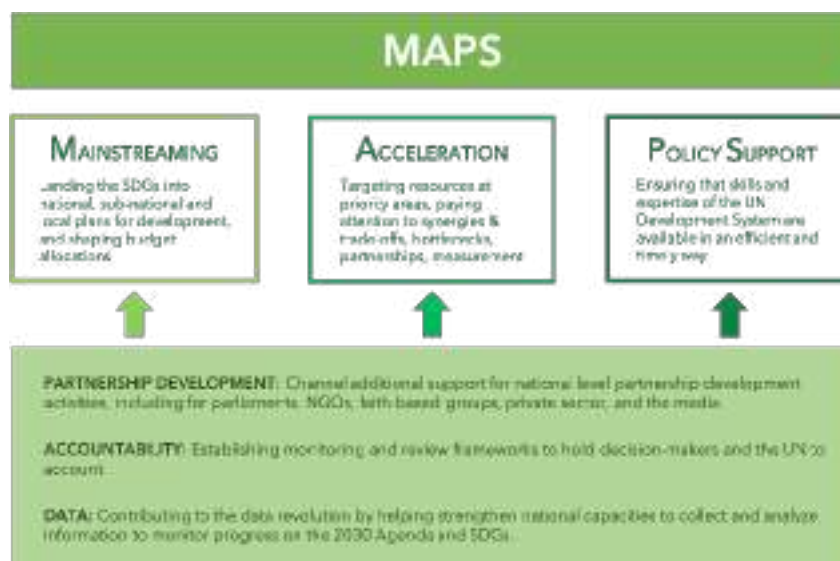
28 Ibid.

29 See <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MAPS-Concept-Note-Oct-2015-ENDORSED-BY-UNDG-on-26.10.15.pdf>

30 Ibid.

31 The eight practice areas include: 1. Raising Public Awareness of the 230 Agenda and SDGs; 2. Applying Multi-stakeholder Approaches for Reviewing National Plans and Adapting the Global SDGs to National Contexts; 3. Reviewing National Plans for Alignment with the 2030 Agenda and Adapting SDGs to the National Context; 4. Creating Horizontal Policy Coherence (Breaking the Silos); 5. Creating Vertical Policy Coherence (Globalizing the 2030 Agenda); 6. Financing and Budgeting for the Future; 7. Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability; 8. Assessing Risk and Fostering Adaptability; with additional a special section on Mainstreaming Guidance for Countries in Complex Situations. United Nations Development Group: Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Reference Guide to UN Country Teams. March 2017 Update.

Figure 1. UNDG Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS)



Source: UNDG, 2015

Country Support Needs Identified for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

In a survey conducted by UN DESA for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the majority of governments responded that they expect the UN to play a major role in advocating for and supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.³²

The most important support areas identified by countries in their UN DESA survey responses included:

- the environment and natural resources (52 per cent)
- sustainable development policies (47 per cent)
- agriculture and rural development (44 per cent)
- economic growth and employment (43 per cent)
- health (40 per cent)

The results of the survey suggest the need to enhance efforts to support programme countries on sustainable development policies, including environment and natural resource management.

Countries appeared to prioritize UN support and technical cooperation in the areas related to:

- capacity building for local and national institutions
- capacity building for statistical data collection and analysis
- joint planning and implementation of programmes through multi-stakeholder partnerships

Arrangements for Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

Unlike the Millennium Declaration, which did not include details on monitoring and evaluation,³³ the

28 Ibid.

29 See <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MAPS-Concept-Note-Oct-2015-ENDORSED-BY-UNDG-on-26.10.15.pdf>

30 Ibid.

31 The eight practice areas include: 1. Raising Public Awareness of the 230 Agenda and SDGs; 2. Applying Multi-stakeholder Approaches for Reviewing National Plans and Adapting the Global SDGs to National Contexts; 3. Reviewing National Plans for Alignment with the 2030 Agenda and Adapting SDGs to the National Context; 4. Creating Horizontal Policy Coherence (Breaking the Silos); 5. Creating Vertical Policy Coherence (Globalizing the 2030 Agenda); 6. Financing and Budgeting for the Future; 7. Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability; 8. Assessing Risk and Fostering Adaptability; with additional a special section on Mainstreaming Guidance for Countries in Complex Situations. United Nations Development Group: Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Reference Guide to UN Country Teams. March 2017 Update.

2030 Agenda includes the assessment of progress at the national, regional and global levels in paragraphs 47-48 as well as paragraphs 72-90 of the Resolution. A coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review system is envisaged at the global level as part of, and as support to, the implementation process. Follow-up and review is aimed at measuring progress, using a set of indicators to inform decision-making, ensuring that no one is left behind, enabling accountability towards citizens and enhancing learning. Follow-up and review is, at the global level, overseen by the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly and ECOSOC. The need to strengthen national statistical capacities is particularly recognized in African countries, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, as well as in middle-income countries. A *'robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework'*³⁴ is meant to support countries to track and maximize progress towards targets. Reviews are meant to be led by countries through a national process and are voluntary in nature. In this sense, the 2030 Agenda does not add any additional formal reporting mechanisms. National-level reviews will be the basis for regional- and global- level assessments. These and other principles (see Box 5 below) that guide follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda are included in the Resolution.³⁵

Box 5. Principles to Guide Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

1. Reviews will be voluntary and country-led and national level processes will be the foundation of reviews at the regional and global level
2. Track progress in goals, targets and means of implementation in all countries, respecting their universal, integrated and interrelated nature and 3 dimensions
3. Maintain a longer-term orientation, supporting countries in making informed policy choices and help mobilize means of implementation and partnerships
4. Open, inclusive and participatory processes, transparent for all people and which support reporting by all relevant stakeholders
5. People-centred, gender-sensitive processes, that respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind
6. Review and follow-up needs to build on existing platforms and processes, avoid duplication and be responsive to national circumstances, capacities, needs and priorities, minimizing the reporting burden on national administrations
7. Rigorous processes, based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations and data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated relevant to national context
8. Requiring enhanced capacity development support, incl. national data systems and evaluation programmes, in particular for African countries, LDCs, SIDS, LLDC and MICs
9. They will benefit from the active support of the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions

Adapted from: UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, October 2015.

32 United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council: Mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development throughout the United Nations system. Report of the Secretary-General. 29 March 2016. Ref: A/71/76-E/2016/55.

33 There is only a general reference to review in the Millennium Declaration: "We request the General Assembly to review on a regular basis the progress made in implementing the provisions of this Declaration, and ask the Secretary-General to issue periodic reports for consideration by the General Assembly and as a basis for further action." United Nations: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 55/2. United Nations Millennium Declaration. September 2000.

34 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN 2015) Available at sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

35 UN General Assembly: Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, Report of the Secretary-General. 15 January 2016, Ref: A/70/684.

A set of 230 SDG indicators was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and agreed by the UN Statistical Commission on March 2016.³⁶ These global indicators are meant to be complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels developed by Member States. Reviews, which need to be inclusive, will be conducted at sub-national, national, regional and global level, making as much use as possible of existing networks, institutions and mechanisms. National reports, along with regional dialogues and global reviews, will inform recommendations for follow-up at various levels. Reviews are meant to draw on contributions from civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities.

Regional-level reviews will draw upon national-level reviews and provide opportunities for peer learning and sharing of best practices across countries. Regional reviews in turn contribute to follow-up and review at the global level. In its oversight role, the HLPF will be informed by an annual progress report on the SDGs to be prepared by the Secretary-General, which is meant to strengthen the science-policy interface. The HLPF will provide high-level political guidance on the 2030 Agenda and its implementation, identify progress and emerging challenges and mobilize further actions to accelerate its progress.

Countries are requested to consider conducting up to two voluntary national reviews for presentation at the HLPF between 2016 and 2030. These reviews should be synthesized before the HLPF session. Such national contributions, however, do not imply a formal reporting obligation to the HLPF. Other non-UN intergovernmental regional and international organizations are also invited to contribute to follow-up and review at the HLPF, as are reviews by think tanks, civil society organizations, scientists and partnership initiatives.

For each of the recent and upcoming HLPFs, a theme and a set of SDGs have been selected for review (see details in Figure 2 below³⁷). In addition, the Goal 17 is meant to be included in every annual review. Quadrennial reviews include all SDGs informed by the Global Sustainable Development Report.³⁸ In addition to annual reviews and quadrennial reviews, there is the biennial Development Cooperation Forum, to be convened prior to the HLPF of the concerned year.³⁹

Figure 2. Focus of HLPF Review of the 2030 Agenda from 2016 to 2019



36 Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on sustainable Development Goal Indicators, Annex IV: Final list of Proposed Sustainable Development goal indicators. March 2016, Ref: E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1.
 37 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>
 38 United Nations General Assembly Draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly, Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level. 26 July 2016, Ref A/70/L.60.
 39 Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 29 July 2016, 70/299. Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level. 18 August 2016, Ref: A/RES/70/299.

4

Contexts of the Country Groups

the fact that the number of people who are not in the labor force is increasing.

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4 Contexts of the Country Groups

4.1 Context of the Country Group A: Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)

1) Classification of Small Island Developing States

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are maritime countries that share similar challenges for sustainable development, such as high vulnerability to external shocks and natural disasters. Even though SIDS were first recognized as a distinct group of developing countries at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, there is a lack of consensus on the definition of SIDS.^{44,45} The United Nations and the World Bank have used their own criteria to define and classify small island states as SIDS. For instance, the UN generally defines SIDS as countries with low-lying coasts that share sustainable development challenges, including population size, limited resources, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to external shocks, and extensive dependence on international trade.⁴⁶ Comparatively, the World Bank and the IMF consider SIDS as small states with a population below 1.5 million.⁴⁷ However, there are some common features across SIDS, which include: 1) small population size (usually 1.5 million people or less), 2) being independent (in terms of sovereignty), 3) developing, and 4) low-lying coastal line.⁴⁸ Due to poor economic performance, SIDS are often being compared to least developed countries (LDCs) and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

As a group of 37 SIDS with UN Membership status and 20 non-UN Members or Associate Members of the Regional Commissions, as listed by UN DESA, SIDS can be re-grouped in different ways for different purposes. For example, SIDS can be divided into three geographic regions: the Caribbean region, the Pacific region, and the Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) region. The Pacific SIDS are characterized as remote countries with weak technological infrastructure

43 United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS). Small Island Developing States: Small Island Big(ger) Stakes. 2011.

44 UNDP Global Center for Public Excellence. Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States. 2014. Available from http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacitydevelopment/English/Singapore%20Centre/GPCSE_Complexity%20in%20Small%20Island.pdf

45 Lisowska, Bata. Small Island Developing States: A case study of standards in defining supranational regions and groupings. Discussion Paper. Available from <http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Small-island-developing-states-a-case-study-of-standards-in-defining-supranational-regions-and-groupings.pdf>

46 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf>

47 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/smallstates>

48 Ibid.

and limited institutional capacity, while the Caribbean SIDS generally have strong and established government bureaucracies along with good access to technology. Lastly, the AIMS SIDS have a mix of continental and common law traditions with varying access to technology. The 16 countries selected for this report are located either in the Pacific or the Indian Ocean. More specifically, 13 states are in the East Asia and Pacific region, two states (i.e., Comoros and Madagascar) are in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, and one state (i.e., Maldives) is in the South Asia region.

SIDS can also be broken down into four groups based on the level of their income (i.e., gross national income (GNI) per capita).⁴⁹ Following the World Bank’s classification system, as shown in Table 3 below, these SIDS can be broken down into the following four groups. Palau in the Western Pacific Ocean is the only high-income country (\$12,330 GNI per capita), while seven states belong to upper-middle-income countries (i.e., Fiji, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu), and six are classified as lower-middle-income countries (i.e., Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu). Finally, two countries in Eastern Africa (i.e., Comoros and Madagascar) are low-income countries (less than \$800 GNI per capita) and they are also classified as heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC).

Table 3. Classification of 16 Countries in Group A based on Income Level

High-Income	Upper-Middle-Income	Lower-Middle-Income	Low-Income
Palau	Fiji Maldives Marshall Islands Nauru Samoa Tonga Tuvalu	Kiribati Micronesia Papua New Guinea Solomon Islands Timor-Leste Vanuatu	Comoros Madagascar

Source: World Bank (<http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications>)

As illustrated in Table 3, the income level varies greatly among the SIDS: the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are relatively evenly distributed across the four income groups, whereas most of the Caribbean states (excluding Haiti) are distributed over high-income and upper-middle-income economy groups. Additionally, a large variation can be seen across the three countries in the Indian Ocean. While Maldives has an upper-middle level of income, two states, i.e., Comoros and Madagascar, have very small economies. Comparatively, the SIDS in the Pacific Ocean are evenly distributed across the economy groups, and none are low-income countries. While some AIMS and Pacific SIDS have recently entered either into the high-income group (i.e., Palau and Seychelles) or the upper-middle-income group (i.e., Samoa), most of the lower-income AIMS SIDS have not shown economic growth in recent years.

⁴⁹ According to the World Bank, nations with a GNI per capita of \$1,005 or less in 2016 are grouped as low-income economies, those of \$1,006 to \$3,955 as lower-middle-income economies, those of \$3,956 to \$12,235 as upper-middle-income economies, and those of \$12,236 or more as high-income economies.

2) General Context of Small Island Developing States

In general, SIDS vary greatly in their land area, population size, economy size, and natural resource base. However, these states share common challenges for sustainable development, including their general small size, geographical isolation, vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change, and high dependence on volatile international trade as well as biodiversity loss.⁵⁰ This report, for analytical purposes, first reviews the overall context of SIDS and then briefly discusses the features of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS in comparison to the Caribbean SIDS. The context of the 16 countries in the Pacific and AIMS regions selected for this report will be discussed in the next section.

A. Economic Characteristics of SIDS

SIDS' markets are generally small and relatively less competitive compared to the global market. Their shared economic characteristics may include several development challenges: limited capacities in the public and private sectors, high volatility of national incomes and GDP, limited diversification, dependence on a narrow resource base, isolation and remoteness from large markets, and significant dependence on foreign aid and international trade.⁵¹ Indeed, the main economic sectors in SIDS tend to be tourism, fisheries, forestry, and agriculture (i.e. resource-dependent economies); in contrast, most states have relied less on the manufacturing sector. The remote geographical location of SIDS helps to protect the private sector on small islands from external competition, but also makes them less competitive and unable to effectively withstand against international pressures. As SIDS commonly have fiscal challenges and financial deficits,⁵² the role of external aid remittances is still important to develop and maintain economic growth and to ensure sustainable development of human and nation.

According to the World Bank, as of 2017, SIDS had a combined GDP of over \$437 billion, and their average GDP per capita (\$11,050.6) pegged a little above the world average (average GDP of \$10,191). However, these numbers need to be interpreted carefully due to high-income countries, including Bahrain and Singapore, which also belong to this group. After excluding these countries, the overall economy of SIDS is closer to the size of upper-middle-income economies.⁵³

However, as noted above, SIDS are a highly diverse group made of countries and territories with varying economic performance across regions. In general, the SIDS in the Pacific and AIMS regions have smaller economies than the SIDS in the Caribbean. The Pacific & AIMS SIDS combined had a GDP of only \$9 billion in 2017—such economy size is much smaller compared to the total GDP of the Caribbean SIDS (\$66.7 billion)⁵⁴. In addition, the average GDP per capita of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS (average GDP per capita of \$3,776) is smaller than that of the Caribbean SIDS (\$9,207) as well as the World Bank's lower-middle-income economies (\$3,835) and surpasses only the UN's LDCs (\$960.54)⁵⁵. These suggest that the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are relatively under-developed, whereas the economy of the Caribbean SIDS is comparable to the world average. In addition to the volume of domestic production, less than 50% of people working in the public or private sector receive compensation in the form of a salary, wages, commissions, or in-kind goods in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, which is much

50 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Sales No. E.10.II.A.12, United Nations, New York. 2010. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/313Trends_in_Sustainable_Development_SIDS.pdf

51 UN DESA. Financing for Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States. 2013. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1153FFSD_SIDS_final.pdf

52 UN DESA. Financing for Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States. 2013. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1153FFSD_SIDS_final.pdf

53 The World Bank, World Development Indicators (2018).

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

lower than the average of the Caribbean SIDS (64%) and the world average (56%)⁵⁶. On average, almost 15% of people are not employed in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS⁵⁷. These data indicate that the Pacific and AIMS SIDS have low-skilled people and fewer industries to employ their people. In other words, the labor productivity and the level of labor market growth are still low in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, even compared to the LDCs as well as the average of the world.⁵⁸

Interestingly, however, the Pacific and AIMS SIDS have exhibited economic growth (annual GDP growth of 2.1% in 2016, a 0.3% increase from 2012), whereas the Caribbean SIDS reported -0.4% GDP growth in 2016, decreasing from 1.3% in 2012.⁵⁹ This may suggest that, in general, while the Caribbean SIDS still suffer an economic downturn stemming from the global economic crisis, on average, the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are bouncing back to develop their economies. Good economic potential can be perceived for the Pacific and AIMS SIDS despite large variation in economic performance among the SIDS generally.

However, the SIDS in the Pacific and AIMS regions suffer challenges to sustainable economic development. These economic challenges include diseconomies of scale in production and exchange of goods and services, high vulnerability to natural disasters, and remoteness from export markets as well as limited human resources and technology.⁶⁰ For instance, geographic location makes these small island states insulated and remote from the global mainstream economy. Also, the small size of the population and the small scale of the economy have contributed to the lack of competitiveness of their economies in the global market. Furthermore, the increasing dependence on a few markets have negative effects on the sustainability and resilience of their economy, which narrow their economic bases and restrain their ability to diversify the industry structure of the economy.⁶¹ Coupled with their susceptibility to natural disasters, these economic environments make SIDS, particularly the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, more vulnerable to external shocks.⁶² While a few SIDS economies have been heavily dependent on resource-based industry (e.g., agriculture, fisheries and mining), many of them have relied primarily on the travel and tourism industry and the financial service industry for their domestic production and employment.⁶³ Although it varies among the SIDS, the importance of the agricultural sector is also noteworthy. However, the contribution of the manufacturing industry is minor compared to the rest of the world.

B. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of SIDS

With regard to the social context, SIDS face the following development challenges: small but growing populations with high inequalities; increasing divide between urban and rural areas; and continuing gender inequalities.⁶⁴

From a demographic perspective, according to the World Bank statistics, as of 2016, SIDS are characterized as having low population density (about 16 people per square kilometer), rapid population growth (1.7%), and high young-age dependency ratio (46% of working-age population)

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 UN DESA. Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Sales No. E.10.II.A.12, United Nations, New York. 2010. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/313Trends_in_Sustainable_Development_SIDS.pdf

61 UN DESA. Financing for Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States. 2013. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1153FFSD_SIDS_final.pdf

62 UN DESA. Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Sales No. E.10.II.A.12, United Nations, New York. 2010. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/313Trends_in_Sustainable_Development_SIDS.pdf

63 UN DESA. Partnership Briefing for Small Island Developing States - Sustainable economic development. 2014. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1359SIDS_BRIEFS_SustEconomic_Dvpmt.pdf

64 Ibid.

compared to the world average.⁶⁵ Population density of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS is higher (37 people per sq. km). In addition, the Pacific and AIMS SIDS have shown a higher population growth rate of 1.3%, which is close to the world average (1.2%) and much higher than that of the Caribbean SIDS (0.6%).⁶⁶ Although the population size of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS itself is still not comparable to that of the Caribbean SIDS, the Pacific and AIMS SIDS show more potential for the population to increase, which would therefore affect the likelihood of economic basis for expansion. As a whole, SIDS also show an increased life expectancy at birth over the past decade (an increase from 63 to 69 years). The Pacific and AIMS SIDS have had a relatively lower life expectancy at birth (71 years in 2015)⁶⁷ than the Caribbean SIDS (73 years in 2015). However, the gap between these two SIDS groups is becoming closer as the life expectancy at birth of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS has steadily increased from 66 to 71 years over 10 years.⁶⁸

SIDS continue to urbanize as many rural dwellers move to cities and urban areas.⁶⁹ The World Bank statistics indicate that the average urban population ratio of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS (38% of total population) is relatively lower than that of the Caribbean states (43%) and the rest of the world (54%) in 2016.⁷⁰ Urbanization is perceived to be a consequence of economic development and also believed to contribute to high and sustained economic growth.⁷¹ Considering the substantial correlation between urbanization and productivity, it is worthwhile to track the pace of urbanization in the SIDS. Interestingly, the urban population is still increasing in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS (with 1.9% annual urban population growth rate), and the speed of their urban population growth is much greater than that of the Caribbean SIDS (0.8%).⁷² This indicates that although more people living in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS still reside in rural areas than in the Caribbean SIDS, they are being relocated to urban areas at a higher rate. As the pace of urbanization is fast in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, sustainable development challenges are expected to be increasingly concentrated in cities. States in these regions have to consider the role of government to improve the lives of both urban and rural dwellers.

With regard to empowerment and equity issues, gender inequalities still persist within economic, social, and cultural perspectives in every small island developing state.⁷³ For instance, in many SIDS, fewer economic opportunities are provided to women, due to restricted access to finance, restricted access to land ownership, limited access to technology and related training, and a gender wage gap. Women in SIDS are also often socially excluded by being restricted from participating in decision-making, being exposed to domestic violence, and receiving less social protection. The issue of gender representation is pertinent in the Pacific SIDS as women in the Pacific SIDS are under-represented in technical and professional education. Accordingly, women tend to be over-represented in low-paid, informal sectors despite the relatively small gap between men and women in the attainment of basic education. The lack of women's representation is also observed in the membership composition of decision-making bodies and high-level positions. For instance, women in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are less likely to be represented in legislative and administrative bodies as well as in high-level positions in organizations, in both the public and the private sector. Unsurprisingly, women in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS receive less legal protection, as the laws in these states provide unequal

65 The World Bank, World Development Indicators. 2018.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 Urbanization refers to a general increase in a population in cities and towns versus rural areas. It symbolizes the flow of many rural populations to non-agricultural sectors and urban areas.

70 The World Bank, World Development Indicators. 2018.

71 Spence, Michael, Annez, Patricia Clarke, Buckley, Robert M. Urbanization and Growth: Commission on Growth and Development. 2009. Available from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2582> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

72 The World Bank, World Development Indicators. 2018.

73 UN ESCAP. Sustainable development in the Pacific: Progress and Challenges, Pacific Regional Report for the 5-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the future implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS. ESCAP Subregional Office for the Pacific, Suva, Fiji, April 2010. Available from http://www.sidsnet.org/msi_5/docs/regional/pacific/Pacific_Regional_Synthesis-MSIS-Final.pdf

protection to women. In other words, women are unfavorably treated when they are involved in legal issues and problems related to sex discrimination, domestic violence, marital rape, legal and safe abortion, the legal age of marriage, and property rights.⁷⁴

C. Environmental Characteristics of SIDS

The populations of SIDS are widely exposed to the natural hazards of earthquakes, cyclones, volcanoes, floods, and droughts as well as to the potential risks of climate change, such as a rise in sea level. Indeed, SIDS are more susceptible to climate change than other countries due to the large number of people living in areas of elevation less than 5 meters above sea level. Accordingly, the rising sea level is expected to endanger the survival of states, in particular the Maldives and Tuvalu, as 100 percent of their land areas are below 5 meters above sea level.

SIDS, in contrast to other states, are disproportionately affected by natural risks such as extreme hydro-meteorological events (e.g., cyclones and tropical storms). The detrimental effect of these natural risks can be seen in the impacts they have on the percentage of their population and their GDPs. Specifically, many SIDS in the Asia-Pacific region (e.g., North Mariana Islands, Niue, Fiji, Samoa, and New Caledonia) rank as the most at risk for extreme hydro-meteorological events, both in terms of percentage of the population exposed and losses as a percentage of GDP. Indeed, many SIDS are seasonally affected by extreme weather, such as tropical storms, cyclones and hurricanes.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the intensity and frequency of natural disasters, which are expected to increase, can make the SIDS more susceptible to natural risks and hamper their coping capacity and ability to recover from extreme events.⁷⁶

Although their geographical characteristics make SIDS more vulnerable to natural disasters and risks, they also grant SIDS access to useful coastal and marine resources, such as ocean fisheries, coastal fisheries and aquaculture, and deep sea minerals, to provide livelihoods and sustain the regional economy. SIDS also have a strength in their local biodiversity, with over 4,000 species of plants and animals, including the world's most threatened species as well as island species endemic to the SIDS.⁷⁷ For example, Papua New Guinea is one of the "mega-diversity countries" that hosts 8 percent of the world's biodiversity.⁷⁸ Similarly, 50 percent of all higher plants, mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians in Mauritius are endemic species.

However, SIDS' heavy reliance on these coastal and marine resources produce some serious threats to these countries. For instance, despite the increasing fishery production levels and their contributions to the growth of the region's economy, the use of traditional fishing practices, which are environmentally destructive, as well as overfishing and sometimes illegal fishing damage their fish stocks and produce negative impacts on the sustainability of fisheries. There are other problems that affect coastal and marine resources and threaten island biodiversity, including but not limited to invasive and alien species, deforestation, over-exploitation of land, pollution, natural disasters, coral

74 Ibid.

75 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). Disaster Risk Reduction in the United Nations Roles, mandates and results of key UN entities. 2013. Available from https://www.unisdr.org/files/32918_drrintheun2013.pdf

76 UN OHRLLS. The Impact of Climate Change on the Development Prospects of the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. 2009. Available from <http://www.unohrlls.org/UserFiles/File/LDC%20Documents/The%20impact%20of%20CC%20on%20LDCs%20and%20SIDS%20for%20web.pdf>; UN DESA. Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Sales No. E.10.II.A.12, United Nations, New York. 2010.

77 UN ESCAP. Sustainable development in the Pacific: Progress and Challenges, Pacific Regional Report for the 5-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the future implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS. ESCAP Subregional Office for the Pacific, Suva, Fiji, April 2010.

78 Ibid.

reef deterioration and habitat degradation. Likewise, the negative impacts of climate change and sea-level rise which results in the loss of coral reefs, ocean warming, and acidification also have detrimental effects on biodiversity and marine resources. These problems can be more complicated since SIDS rely heavily on the tourism, fishery, and mining industries, which utilize coastal and marine resources as valuable economic assets.

Furthermore, it is important to note that SIDS' economies are not resilient to losses from natural disasters and climate change due to their limited resource base and diversification, as well as their small market size. Indeed, SIDS' "low economic resilience and limited human and technological capacity for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change" makes them even more vulnerable.⁷⁹ Given the small size of SIDS, calamities may affect their entire economy and territory.⁸⁰

However, these risks can also be interpreted as potential opportunities for SIDS to develop their economy. The current advancement of climate adaptation technology improves the ability of SIDS to cope with climate change as well as to alleviate current risks from natural disasters. So, if these strategies and climate-related technologies are successfully adopted and implemented, SIDS could open up more opportunities to attract foreign capital, to improve their resiliency and to promote sustainable economic development.⁸¹ Accordingly, the SIDS have recently focused more on collaborations between the public sector and the business sector to prevent the further loss of biodiversity and marine resources, and to explore these partnership opportunities for the sustainable development.

D. Governance Characteristics of SIDS

The general smallness in land area and population is associated with the relatively small size and limited capacity of the public sector in SIDS. The public sector in SIDS, particularly in the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, is characterized by lower institutional capacity, measured in terms of government effectiveness and regulatory quality, and low transparency, measured in terms of control of corruption. According to the World Bank statistics, on average, the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are perceived to have less effective government, poor regulatory quality, and lack of control of corruption compared to the world average.⁸² While the levels of institutional capacity and transparency of the Pacific and AIMS SIDS are comparable to those of the countries in the lower-middle-income group, the Caribbean SIDS have more effective and transparent governments than the Pacific and AIMS SIDS, and their levels of government effectiveness and transparency are a little bit above the rest of the world average.⁸³

3) Specific Context of Small Island Developing States in the Country Group A

The report of the Country Group A focuses on 16 countries, including 14 SIDS in the Asia and Pacific regions (i.e., Fiji, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), in addition to Comoros (SIDS) and Madagascar (Island State) in the Eastern Africa region.

79 UN DESA. Trends in Sustainable Development: Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Sales No. E.10.II.A.12, United Nations, New York, 2010. Available from http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/313Trends_in_Sustainable_Development_SIDS.pdf

80 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). Disaster Risk Reduction in the United Nations Roles, mandates and results of key UN entities. 2013. Available from https://www.unisdr.org/files/32918_drrintheun2013.pdf

81 Ibid.

82 The World Bank, World Development Indicators (2018).

83 Ibid.

A. Economic Characteristics of the SIDS in the Country Group A

As shown in Table 4, these 16 small island developing states are characterized by small populations living densely together and low national incomes (\$4,641 GNI per capita). However, as of 2016, they registered better economic growth in terms of their size alone (3.77% in 2016) and their size weighted by population (1.99% in 2016), compared to the world average. On average, the 16 countries in the Country Group A can be comparable to the group of states with upper-middle-income economies. However, their economic performance and economy size are relatively lower than their counterparts in the Caribbean Sea as well as other states in the East Asia and Pacific region.

These 16 countries vary with respect to their economic and demographical characteristics. As of 2016, there are two states (Papua New Guinea and Madagascar) with GDPs of over \$9 billion, and two states (Fiji and Maldives) with GDPs between \$3 and 4 billion. However, except these four states, the remaining SIDS have quite a small economy in terms of GDP. As the amount of GDP is influenced by the size of regional area and population of a county, small states tend to have small economy sizes. When these economy sizes are weighted by the sizes of their population, there are two states (Palau and the Maldives) that have GDPs per capita above \$10,000, followed by two other states (Nauru and Fiji with GDPs per capita between \$5,000 and \$8,000. However, most of the states have a GDP per capita of less than \$4,000, and there are two states (Comoros and Madagascar) that have a GDP per capita of even less than \$1,000. Here, Madagascar is a case in point: while Madagascar seems to be desirable in having a large GDP, the weighted GDP per capita is smallest among the 16 countries, next to Comoros. These GDP figures suggest a variation in the unweighted and weighted scale of economy among the 16 countries and many SIDS have quite small economies.

In terms of economic growth, measured as GDP growth, Nauru (10.4%), Samoa (7.1%), and Timor-Leste (5.7%) have shown large economic growth in 2016, whereas Marshall Islands (1.99%), Kiribati (1.1%), and Fiji (0.4%) have shown small economic growth. It is noteworthy that Micronesia even has shown negative economic growth over the last five years. Rolling back to 2013, some SIDS (e.g., Micronesia, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga) experienced a severe economic downturn, while Nauru and the Maldives recorded positive economic growth. Since then, some states seem to succeed to bounce back to the normal growth, but Micronesia appears to still have more time to achieve positive economic growth. The challenges of geographical isolation and underdeveloped physical and regulatory infrastructure attribute to Micronesia's poor economic performance. The heavy reliance on the public sector and the stagnated growth of the private sector also explain the struggle of Micronesia's economy.

Regarding the structure of the industry sector, all 16 countries heavily rely on the service industry: Maldives (84.6%), Palau (78.4%), Marshall Islands (72.7%), and Fiji (70.1%) produced more than 70% of their GDP from the service industry, while other states derived almost half of their domestic production from the service industry. Only two states, Papua New Guinea (43.5%) and Solomon Islands (21.2%), have developed resource-based industry, with mineral resources largely contributing to the economy of Papua New Guinea and forest resources mainly contributing to the economy of Solomon Islands. However, most of the other states do not have and/or do not utilize sufficient natural resources to drive their economic development.

Table 4. Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Country Group A

	GNI pr capita (\$)	GDP growth (%)	GDP per capita growth (%)	Population (millions)	Population density (people/sq. km)
Comoros	770	2.2	-0.1	0.8	428
Fiji	4,780	0.4	-0.4	0.9	49
Kiribati	2,270	1.1	-0.6	0.1	141
Madagascar	400	4.2	1.4	24.9	43
Maldives	10,630	6.2	4	0.4	1,392
Marshall Islands	4,630	1.9	1.8	0.1	295
Nauru	10,750	10.4	5.5	0	652
Palau	12,330	1.9	0.9	0	47
Papua New Guinea	2,680	2.4	0.3	8.1	18
Samoa	4,120	7.1	6.4	0.2	69
Solomon Islands	1,880	3	0.9	0.6	21
Timor-Leste	2,060	5.7	3.4	1.3	85
Tonga	4,060	3.4	2.6	0.1	149
Tuvalu	5,090	2.7	1.9	0	370
Vanuatu	3,170	4	1.8	0.3	22
Average	4641.3	3.8	2.0	2.52	252.07
World	10,316	2.5	1.3	7,442.10	57
East Asia & Pacific	9,858	4.1	3.4	2,296.80	94
Low-income	612	4.2	1.4	659.3	49
Lower-middle-income	2,079	5.1	3.6	3,012.90	130
Upper-middle-income	8,177	3.7	2.5	2,579.90	44
High-income	41,208	1.7	1.1	1,190.00	34

Source: World Bank's Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

B. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the SIDS in the Country Group A

From the demographic perspective, the size of the population and population density have some roles for economic activity by affecting the development of infrastructure and country potential for economic growth. A rising population can increase the supply of labour, whereas an increasing population density can create new demands for economic growth. In addition, population density that is either too high or too low can affect the efficiency of physical and governmental infrastructure, such as transportation and communication. As shown in Table 4 above, Madagascar and Papua New Guinea have a greater population than other SID states. These two countries have a combined population of about 33 million people, greater than the total sum of the other 12 states. Except these two countries, the population size of the countries in the Country Group A ranges from 0.1 to 1.3 million. This indicates that most of the SIDS, as labour constrained economies, have a limited supply of labour, negatively affecting the productivity of labour compared to the Asian type surplus labour economies.⁸⁴

Research shows there is a nonlinear relationship between population density and (sustainable) development.⁸⁵ For instance, while more densely populated countries could enjoy benefits of more

84 Karshenas, Massoud. The Lewis Model and the Diverging Development Paths of Asia and Africa. 2004. Available from <http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/5803/1/lewis.pdf>

85 Becker, Gary, S., Edward L. Glaeser, and Kevin M. Murphy. 1999. Population and Economic Growth. *American Economic Review*, 89 (2): 145-149; Tinsley, Karen, and Bishop, Matt. 2006. Poverty and Population Density: Implications for Economic Development Policy. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 11(1): 195-208.

environmentally sustainable living (e.g., amenities within walking distance), some potential negative externalities can exist as well (e.g., degradation of natural resources and lack of places to live). Indeed, the World Bank statistics show that many people live densely together in Maldives (1,392 people per sq. km), Comoros (428 people per sq. km), and Tuvalu (370 people per sq. km). Comparatively, the two biggest population countries in the Country Group A report low population density (lower than 45 people per sq. km). Although there is no apparent relationship between population density and economic performance (in terms of size and growth of economy),⁸⁶ high-income countries tend to have lower population density. In this sense, the SIDS can be characterized as countries with higher population density but with poorer economies compared to the average of the world, as well as that of the East Asia and Pacific region as a whole.

It is also worth considering the relationship between urbanization and development, as urban population growth helps to raise living standards and economic growth.⁸⁷ According to the World Bank statistics, as of 2016, 38% of people in the 16 countries lived in urban areas and the percentage of the urban population has steadily increased by about 9 percentage points over the last 25 years. This indicates the selected 16 countries continue to urbanize and more urban population have moved from rural areas. However, as indicated in Table 5, the level of urbanization is relatively low as the selected SIDS are less urbanized (44.6% of total population living in urban areas) compared to the rest of the world (54.3%). There is quite a variation among the states as well, ranging from 13% to 100%. More specifically, most of the people reside in urban areas in Nauru (100%) and Palau (88%), whereas most of the people live in rural areas in Samoa (19%) and Papua New Guinea (13%).⁸⁸

While, on average, most people in the SIDS have access to basic sanitation services (63.4% of total population, which further divides into 74.3% of the urban population and 58.5% of the rural population), it is still a bit lower than the world average (68% of total population, 82% of the urban population and 49.8% of the rural population).⁸⁹ In addition, a huge disparity is observed in the level of access to basic sanitation services (see Table 5). Whereas Palau, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Tuvalu and the Maldives provide improved access to sanitation facilities for more than 90% of population in both urban and rural areas, Madagascar (16.2% of urban population and 6.2% of rural population) and Comoros (47.3% of urban population and 29% of rural population) fail to ensure that at least half of their people have access to sanitation services.

86 Becker, Gary, S., Edward L. Glaeser, and Kevin M. Murphy. 1999. Population and Economic Growth. *American Economic Review*, 89 (2): 145-149.

87 Turok, Ivan, and Gordon McGranahan. 2013. Urbanization and Economic Growth: the Arguments and Evidence for African and Asia. *Environment and Urbanization*, 25(2): 465-482.

88 The World Bank, the Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

89 Ibid.

Table 5. Urbanization and Public Health of the Countries in the Country Group A

	Urban population (% of total)	Urban population growth(%)	Population using at least basic sanitation services (% of population)	Population using at least basic sanitation services (% of urban population)	Population using at least basic sanitation services (% of rural population)
Comoros	28.41	2.72	34.2	47.3	29.0
Fiji	54.10	1.42	95.7	96.1	95.2
Kiribati	44.45	2.07	39.8	49.5	32.1
Madagascar	35.74	4.48	9.7	16.2	6.2
Maldives	46.54	4.39	95.9	92.9	98.3
Marshall Islands	72.94	0.48	86.9	94.8	65.9
Nauru	100.00	4.49	65.6	65.6	..
Palau	87.64	1.65	100.0	100.0	100.0
Papua New Guinea	13.04	2.33	18.6	55.2	13.1
Samoa	18.96	-0.05	96.6	98.1	96.3
Solomon Islands	22.78	4.01	31.3	76.1	18.4
Timor-Leste	33.40	4.11	44.0	72.5	30.1
Tonga	23.80	1.08	93.5	96.6	92.5
Tuvalu	60.62	2.38	91.4	91.7	91.0
Vanuatu	26.44	3.36	53.5	61.4	50.7
Average	44.59	2.59	63.8	74.3	58.5
World	54.29	2.03	68.0	82.0	49.8
East Asia & Pacific	57.50	2.25	77.1	85.4	62.7
Low-income	31.18	4.16	25.1	38.6	19.1
Lower-middle-income	39.64	2.64	53.6	69.1	46.6
Upper-middle-income	65.05	2.02	81.3	89.0	67.2
High-income	81.42	0.87	99.4	99.4	99.2

Source: World Bank's Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

It is also noteworthy that people in rural areas in SIDS have less access to drinkable water compared to the world average. As a critical asset to a sustainable ecosystem, access to drinkable and managed water is important for health and well-being. On average, the selected 16 countries have poor access to drinkable water (81.6% of total population have access) compared to the average of the world (88.5%) (See Table 6). Specifically, about half of the 16 countries provide basic drinking water services to over 90% of the population, whereas about one third of the SIDS are not able to provide the services to more than 50% of population. Also, there is disparity in access to drinkable water between urban and rural population: while most of the people in urban areas (92.8%) enjoy access to basic drinking water services, only 76.4% of the rural population has such access. While there is less disparity among the urban population in the access to basic water services, the disparity in the access to drinkable water is much more severe across the 16 countries among their rural populations, ranging from 29.5% to 99.7%. In particular, Papua New Guinea, Madagascar, and Kiribati provided water services to less than 45% of their people living in the rural areas.

Table 6. Access to Drinking Water Services of the Countries in the Country Group A

	Basic drinking water services (% of population)	Basic drinking water services (% of urban population)	Basic drinking water services (% of rural population)
Comoros	83.7	93.0	80.0
Fiji	93.7	97.9	88.8
Kiribati	64.4	89.7	44.2
Madagascar	50.6	82.1	33.6
Maldives	97.9	95.7	99.7
Marshall Islands	78.2	70.3	99.0
Nauru	100.0	100.0	..
Palau	99.6	100.0	96.7
Papua New Guinea	36.6	84.2	29.5
Samoa	95.5	99.5	94.6
Solomon Islands	64.0	90.4	56.4
Timor-Leste	70.2	90.6	60.3
Tonga	99.9	99.8	99.9
Tuvalu	99.3	99.6	98.8
Vanuatu	90.5	99.3	87.4
Average	81.6	92.8	76.4
World	88.5	95.2	80.1
East Asia & Pacific	94.0	95.6	91.1
Low-income	54.0	81.0	42.1
Lower-middle-income	85.3	92.4	80.8
Upper-middle-income	95.7	96.9	93.6
High-income	99.5	99.8	98.4

Source: World Bank's Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

C. Environmental Characteristics of the SIDS in the Country Group A

SIDS are generally vulnerable to natural risks, the losses and damage resulting from climate change which is considered as one of the threats to sustainable development.⁹¹ Indeed, SIDS are exposed to natural disasters and disturbing weather events, such as droughts and floods. In addition to the challenge of geographical location in risk-prone regions, SIDS are considered to be vulnerable to natural risks due to their relative isolation, limited physical size, and a concentration of population along coastal zones.⁹² Accordingly, policy makers and scholars have paid special attention to SIDS' preparation and adaptation to climate change, but the SIDS are often less prepared for these pertinent natural disasters and risks. Table 7 shows the extent to which the land area and population is exposed to natural disasters and the extent to which individual countries prepare for natural risks. On average, the 16 countries have more coastal land areas, along with a disproportionate share of the population living in areas where the elevation is below 5 meters (12.4%) compared to the world average (5%).⁹³ However, just as there is heterogeneity in the economic and demographic features of the SIDS, the 16 countries also do not share the same level of risk and exposure to natural disasters, although they are susceptible to the same general kinds of disasters. For instance, almost half of people in Madagascar (48.2%) and Tuvalu (47.5%) live close to sea level, whereas people in Papua New Guinea (99.5%) and Timor-Leste (99.1%) reside in areas away from such risks.

91 United Nations (UN). Report of the Inte-agency Task Force on Financing for Development: Financing for Development: Progress and Prospect. 2018.

92 Pelling, Mark, and Juha Uitto. 2001. Small Island Developing States: Natural Disaster Vulnerability and Global Change. *Environmental Hazards* 3:49-62

93 World Bank, the Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

Table 7. Exposure to Natural Disasters and Risk Reduction Progress of the Countries in the Country Group A

Country	Exposure to impact			Resilience
	Land area where elevation is below 5 meters (% of land area, 2010)	Population living in areas where elevation is below 5 meters (% of total population, 2010)	Population affected by natural disasters average annual; (% of total population, 2009)	Disaster risk reduction progress score (1, worst to 5, best, 2011)
Comoros	0.8	0.7	0	1.8
Fiji	3.1	4.9	1.7	2.8
Kiribati	54.6	20.6	5	..
Madagascar	0.7	1.7	0.9	3.8
Maldives	45.5	48.2	0	2.3
Marshall Islands	43.8	35.9	0.1	1.8
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	7.2	8.4	1.3	..
Palau	2	3.5	..	..
Papua New Guinea	0.5	0.5	0.7	..
Samoa	0.4	1.4	0	3.5
Solomon Islands	1.6	2.9	0.1	2
Timor-Leste	0.7	0.9	0	..
Tonga	7.3	7.5	..	..
Tuvalu	32.7	47.5	..	..
Vanuatu	0.8	1.2	0.1	2
Average	13.4	12.4	0.8	2.5
World	1.1	5	..	..
East Asia & Pacific	1.5	8.3	..	..

Source: World Bank's Worldwide Development Indicators (WDI)

In terms of resilience to natural disasters, Madagascar, Samoa, and Fiji have made considerable efforts to reduce disaster risks, but there remain many states that have not yet established the sufficient level of preparation needed to prevent and respond to natural disasters. Remarkably, SIDS that are extremely vulnerable to natural risks are less likely to be prepared for disasters and subsequent damages. For instance, even though almost half of the people in the Maldives and Marshall Islands live close to sea level, their preparations and efforts for disaster risk reduction are relatively poor, as the disaster risk reduction progress score is 2.3 for the Maldives and 1.8 for the Marshall Islands. Comparatively, Madagascar and Samoa are less susceptible to natural risks but have placed more efforts to reduce expected risks, as the disaster risk reduction progression score is 3.8 for Madagascar and 3.5 for Samoa.

D. Governance Characteristics of the SIDS in the Country Group A

From the governance perspective, the selected 16 countries are characterized by less effective governments, poor regulatory quality, and a lack of control over corruption. Table 8 reports the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, which measure the quality of governance in terms of government effectiveness, regulatory quality, and transparency. Here, the "government effectiveness" category measures opinions of various stakeholders, including public, private, and non-government sector experts about the quality of public services, the quality of civil services, the degree of the independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to public policies. The "regulatory quality" category reflects stakeholders' perceptions about the government's ability to formulate and implement sound policies and to promote private sector development. Finally, the "control of corruption" category is associated with the government's efforts to prevent and fight against corruptions. These indicators are calculated by the distance from the world average (i.e., negative values - below the world average and positive values - above the world average). As shown in Table 8, among these 16 countries, only

Samoa has a positive value in “government effectiveness,” and all of these states have a negative value in “regulatory quality.” In the dimension of “control of corruption,” only five states - Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, Samoa, and Tuvalu - achieved a positive value.

Table 8. Institutional Capacity and Government Transparency of the Countries in the Country Group A

Country	Government Effectiveness	Regulatory Quality	Control of Corruption
Comoros	-1.54	-1.05	-0.64
Fiji	-0.26	-0.38	0.13
Kiribati	-0.45	-0.84	0.25
Madagascar	-1.17	-0.69	-0.90
Maldives	-0.33	-0.46	-0.67
Marshall Islands	-1.56	-0.98	-0.06
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	-0.35	-0.97	0.65
Nauru	-0.69	-0.38	-0.47
Palau	-0.41	-0.18	-0.47
Papua New Guinea	-0.73	-0.56	-0.92
Samoa	0.54	-0.10	0.28
Solomon Islands	-0.99	-0.96	-0.34
Timor-Leste	-1.03	-0.98	-0.51
Tonga	-0.29	-0.41	-0.44
Tuvalu	-0.93	-0.59	0.03
Vanuatu	-0.88	-0.29	-0.10
Average	-0.69	-0.61	-0.26

Source: World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)

4.2 Context of the Country Group B: Least Developed Countries (LDCs) & Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

1) Classification of Least Developed Countries

Least developed countries (LDCs) are characterized as low-income countries which face severe structural impediments to sustainable development. The LDCs consist globally of 48 countries with a total population of about 880 million people. They represent the poorest and weakest segments of the international community. LDCs are characterized by low per capita income and low level of human development and are constrained by economic and structural handicaps to growth.⁹⁴

These countries were recognized as in need of supplementary support, in addition to assistance commonly available for all developing countries in the areas of international trade, official development assistance and general support. At their inception in 1971, the three criteria for inclusion consisted of: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (linked to dimensions of poverty and overall level of development), share of manufacturing in GDP (indication of structural transformation of the

⁹⁴ United Nations: Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1).

economy) and adult literacy rate (specifying the size of the base for enlarging a skilled labour force). The average rate of GDP growth in real terms was used for borderline cases.⁹⁵

The definition of and criteria for LDCs were adapted several times, including in 1991, 1999, 2002, 2005 and finally 2011. Present criteria for LDCs include: Gross national income (GNI) per capita, a Human Assets Index and an economic vulnerability index. Moreover, since 1991, countries with a population over 75 million are no longer considered as eligible for inclusion. Also, countries need to consent with inclusion in the list of LDCs and its related benefits.⁹⁶

Graduation rules were established in 1991 with an intentional asymmetry between the inclusion and graduation eligibility criteria. The threshold for graduation is higher than those for inclusion and the requirements is to meet two out of three graduation criteria in two consecutive triennial review cycles. Actual graduation takes place after three years, and it does not require country consent. Criteria are not applied mechanically but are used in a flexible way.

Based on the triennial review conducted in 2015, the following countries that are part of the present survey were eligible for graduation for the first time, i.e. the first of the required two consecutive cycles: Bhutan and Nepal. Countries eligible for graduation for a second consecutive cycle in 2015 included only Kiribati (although this country is part of the Country Group A: Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the present study).

2) Context of Least Developed Countries in the Country Group B

All of the countries in the Country Group B have faced considerable challenges in their social and economic development and still struggle with low or limited GDP per capita, considerable levels of poverty, substantial dependence on agriculture and export of primary products and low levels of productivity. This goes in particular for the low-income countries in the Group, with GNI below USD 995 in 2017, which are predominantly rural societies, with low human development indices, high fertility rates and high levels of under-five mortality.

Within the Country Group B, the countries that have increased their GNI beyond USD 995 per capita and thus have reached the status of lower-middle-income country are usually performing better compared to low-income countries on several other characteristics, including lower levels of under-five mortality rates and higher levels of human development index. These lower-middle-income countries include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) and Myanmar in Asia, and Djibouti and Zambia in Eastern Africa. Nevertheless, these countries have not yet graduated from the LDC category, with the graduation threshold set at 20 percent above the level of MIC status and/or their Economic Vulnerability Index and Human Assets Index not yet at the required level for graduation. This means that their economies remain vulnerable due mainly to relatively high shares of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in GDP, often combined with vulnerability to shocks from natural disasters and remaining instability of exports of goods and services. The Human Asset Index refers to the level of health and education outcomes that need to be reached for graduation. In terms of health, the Index includes under five mortality rate, prevalence of undernourishment and maternal mortality ratio. In terms of education, it includes levels of secondary enrolment and adult literacy.⁹⁷

Compared to their counterparts in Eastern Africa, most of the countries in Asia have developed relatively well over the past decade, with the exception of Afghanistan and Nepal, primarily due to

95 Committee for Development Policy and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Handbook on the Least developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures. Second Edition, October 2015.

96 Ibid.

97 UN Economic Analysis and Policy Division, at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category/ldc-criteria.html>.

conflict exacerbated by natural disaster as in the case of Nepal. Although most of the countries of the Country Group B located in Eastern Africa have experienced economic growth, they have remained nevertheless low-income countries, with the exception of Djibouti and Zambia. When comparing the Human Development Index for the year 2017, countries in Asia score better than countries in Eastern Africa, with the first almost all above 0.5 (with the exception of Afghanistan), while most of the Eastern African countries score under 0.5 (except for Tanzania and Zambia), with Burundi lowest at 0.4.⁹⁸ A similar trend is reflected in under five mortality rates. For an overview of statistical details on the countries in the Country Group B see Annex 5.

Though overall ODA from OECD countries has decreased between 2009 and 2016, the levels concerned remain relatively high (over 10 percent of GNI) for some low-income countries in Eastern Africa, including Burundi, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia and South Sudan. Levels of ODA from OECD in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda have reduced and are all below 10 percent. ODA dependence from OECD countries in the selected countries in Asia is less with the exception of Afghanistan. ODA for countries that reached MIC status have reduced considerably between 2009 and 2016. For details see Table 9 below.

Table 9. Total Development Assistance from OECD Countries in Percentage of GNI of Receiving Country

Country	2009	2016	Country	2009	2016
Eastern Africa Region			Asia Region		
Burundi	33.41	24.84	Afghanistan	49.72	20.64
Eritrea	7.75	5.16 (2011)	Bangladesh	1.12	1.07
Ethiopia	11.80	5.65	Bhutan	10.49	2.50
Malawi	12.62	23.36	Cambodia	7.14	3.88
Mozambique	18.93	14.23	Lao PDR	7.36	2.62
Rwanda	17.49	14.06	Myanmar	0.97	1.99***
Somalia	21.40**	20.42	Nepal	6.56	4.95
South Sudan	3.80*	21.07***			
Tanzania	11.06	4.96			
Uganda	8.55	7.00			

*: Data from 2011; **: Data from 2013; ***: Data from 2015
Source: World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)

3) Context of Landlocked Developing Countries in the Country Group B

Landlocked developing countries are countries with serious constraints to their overall socio-economic development, due to lack of territorial access to the sea which adds to their remoteness and means considerable isolation from world markets, resulting in high transit and transportation costs. In Group B, this concerns almost half of all countries, including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Lao PDR and Nepal in Asia and Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and Zambia in Eastern Africa. Although the shared characteristic of being landlocked provides substantial challenges to economic and social development of all countries concerned, these appear to have been overcome to various degrees in different contexts, with different levels of economic and social development results. This group includes countries with relatively high economic growth like Ethiopia, Lao PDR and Bhutan as well as those with low or negative economic growth, like Burundi, Zambia, Afghanistan and Nepal. The group also includes countries with low levels of under-five mortality rates, like Bhutan and Nepal, as well as countries with relatively high levels, including Burundi, Ethiopia and Zambia. In terms of environmental indicators, there is substantial variation across landlocked countries.

98 Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-indices-indicators-2018-statistical-update>

4.3 Context of the Country Group C: Low- and Middle-Income Countries

1) Classification of Low- and Middle-Income Countries

The 12 countries in the Country Group C are low- and middle-income economies. Seven of these are lower-middle-income economies and three are upper-middle-income economies. Two other countries in this group are the 'outliers', including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which is a low-income economy, and Brunei Darussalam, which is a high-income economy. While income does not completely identify a country's level of development, it is considered a useful indicator which correlates with non-monetary aspects of development, including life expectancy at birth, child mortality and school enrollment rates. As information on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Brunei Darussalam has proved more limited, the analysis for the countries in the Country Group C focused in practice primarily on middle-income economies. For details see Table 10 below.

Table 10. Classification of Countries in the Country Group C by Income Group⁹⁹

Country Classification by Income (GNI)	Country
Low-Income Economies (USD 995 or less in 2017)	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
	India
Lower-Middle-Income Economies (USD 996 to USD 3,895 in 2017)	Indonesia
	Mongolia
	Pakistan
	Philippines
	Sri Lanka
	Vietnam
	China
Upper-Middle-Income Economies (USD 3,896 to USD 12,055 in 2017)	Malaysia
	Thailand
	Brunei Darussalam
High-Income Economies (USD 12,056 or more in 2017)	

Source: World Bank database, extracted in December 2018

The middle-income trap refers to the phenomenon where rapidly growing economies stagnate at middle-income levels and fail to transition into a high-income economy. In practice, however, growth patterns of middle-income countries have proved to vary substantially and countries at this income level have not systematically fallen into this trap. Nevertheless, the term has identified specific challenges that middle-income countries face and points to the limited number of middle-income countries that have so far reached developed country status.¹⁰⁰ It has identified the stagnation of growth in middle-income countries, although the stagnations are not considered more likely than in other stages of development. What has been lacking so far is a "satisfactory growth theory" to inform development in middle-income countries which point towards growth of productivity.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ As per the World Bank Atlas method based on GNI per capita and updated for the current 2019 fiscal year (available at <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>).

¹⁰⁰ Fernando Gabriel Im and David Rosenblatt, "Middle-Income Traps: A Conceptual and Empirical Survey." Policy Research Working Paper 6594, World Bank, Washington DC, 2013.

¹⁰¹ World Development Report 2017 Team, World Bank Development Report 2017, The Middle-Income Trap.

Table 11. Economic Indicators of Countries in the Country Group C

Country	GDP (billion USD)	GDP Growth (annual %)	GDP per capita (current USD)	Population Growth (2015)	Gini Coefficient (2013)
Brunei	12.93	-0.6	30,554.7	1.41%	n.a.
China	11,064.66	6.9	8,069.2	0.51%	42.1
DPR Korea	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.51%	n.a.
India	2,088.84	7.9	1,593.3	1.17%	33.9
Indonesia	861.93	4.8	3,346.5	1.18%	38.1
Malaysia	296.28	5.0	9,768.3	1.62%	46.2
Mongolia	11.74	2.4	3,967.8	1.80%	36.5
Pakistan	271.05	4.7	1,434.7	2.05%	30.0
Philippines	292.45	5.9	2,904.2	1.60%	43.0
Sri Lanka	82.32	4.8	3,926.2	0.93%	36.4
Thailand	395.17	2.8	5,814.8	0.35%	39.4
Viet Nam	193.6	6.7	2,110.9	1.08%	35.6

2) Context of Low- and Middle-Income Countries in the Country Group C

The twelve countries included in this report span an array of contexts. They share the categorization of “developing” according to the UN Development Policy and Analysis Division. The upper-middle-income countries – China, Malaysia, and Thailand – are states with a high degree of development, as well as significant disparities in their populations. The lower-middle-income countries (India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) have a significantly lower per capita income. With the inclusion of China and India, as well as Indonesia, this group of countries covers a large part of the total world population.

A common challenge of middle-income countries centres on economic resilience and growth as these countries must compete with low-income countries regarding labour and resource costs, while also having to compete with higher-income countries in the market without the advantages of highly developed production technology.¹⁰² These countries must also contend with the growing social issues that accompany rising income, such as disparities in wealth, education, health care, and a greater sensitivity to environmental concerns. While middle-income countries usually have a more stable set of institutions, they may be challenged to integrate new priorities in their governance systems.

Common challenges for low-income countries span the range of topics from economic growth, living wages for the labour force and environmental issues, to health care, education and gender inequalities. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is the only country in the group that is classified as a low-income economy. Access to data and information from the DPRK was severely limited.

Brunei Darussalam is a high-income nation that has achieved an advanced state of progress and is the only high-income economy in the group. Information from Brunei Darussalam has been limited as well.

102 UNDP 2013. “Common challenges of the middle-income countries and the Korean development experience.”

Mongolia has the status of being a landlocked lower-middle-income developing country, which entails additional constraints in terms of capacities for SDG implementation. Mongolia is relatively isolated geographically and has a small, sparse population. It has taken significant steps to implement the SDGs, despite these constraints, and appears to be capitalizing on its momentum from the past 15 years' work on the MDGs. For an overview of statistical details on the countries in the Country Group C see Annex 3.

5

Synthesis Summary of the Findings and Analysis



5 Synthesis Summary of the Findings and Analysis

1) Capacities for SDG Implementation

National Development Strategies

All countries included in the assessment have integrated the SDGs into their national development plans. This has enabled alignment of the strategic directions of national development plans with the SDGs, and has created a single track, rather than a dual track of national plans and SDGs. This has, moreover, been essential in order to enable access to the national government budget for SDGs achievement and the allocation of human resources from government agencies.

In several countries, assessments were made regarding the inclusion of the SDGs in the national development plans, with varying results. It usually showed that not all SDG priorities has been included, with some of these not relevant in the context of the country concerned. Reviewing the actual implementation of parts of national development plans aligned with the SDGs using the proxy indication of budget allocations and expenditures has not yet been conducted. The inclusion of the SDGs in development plans has focused in particular at the national level, with attention to the sub-national level varying. In India, apart from the federal level, there proved quite some variety in the approaches to the SDGs at the state level, linked to the differences in development contexts in each of the states.

In particular, LDCs indicate that the SDGs provide the opportunity to address the unfinished business of the MDG agenda. While countries did make substantial progress on the MDGs, not all of the targets concerned were yet reached by 2015, with uneven progress, inequality persisting and significant gaps remaining. LDCs usually have their national development strategy underpinned by the aim of becoming a MIC. The focus on MIC status is reflected in attention to economic growth as a goal of many development strategies and programmes, often viewed in terms of inclusive growth. This aligns with the SDG target 8.1, which includes a target of GDP growth rate of 7% per annum in LDCs.

While SIDS did not explicitly identify climate change or natural risk as significant challenges, all states have systematically incorporated their responses to climate change in national development strategies and plans. Also, MICs have integrated the SDGs into their development plans and often mapped out the SDGs against the objectives of their national plans.

The level of attention to the three aspects of sustainable development, i.e. economic, social and environmental aspects, differs considerably across the countries. While the MDGs were primarily focused on social development, the approach of the SDGs has broadened to include economic growth as well as governance issues, providing a more comprehensive development perspective.

Institutional Arrangements

In order to implement the SDGs as part of national development programmes and plans, a variety of

institutional arrangements have been made in the countries concerned. There have been two main ways to address this. One concerns the installation of a high-level cross-sectoral committee or council to lead the SDG implementation process. Leadership in most cases is provided by the Prime Minister, while in Indonesia this role is performed by the President of the Nation. The other way of institutionalizing the SDGs is through the use of existing Ministries or Divisions, as in the cases of the Ministry of Planning in Cambodia, the National Planning Commission in Ethiopia and the National Planning Division in Tonga. In all cases, responsibility for the oversight over the 2030 Agenda is located at a high level of government, which is beneficial to secure the need for continuous high-level political support to the SDG implementation process.

Given the complex relations between the SDGs and national development goals and objectives, several countries have started mapping out the support requirements of line ministries and other government agencies for each of the SDGs. This has resulted in a relatively complex set up of inputs and responsibilities from multiple line ministries and government agencies for each of the goals.

Engagement with Non-Governmental Actors

Given the scope and complexity of the SDGs, there is a need to mobilize a broad range of stakeholders beyond the government actors, including civil society organizations, the scientific community and the private sector as well as UN agencies, development partners, philanthropical organizations and citizens. In some countries, the media are explicitly included as a stakeholder. These non-government actors are usually a part of the technical-level working groups and task forces, providing advice to the policy-level committees and councils that guide SDG implementation. Thailand appears an exception, where non-government actors are included in the National Committee for Sustainable Development, which is chaired by the Prime Minister. Non-governmental actors provide a way to link the aspects of the development process with the concrete needs of people at the local level, in particular in terms of underserved areas and groups to which civil society and private sector can at times have better access.

In order to enable coordination, a variety of committees and task forces have been set up at the national level, with higher level decision-makers engaging in policy level issues. Also, there is a middle layer to review progress and report to the policy level and a layer of technical working groups, which is concerned with the technical details of SDG implementation, monitoring and review. The organization of meetings and workshops on a variety of topics is used in various countries to enhance coordination and to engage stakeholders in the process of SDG implementation. In addition to this national structure to guide and support SDG implementation, there is an additional structure at the sub-national level, which varies in extent and set-up based on the country context.

Financing of the SDGs

In LDCs, financing the SDGs through domestic financial resources is usually not sufficient, although many of the countries concerned have engaged in tax reform to increase domestic resources. In addition to ODA, many countries look for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as an external means of resource generation for their SDG implementation, although the volatility of related capital flows does not necessarily align with longer-term SDG achievements.¹⁰³

Bangladesh is one of the countries that conducted an assessment of the financial implications of the 2030 Agenda. The results of the study indicated that an additional 928 billion USD would be required, amounting to 66.3 billion USD per year, which compares to 18.5–20 percent of the annual GDP.

103 United Nations, *Towards Human Resilience: Sustaining MDG Progress in an Age of Economic Uncertainty*, Chapter 3: Private Capital Flows: Foreign Direct Investment and Portfolio Investment.

In Ethiopia, the government has given high emphasis to increase domestic resource mobilization through widening the tax base, strengthening and ensuring full implementation of tax information and administration system, enhancing taxpayers' education, enforcing tax laws and strengthening revenue and customs institutional capacity. The government has set the target to increase tax revenue from 12.7 percent of GDP in 2014/15 to 17.2 percent of GDP in 2019/20. Moreover, the development of public-private partnerships is pursued in order to address the financing of infrastructure.

In MICs, access to ODA has decreased with domestic resource mobilization as the key to obtaining the financial means needed for SDG implementation. This is done in a variety of ways, including tax reform, Public-Private Partnerships, attraction of FDI and prevention of capital outflows. The Fijian government seeks to encourage foreign private investments by alleviating the regulations on the minimum-investment requirement for the SDG-related areas. For lower MICs as well as for many of the SIDS, however, ODA remains important as a funding source, with the need for developed countries that are part of the OECD-DAC to abide by the 0.7 percent of GNI to be allocated towards ODA.

In addition, resources are being tapped from civil society, philanthropy and business, in particular in MICs. In India, a path-breaking tax reform agenda is being readied in the country to optimise domestic resource mobilization, while in Malaysia, other resource opportunities are tried out, including corporate social responsibility, encouragement of social enterprises to take up the SDGs- related objectives and crowdfunding. The latter was successfully applied in an emergency situation.

Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

In all countries, monitoring, review and follow-up systems have been put into place. In some countries, such as Bangladesh and Indonesia, use is made of the existing government monitoring system to assess progress on SDG achievement. In other countries, such as Fiji and India, a specific arrangement for SDG monitoring and review has been put into place. Monitoring of SDG achievement is usually coordinated by the agency leading the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with actual data collection conducted by the statistical office in-country in terms of the census and survey data and by the various line ministries and government agencies, in terms of administrative data. The process is supported to varying degrees in various countries by the scientific community and civil society organizations.

In some instances, the agency responsible for implementation of the SDGs is also responsible for monitoring, review and follow-up, as is the case in India and Vietnam. In other countries, these functions have been more clearly separated, with different committees and agencies in charge, resulting in a more independent review system, as in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. The private sector is a relatively new actor in terms of monitoring and review. In several countries, mention is made of the need for data from the private sector stakeholders, although no mechanisms are specified to collect and share such data.

Many countries have conducted mapping of existing data, assessing the number of indicators, out of the total of 230 of the SDG framework, that are considered relevant for the country concerned and that can be provided data for, and have on the other hand identified data gaps. Monitoring data are used in annual reporting on SDGs, which is usually shared with the Parliament, and which informs the next national budgeting cycle. In several countries, web-based data repositories are being developed, which can enhance access to data concerned and which can facilitate data analysis and reporting. The National SDG review process is, in most countries, guided by the M&E framework of their national development strategy as well as by the Indicator Framework of the SDGs.

Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) have been conducted at the national level and started in 2016 when globally a total of 22 countries participated. In 2017, a total of 43 countries conducted VNRs. For 2018, the number of volunteering countries rose further to 46. Fifteen out of the 46 countries included in the

present assessment have conducted a VNR. China, Madagascar, the Philippines, Samoa and Uganda conducted their reviews in 2016, while Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, the Maldives, Nepal and Thailand conducted their reviews in 2017. Bhutan, Lao PDR, Sri Lanka and Vietnam conducted in 2018. In addition to data on selected indicators, the VNR reports included details on the institutional arrangements of the SDG implementation and the ways in which monitoring and review systems were set up.

A study of the IIED¹⁰⁴ of VNR conducted concluded that attention in the VNR reports so far has been focused on assessment of indicators and reaching yearly targets, rather than on the analysis of these data through a broader-based evaluation process. The report identifies the need to put more attention to evaluation into the VNR process, in order to complement quantitative indicator-based monitoring with qualitative methodologies, with analysis of aspects of cause and effect and with the assessment of the role of the country M&E systems in VNR processes.

National statistics offices play an important role in the monitoring and review of SDG implementation. Their role concerns, in particular, the conduct of census and surveys, in order to gather relevant quantitative data on the SDG indicators. While surveys are usually conducted with a 2 to 5-year interval, a census is usually conducted once every 10 years. In some countries, some of the surveys are conducted on an annual basis, such as the socio-economic survey in Cambodia and the household survey in Nepal, which makes data concerned available on a more regular basis.

Another role of the national statistical office concerns coordination on data obtained from administrative data from the various line ministries. In Bangladesh, a data gap analysis showed the importance of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), with 89 of the SDG indicators identified as under the responsibility of the BBS in terms of data gathering, while all other government agencies are responsible for less than 25 indicators each, while most of these have responsibility for less than 5 indicators.

Capacities of the national statistical offices vary considerably with different levels of support needs. Several countries have developed a national statistical capacity building strategy or programme, in order to address data gaps and to enhance capacities concerned.

2) Challenges Faced and Priority Areas for Support

Looking at the challenges faced across the three country groups, a relatively consistent pattern emerges. Most important challenges concern capacities for monitoring, review and follow-up, the lack of sufficient financial resources and the limitations in terms of human resource capacities.

The issues with monitoring concern about the limitations of the monitoring system as well as the lack of data, in particular the lack of sufficiently disaggregated data needed to enhance analysis and to inform policy and programmatic decision-making. With the SDG monitoring quantitatively oriented, statistical capacities are at times limited, which goes amongst others for SIDS, with relatively small numbers of population and statistical specialists. Given the broad base of the SDGs covering 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators, the challenge of financial resources is not really surprising. In particular, in LDCs and SIDS, the mobilization of domestic resources is more limited and the dependence on external resources is usually higher. Nevertheless, MICs also struggle with this issue.

104 IIED, Eval SDGs and EvalPartners, Evaluation: a missed opportunity in the SDGs' first set of Voluntary National Reviews. May 2017.

SDG implementation is challenged by the limitations of the capacities of human resources. This in particular is because the 2030 Agenda covers a wide range of aspects, which are in turn interrelated, resulting in a complex whole, not necessarily easy to grasp for government agencies that have been sector-oriented.

Other constraints identified include difficulties in coordination and in the localization of the SDGs and their sub-national implementation. Coordination refers both to bringing together government agencies as well as creating linkages between government and non-governmental stakeholders. These coordination mechanisms are required to bring together the inputs of all stakeholders concerned in an organized way which is important for SDG realization.

Challenges in localization refer both to the adaptation of the SDGs and their targets and indicators to the country context as well as to further specifying these in terms of sub-national conditions and needs. In the end, it is the local level at which the SDGs are meant to make a difference, in the actual lives of women and men and girls and boys and the quality of their daily lives.

Specific challenges mentioned in SIDS concern the difficulty in terms of longer-term and strategically oriented development programming, which in part made more difficult through political instability in some of the countries. The specific geographical context of the SIDS further adds specific constraints as does the limited size of their populations spread over a wide area (for details see Table 12).

Table 12. Challenges of the Three Country Groups Identified by Frequency in Survey Responses and VNRs

SIDS	LDCs/LLDCs	LICs / MICs
<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up Challenges in terms of government and administration capacities to monitor SDG implementation and report on results with limited data collection and statistical capacities as well as capacities for evaluation.</p>	<p>Coordination Mechanisms Lack of sufficient mechanisms for coordination across government and non-government stakeholders at national and sub-national levels, limiting engagement of them in SDG implementation processes, constraining a holistic and coherent approach across sectors and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up Challenges include the lack of data, in particular disaggregated data, that could inform identification of results for vulnerable groups in order to inform the application of the principle of 'leaving no one behind'; lack of data sharing with NGOs' and insufficient methodological support on data collection and analysis.</p>
<p>Financial Resources Lack of financial resources for development initiatives; and effective combining of domestic and external funding to implement government priorities through the national budget.</p>	<p>Financial Resources Limitations in the availability of financial resources, with difficulties in mobilizing domestic resources; traditional sources of funding proven insufficient to implement the SDGs; and unstable ODA and FDI flows</p>	<p>Human Resources Technical Capacities Issues regarding human resource capacities are varied and range from ICT, environmental, cost-benefit analysis and e-governance.</p>
<p>Limited Human Resources Capacities Lack of technical capacities in a variety of fields needed for SDG implementation with a limited number of staff in government agencies.</p>	<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up The limited capacity of data generation systems and challenges in collection, analysis, disaggregation and dissemination of monitoring data and information, with many data gaps in monitoring frameworks, limiting the use for decision-making and informing policy development</p>	<p>Financial Resources The limitation of financial resources compared to the wide range of issues covered through the 17 SDGs and their targets that need to be addressed.</p>
<p>Lack of Long-Term Strategic Direction Focus on ad hoc rather than long-term strategic decision-making with frequent policy level changes in an unstable political environment limits longer term planning with insufficient collaboration across government agencies.</p>	<p>Localization of the SDGs Challenges in the localization of the SDGs in line with development plans and strategies at national and sub-national levels and their inclusion in both short-term plans and longer-term strategies in line with the country's fiscal space.</p>	<p>Means for Coordination and Integration The silo approach of government agencies is a constraint as well as the lack of tools to integrate cross-cutting aspects across the SDGs.</p>
<p>Context of SIDS SIDS share a challenging context characterized by their small size, remoteness and isolation, high transportation costs, vulnerability to external shocks and climate change and dependence on small internal markets and a narrow range of exports.</p>	<p>Human Resources Capacities Limitations in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, including the capacity of civil servants at all levels of government, to implement the SDGs.</p>	<p>Sub-national SDG Implementation Limitations in the understanding of the SDGs at the local level; and the lack of capacities of the implementing partners at the sub-national level with the need to have the goals make a real difference at the local level.</p>

Priority Areas for Support

When identifying priorities for support, the issues concerned broadly overlap with the challenges identified, with a focus on support for monitoring, review and follow-up, capacity development, resource mobilization and South-South learning. What stands out is the explicit mention in LDCs of capacity development of the public sector, which is an important enabler for the SDG achievement. Details concerned are presented in Table 13 below.

Table 13. Support Needs Identified for the Three Country Groups

SIDS	LDCs/LLDCs	LICs / MICs
<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for improving data and reporting for SDG tracking and capacity to monitor, data collection, analysis and reporting on progress Tools for effective monitoring and evaluation and integration with various levels of government; for example, sub-national planning and implementation Building evaluation capacities 	<p>Public Sector Capacity Development</p> <p>Support to the further development of the capacity of the public sector in general and particularly in terms of its capacity to implement the SDGs, including the use of innovative approaches to public service delivery, and the use of ICT</p>	<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <p>- including data gathering, analysis and reporting and in particular support on working on complex indicators; To a lesser extent support to South-South learning and support for SDG implementation as the sub-national level</p>
<p>Capacity Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building at all levels including on integrated policy-making and partnership arrangements Training on SDG implementation tools and sharing of the tools 	<p>Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <p>Support to the development of institutional and individual capacities in the monitoring of SDG progress, including the gathering of data, the management and storage of data, data analysis and use for accountability and to inform management as well as policy decision-making</p>	<p>Capacity Development</p> <p>There is a need for capacity development on a variety of issues, including policy coherence across different sectors, planning for SDG achievement and best practices in implementation</p>
<p>South-South Learning</p> <p>Learning about other countries' experiences</p>	<p>Financial Resources</p> <p>Support to the funding of the SDGs through the development of innovative funding mechanisms, which tap into public as well as private resources and make use of domestic resources as well as development aid</p>	<p>Resources Mobilization</p> <p>Support to the mobilization of financial as well as technical resources</p>
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to global resources, both funding and technical support facilities for SDG implementation Curricula on SDGs implementation in the school of public administration 		<p>South-South Learning</p> <p>The need for learning across countries in a peer learning environment</p>
	<p>South-South Learning</p> <p>The need for learning across countries in a peer learning environment</p>	<p>Sub-national SDG Implementation</p> <p>Support for SDG implementation as sub-national level</p>

3) Policy Recommendations

In order to respond to the challenges faced by countries, in the three clusters concerned, in the implementation of the SDGs and in line with the needs that countries have identified in terms of the support required and the role that UN DESA/DPIDG/ UNPOG could play (see Table 14 below), it is recommended for UNPOG to tailor support to the following issues:

1. Support the development of capacities of public administration at the national and sub-national level, to incorporate the SDG goals and targets into national and sub-national development plans and to mainstream them throughout government development planning and implementation

- With many governments developing new multi-year plans in the coming decade, it will be important for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to support this process. This would mean to gather experiences and lessons learned so far on the inclusion of the SDGs in national development plans and to analyse these data to inform guidelines for the incorporation of the SDGs in new multi-year national and sub-national development plans.
- Work with the pre-service and in-service institutes that instruct civil servants, in order to support the inclusion of aspects of the SDGs into the curriculum used by these institutes. The curriculum would need to deal with the contents of the SDGs as well as with the ways to incorporate the goals and targets into national and sub-national planning processes and mainstream them across ministries, departments, and government agencies at national and sub-national levels

2. Development and implementation of innovative funding mechanisms at the national and sub-national level, tapping into domestic and international resources as well as public and private resources

- Support countries in the conduct of an assessment of the financial resource requirements for SDG implementation, specifying details for each of the SDGs, while taking into account aspects of synergy amongst the various goals and targets
- Provide support on ways in which countries can fund the implementation of the SDGs with a combination of public and private, domestic and international resources
- Support countries to develop ways to assess existing capacities for resource mobilisation from private, domestic and international resources, in order to inform plans to develop such capacities at both institutional and individual levels
- Document good practice examples of public finance mobilisation, through enhanced tax revenue in terms of revenue to GDP ratio, and allocation of such resources for SDG implementation, including planning and budgeting mechanisms at national and sub-national levels
- In selected countries, conduct focused case studies on private sector support to SDG implementation, either through private sector investment, Public-Private Partnerships or Foreign Direct Investment and document these. Conduct meta-analysis on the case studies in order to distill more general lessons and good practices, which can be used to inform government engagement with the private sector for SDG achievement.

3. Support the development of mechanisms to enhance coordination across government stakeholders as well as between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the implementation of the SDGs

- Assist inquiry of systems and mechanisms presently used for coordination and cooperation across government agencies and between government and non-government actors, to support the implementation of the SDGs in a variety of national and sub-national contexts. This would include the identification of institutional and other enabling and constraining factors for coordination as well as the documentation of the critical moments and aspects of development processes where substantial coordination is required.
- Analyse lessons learned and good practices in terms of coordination amongst government parties and with non-governmental actors, including practices that can be applied more broadly across countries and those that are more closely related to specific development contexts.
- Use the results of the inquiry to support learning on coordination in SDG implementation through sharing of the findings of the inquiry through meetings and workshops and making use of the results to support peer learning processes across selected countries.

4. Development of capacities for monitoring of the SDG indicators, including data gathering, analysis of development results and the analysis and use of data and information to inform the SDG implementation process, in order to enhance results.

- Support will need to start with providing countries with a simple tool that enables them to conduct an assessment of the readiness of the government monitoring system to assess the progress on SDG implementation through monitoring of the SDG indicators. Based on the conduct of such a readiness assessment, a capacity development plan needs to be developed and implemented at country level, including those aspects that have proven to be lacking in the readiness assessment. This could address, for example, data gathering, data management system, data analysis, disaggregation of data, reporting and dissemination of data and information. Each of these aspects of the capacity development process can, in turn, be supported.
- Informed by the capacity assessment, support needs to be provided to building capacities in data gathering on the indicators included in the SDG monitoring framework, in particular on Tier II and III data gathering processes. This concerns both improvement of administrative data gathering systems as well as the development of capacities of statistical agencies on the gathering of survey data. In addition to institutional capacities, there is a need to develop capacities at the individual level of the staff in government and relevant non-governmental agencies.
- The intermittent process of data analysis needs to be encouraged and assisted such as reviewing data gathered and analysing these, making use of a selected set of evaluation criteria, including effectiveness, comparing results with the targets set in the SDG monitoring framework, and aspects of efficiency, participation and other process issues. Apart from the data on indicators, it will be useful to inform this process through the use of complementary data gathering methods.

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- Analysis needs to pay particular attention to the principle of leaving no one behind, through the disaggregation of data by relevant vulnerability criteria. Moreover, specific case studies could be supported, in those circumstances where vulnerable groups are known or have been identified, but where statistical survey data do not sufficiently enable disaggregation to get an understanding of the living conditions of the members of these groups, in order to inform initiatives to improve their status. Review processes may, moreover, require the gathering of other additional qualitative information, to underpin the analysis of the review.
 - UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG will need to work closely with the scientific community, civil society and think tanks in the enhancement of monitoring, review and follow up processes, based on the capacities of each of these actors in the specific country contexts. Each of these actors can play a role in the monitoring and review process as well as in the capacity development process concerned.

5. Support peer learning on SDG implementation across countries in the Asia-Pacific and Eastern Africa region, in a systematic way.

Provide support to create an enabling environment for learning on SDG implementation in multiple ways:

- Enhancing opportunities for learning through the organization of meetings and workshop on key topics of SDG implementation in the regions
- Play a coordinating role for countries in the regions in terms of matching demand and supply of the lessons learned, good practices and other relevant experiences identified in SDG implementation and facilitate related learning opportunities across countries.

Start the learning process across countries with a focus on the key needs of the countries identified in the present assessment:

- Development of capacities of public administration
- Monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up
- Resource mobilisation

Making use of ICTs to develop a learning platform for stakeholders involved in SDG implementation in Asia and the Pacific, and Eastern Africa regions, where they can share lessons and discuss issues concerned in a constructive way.

Table 14. Support Expectations from UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG Identified

SIDS	LDCs/LLDCs	LICs/MICs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional development including supporting innovative public service delivery and ICTs development • Developing partnerships • Reinforcing transparency and accountability and developing M&E capacities • Engaging citizens in decision making and implementation • Support to programme quality and coordination • Mobilizing financial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of capacities of the public administration at a national and sub-national level to implement the SDGs in coordination with other stakeholders • Development of capacities in the monitoring of results towards SDG achievement and SDG indicators; and development of statistical capacities • Development and implementation of innovative funding mechanisms at the national and sub-national level • Enhance coordination across government stakeholders as well as coordination between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders • Support South-South learning across countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to public administration development, including public service delivery and ICTs for development, and support to integrated policy making • Reinforcing transparency and accountability • Public awareness raising and participatory decision-making using innovative approaches to public communication • Development of partnerships • Guidance on monitoring, review, and follow-up, enhancing comparability across country level VNR reports • Mobilization of resources • Sub-national SDG implementation

6

Findings and Analysis on Country Group A : SIDS



6 Findings and Analysis on the Country Group A : SIDS

1) National Strategies for SDG Implementation

SIDS have an overarching development plan for sustainable development, and many states include a long-term vision, goals, guiding principles, and strategic areas in their plans. In many states, strategies for sustainable development are developed by complementing rather than replacing existing planning and strategy documents. The national strategies have been prepared with the guidance and assistance of international organizations and multi-national associations. In particular, the Pacific SIDS have developed their national strategies in close collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum and the Forum Secretariat.

A. Mainstreaming the SDGs in line with National-level Goals and Priorities

Based on the survey responses, it seems that most of the SIDS have integrated the SDGs in their legislation by revising their current rules and policies, rather than writing and passing a new bill.¹⁰⁵

Legislative Actions and Efforts

Among the countries that responded to the survey, **Papua New Guinea** is the only country in which the government has already taken actions to integrate the SDGs in the national development process. In Papua New Guinea, the government connects its five-year strategic plan (Medium Term Development Plan, MTDP) to the annual budget and implementation framework through the passage of the National Responsible Planning and Monitoring Act (NRPMA). While the SDGs are mainstreamed into the MTDP, various sectors, including public and private sectors, also develop their own sectoral plans to achieve the goals of the MTDP.

Fiji takes a different approach in a way that the Parliament provides strong support for its SDG implementation. Fiji's Parliament plays a proactive leadership role in developing a practical tool for scrutinizing the legislation from an SDG perspective. After the self-assessment of the SDGs, the Parliament recognizes the importance of the legislative support to implement the SDGs effectively. In this self-assessment, Fiji reports the necessity of mainstreaming the SDGs into parliamentary mechanisms by passing laws to support the SDGs, financing and monitoring the SDG implementation and ensuring public engagement in the SDG implementation.

In **Vanuatu**, at the time of the survey, the government was calling for constitutional and legislative changes to facilitate the implementation of the SDGs and promote cooperation and collaboration between political institutions. In the meantime, the government has launched its National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030 (NSDP), as a localized version of the SDGs.

¹⁰⁵ Only two states (i.e., Maldives and Samoa) have completed the VNR; so, the findings of this report rely primarily on the responses of surveys on the SDG implementation. Unless clearly specified, the analysis results reflect self-report on a state's preparation and implementation of the SDGs.

While the governments collaborate with the legislative body (e.g., the Parliament) to implement the SDGs, the legal action, including the passage of a new bill, has not yet been taken in most of the SIDS. There are, however, some states that have received extensive support from the legislative body. For instance, in **Tonga**, the Parliament shows a cooperative attitude toward the implementation of the SDGs by proposing workshops to establish SDG monitoring committees.

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SDG Integration in National Strategies and Plans

Rather than adopting new legislation, the surveyed SIDS have established national strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda. Legislations on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are deemed unnecessary, as the SDGs are incorporated in national development strategies and plans. Recognizing the importance of the SDGs, SIDS have taken various steps and measures to integrate the SDGs into their national priorities.

The present assessment of SDG integration into national level goals also suggests that a few countries have already set specific targets reflecting the SDGs at the national level, whereas most countries are either in the process of collecting inputs and opinions from relevant actors in various sectors, or in the process of adapting their targets for SDG implementation.

Among the countries that completed the survey, four countries have developed national-level targets to achieve the SDGs. For instance, in **Fiji**, the Green Growth Framework (GGF) has been established to accelerate integrated and inclusive sustainable development and building resilience to climate change. While the GGF is not directly targeted to realize the SDGs, the principles underlying the framework are similar to the SDGs, as the GGF seeks a holistic, inclusive, and integrated approach to achieve economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable development. The government also recently completed the 5-year and 20-year National Development Plan (NDP) by integrating the principles of the GGF with the content of the SDGs. In addition, Fiji has established a target to deal with poverty by taking a multi-sectoral approach to achieve sustainable growth and to ensure better access to social services. Similarly, in **Samoa**, the SDGs were incorporated into the national Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS, 2016-2020) without actual legislation changes. In **Tonga**, the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) has integrated the SDGs into the national plan. Tonga also has integrated the SDGs into three sector plans: the Tonga Energy Road Map (TERM), the National Health Strategic Framework (NHSF) and the Joint National Action Plan (JNAP). Notably, the TSDF has developed and utilized the Mainstream Accelerate Policy Support (MAPS) initiative to cascade down the SDGs to the ministerial level and integrate the relevant SDGs in corporate business plans and annual management plans. There was no legislation in **Tuvalu**; however, the Tuvalu National Strategy for Sustainable Development, known as the 'TE KAKEEGA III' (TK III) 2016 - 2020, has been aligned with the SDGs.

For the remaining states, the targets for the SDGs have not yet been clearly defined and established either at the national or the sub-national level. **Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Samoa** and **Vanuatu** are currently working to set these national-level targets. In the **Maldives**, while no new legislative efforts or actions have yet been taken, the government is at the stage of identifying national priorities and exploring how the SDGs are aligned to national agendas and priorities. Interestingly, despite the poor integration of the SDGs into the national-level plans, the Maldives has integrated the SDGs into policy plans at the sectoral level. More specifically, at the time of the survey, the Maldives government was

gathering inputs from its implementing agencies as well as civil society and the private sector to identify national priorities and targets for the SDGs (e.g., Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) is scheduled for 2018/2019). In **Papua New Guinea**, the government was consulting with various sectors to review and localize the SDG targets and indicators relevant to the country's context before establishing the national targets and indicators. In **Samoa**, the work of setting the national-level targets for SDGs was still in progress, and its progress varies among the 15 different sectors. Finally, in **Vanuatu**, the government has been planning to develop targets and indicators since July 2017, while soliciting funding assistance (particularly from UNDP) to help with this exercise.

Degree of SDG Integration in National Strategies and Plans

The alignment of the SDGs and targets into national plans, policies and strategies varies among the countries that responded to the survey. Some states have already integrated the SDGs and mainstreamed targets into the planning and budgeting processes at the national and sectoral levels. These states include Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

In **Fiji**, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Implementation Roadmap identifies the path for renewable energy, while the national development plan covers the SDGs broadly. Comparatively, in **Samoa**, the government has developed the national strategy, called the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS). Samoa has aligned the three pillars of sustainable development (i.e., social, economic and environmental) to 14 key outcomes at the sectoral level in order to support national objectives and goals. In **Tuvalu**, the Te Kakeega III (TK III) has reflected and integrated the SDGs and related targets into the national strategy to deal with environmental, human resource development and energy issues. In **Vanuatu**, the SDGs have been integrated and even localized into its NSDP initiative by reflecting what its people need and by specializing plans in terms of policies, goals and objectives at the national, provincial, regional and local levels.

Comparatively, the **Maldives** can be classified as a partially aligned country with the limited localization of the SDGs into their action plans. The government has incorporated the target SDGs into some sector plans (including education, health, energy, waste management, fisheries, water and sanitation), but the local governments still need to be aligned with their national priorities and plans. Furthermore, the integration process is limited to the planning stages, and at the time of the survey the government was attempting to expand the budgeting process and the monitoring and evaluating processes.

Finally, the **Papua New Guinea** government was only in the process of developing the strategic plan (medium-term development plan) for 2018-2022. This strategic plan reflects the localized SDG targets and indicators into the national targets and indicators. The reasons for the late integration are partially due to capacity challenges, such as limited capacity at sub-national levels, insufficient infrastructure (e.g., roads and communications), deadlocked public support resulting from unnecessarily strengthened accountability for public resources (e.g., increased red tape and formal processes).

B. Priorities for SDG Implementation

Considering the level of connection of national priorities to the SDGs and related targets, five countries (i.e., Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) have set priorities to pursue the implementation of the SDGs and targets, whereas two countries are either in the process of identifying priorities (**Maldives**) or waiting for policymakers to review its planning framework (**Vanuatu**).

Of the countries with set priorities, shared emphasis were placed on the provision of basic human services (e.g., health and education) and infrastructure (e.g., transportation and ICT) as well as the need for enhanced preparation in response to climate change. However, the priority areas themselves vary among these five states. For instance, in **Fiji**, the national priorities have been set in terms of inclusive and sustainable social and economic development, including addressing climate change. The Fijian government plans to evaluate the status of Fiji with regards to the SDGs and identify the gaps from the expected goals. Along with this diagnosis, the government also plans to identify priorities and prepare policies and mechanisms for implementing the SDGs. **Papua New Guinea** has given priority to universal healthcare access, the provision of primary education, decentralization of service delivery to sub-national levels and the development of infrastructure over the last five years. The government's emphasis was being expanded at the time of the survey to mitigating and adapting climate change and exploring agro-business for the next five years.

Samoa also has prioritized the provision of health and basic education as well as enhanced readiness to climate change. More specifically, the Samoa government established priorities in three areas: in terms of the economy, Samoa prioritizes enhanced macroeconomic resilience, increased agricultural productivity and exports, improved tourism performance and enhanced private sector development; in terms of social considerations, the priorities are for the continued promotion of health, the improvement of quality education, and the strengthening of social institutions; finally, in terms of the environment, the priority is to enhance resilience to the impact of climate change. SDG-related priorities also include increased access to clean water and sanitation, improved transport systems and networks, and improved quality and affordability of ICT connectivity and (renewable) energy supply.

In **Tonga**, the government has prioritized the promotion of industry (e.g., tourism, agriculture, fisheries) and the establishment of economic and social infrastructure through government investments. While these two priorities are not directly related to the implementation of the SDGs, they will build the national foundation necessary to achieve the SDGs. In addition, the government has worked to improve the quality of governance (including law and order), to prepare for climate change and disaster recovery, increase energy efficiency and address issues of unemployment and trade. Due to limited resources, the government also focuses on the mobilization of resources to strengthen revenue collection and increase revenue bases as well as development aid and assistance. The government has specified the four-year tenure of the current government administration as the time frame to fulfill these priorities.

In the **Maldives**, a Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) is scheduled for 2018/2019, which will feed into the process of identifying national priorities.¹⁰⁷ For Tuvalu, although specific priorities are not explicitly stated, the government reported that it had set them.

2) National Institutional Arrangements for SDG Implementation

The institutional arrangements for SDG implementation vary amongst countries. While most countries delegate the authority on SDG implementation to the department level, four countries, including Fiji, Madagascar, Maldives and Samoa, have created an ad hoc task force consisting of multiple departments to lead the SDG implementation (see Table 15).

107 Republic of Maldives. Voluntary National Review for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017.

Table 15. Government Agencies for Implementing the SDGs

Country	Lead Agency
Fiji	SDG Task Force, Ministry of Economy
Madagascar	Steering and Follow-up Committee
Maldives	National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC)
Papua New Guinea	Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM)
Samoa	National Task Force
Tonga	National Planning Division (NPD)
Tuvalu	Evaluation and Coordination Unit (ECU)
Vanuatu	Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DPPAC)

In **Fiji**, the government created an inter-agency task force, called as the SDG Taskforce, to coordinate the SDG implementation and to raise awareness of the SDGs at various agency levels. Also, the Ministry of Economy is in charge of national-level planning and budgeting. The Ministry of Economy is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the SDG implementation through the development of annual scorecards and five-year reporting to the UN. In addition, the government created a new Ministry of Waterways to better manage waterways with the purpose of establishing food and nutrition security.

In the **Maldives**, the National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC) is the lead agency to implement the SDGs and is composed of all Cabinet Ministers. The NMCC was formed to provide guidance and feedback from the respective agencies and other areas of knowledge and ensure the integration of economic, environmental, governance and social actions towards the development of the SDGs within the country context. At the operational level, the SDGs Division within the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEE) is mandated by the President’s Office to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the SDGs. In an effort to update the institutional set up to support SDG implementation, a Technical Committee was formed at the end of 2016 in order to bring together focal points from government offices and state agencies to provide critical and technical support. Representation from each state and government agency is included in the technical committee, and the members coordinate with stakeholder agencies to ensure that the SDGs are integrated into sectoral plans and other development plans.

Similarly, in **Samoa**, the National Task Force, which consists of various government agencies, is the lead agency for SDG implementation. The National Task Force is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and is composed of representatives from the lead ministries responsible for sustainable development (i.e., Finance and Planning, Natural Resources and Environment and Community and Social Development). The relevant sector ministries that are responsible for implementation of each of the SDGs and representatives of civil society and the private sector also work with the National Task Force to review the implementation of the national roadmap and to assess SDG indicators.

Finally, in **Madagascar**, the Steering and Follow-up Committee is in charge of leading and implementing the SDGs.

Other countries in group A have delegated the responsibility to guide the implementation of the SDGs to a ministry or department at the central government level. The planning department takes the primary responsibility in most states. For instance, in **Papua New Guinea**, the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) is responsible for developing plans and strategies, implementing, monitoring and reporting to the government on progress. It coordinates with all related sectors and controls the allocation of development budgets to align with government development priorities. While the DNPM takes a leading role, all government and relevant institutions, including non-state actors such as the private sector, civil society, and community-based organizations, are also widely represented at different layers of the governance structure. All sectors are represented by their national representatives to discuss technical issues associated with their respective sectors in the process of mainstreaming the SDGs into their sector plans.

In **Tonga**, the National Planning Division (NPD) under the Prime Minister's Office plays a leading role in implementing the SDGs. The NPD is responsible for localizing the SDGs and implementing the SAMOA Pathway as well. The NPD also contributes to formulating the budget statement of SDG implementation. The NPD has utilized several workshops, sector dialogues and focus groups for the realization of the TSDF and the SDGs to engage and inform stakeholders about the SDG implementation. In addition, the NPD has reviewed and monitored the Maldives Development Alliance (MDA)'s budget and corporate plans to ensure the outputs of these plans are linked to the TSDF and the SDGs. Notably, the toolkit for managing the Disaster and Gender Social Indicators had been introduced at the time of the survey and were expected to be an integral part of the corporate plan and budget process starting in 2018.

In **Tuvalu**, the lead government agency is the Evaluation and Coordination Unit (ECU) under the Office of the Prime Minister. Specifically, the ECU works closely with the Planning, Budget and Aid Coordination Department in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to launch and present the Te Kakeega III (TK III) - National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016-2020) - to the public and developing partners. The ECU is accountable for the implementation of TK III to the Cabinet and the Parliament, including updating both institutions about Tuvalu's progress in achieving the TK III. Public servants from various ministries are also invited and engaged in the activities of SDG implementation with participating in international meetings and training on the SDGs that take place in the Pacific region.

In **Vanuatu**, the Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination, as one of the key departments at the Office of Prime Minister, is responsible for overall policy, planning and resource allocation, as well as coordination for the implementation of SDGs/NSDP.

A. Engagement of Sub-National Level Government

In many countries, the central governments have informed and consulted with sub-national authorities to localize the SDGs and to integrate the SDGs into local development strategies. In general, many countries have involved local authorities in localizing the SDGs into sub-national-level development plans.

In **Fiji**, issues of climate-informed development and disaster risk reduction are programmed through local government authorities by integrating these issues in the divisional and provincial development boards. For instance, although it is a sub-national level legislative action, the House of Representatives of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville also established the SDG House Committee to help oversee the integration of the SDGs in their strategic policies, plans and budgets. The subsequent budgetary

allocations and other on-going efforts are also made for these forums. In particular, many townships are being informed about the need for action on climate-resilient development (related to the SDG 13 and the SDG 14).

In the **Maldives**, the Local Government Authority (LGA), as the parent organization for local councils, has been engaged in the process of SDG localization by aligning its five-year Development Plan (2017-2021) with the SDGs. Indeed, Maldives has 186 inhabited islands, and all islands are governed by elected councils, and these island councils are addressing the SDGs under the LGA Development Plan (2017-2021). At the sub-national level, meetings with State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) are also conducted to create and increase the level of awareness of the SDGs and to emphasize the importance of their role in successful implementation of the SDGs.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville has taken initial steps to customize the SDGs to fit the sub-national context. Other provinces have not yet undertaken these steps, but they are participating in consultations for the SDGs through national government departments. Apart from Bougainville, the sub-national authorities have not yet been introduced to the SDGs.

In Samoa, local government authorities are actively engaged through sector steering committees regarding policy and service delivery. Public consultation is considered a norm with regard to the planning processes and even legislation procedures.

In **Tuvalu**, all eight islands were involved in the process of formulating of the TK III through engagement with the consultation process. Tuvalu encourages all eight islands to provide their own Island Strategic Plans (ISPs) and ensure that their own ISPs are linked to the TK III and the SDGs. Besides, the eight islands in Tuvalu have also formulated their own Island Strategic Plans that align with the TK III and the SDGs.

In **Tonga**, although specific practices are not reported, local authorities are indirectly engaged in the SDG implementation by their consultation in the formation of the national development plan.

In **Vanuatu**, the NSDP involved three years of broad-based consultation. In other words, all sectors and authorities were mobilized to work on their respective areas.

B. National Education System for SDGs Awareness-raising

Some countries are considering using their education systems to support the SDG implementation. In **Papua New Guinea**, several universities have operated graduate and post-graduate courses specialized on the SDGs. The government is also using secondary and primary schools for improving awareness of the value or importance of community living and conservation among young students, which are the foundations for sustainable development. Comparatively, some countries, such as **Fiji** and **Tonga**, have utilized primary and secondary schools to increase the awareness of sustainable development topics, especially the climate change in the case of Tonga. The Fijian government has proposed to integrate the national development plan (the roadmap for SDG implementation) to the education curriculum with a focus on such topics as cultural diversity, gender, nutrition, drug and alcohol use and climate change and the environment. Additionally, the Fiji Higher Education Commission runs certification-level courses on resilience and renewable energy.

However, many countries have not yet explicitly utilized their education system for raising the awareness of the SDGs. In Vanuatu, while the curriculum and education policies are reviewed and discussed along with the National Human Resource Development Plan as a strategy to address the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) and SDGs, the education system has not yet created specific programmes and curricula on the SDGs. Maldives, Samoa and Tuvalu do not report any curricula related to the SDG implementation.

3) Engagement with Non-Government Actors

Along with the arrangement of government institutions, each country has attempted to increase the engagement of non-government actors, i.e., civil society organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and citizens. The provision of workshops on the SDGs is a primary method to increase the awareness of SDGs among non-governmental actors. Some states invite the representatives of civil society organizations and the private sector to participate in the decision-making process for the SDG implementation and international meetings.

In **Fiji**, the government has taken a range of measures to this end, including workshops, consultations, exhibitions, posters and media campaigns. More specifically, to increase the awareness of the SDGs among multiple sectors, the speaker of the Parliament has initiated the Speakers' Debate, which invites various stakeholders to discuss topics related to the SDGs such as climate change, oceans, gender-based violence and youth and health. The participants include ministers responsible for work on SDG-related areas as well as representatives from civil society, academia, faith-based groups and so on. By streaming this debate online on the Parliament's website, the legislative body attempts to increase public interest in the SDGs. In addition to the Parliament's efforts, the government has worked with the UNDP Pacific Office to organize an SDG exhibit and conduct the Rights, Empowerment and Cohesion for Rural and Urban Fijian Project (REACH).¹⁰⁸ The government sought to encourage various important stakeholders to participate in the SDG implementation by expanding partnerships with them. For instance, the National Human Rights Commission has engaged with civil society organizations (such as youth organizations) in a dialogue on human rights.

In the **Maldives**, a series of regional workshops on the SDGs for CSOs were arranged at the time of the survey to advertise the importance of their involvement and to identify the ways in which they can contribute to the SDG implementation.

In **Papua New Guinea**, non-governmental stakeholders in all sectors are consulted in any policy or legislative development. Also, the government has held several workshops for various sectors (public, private and civil society) to introduce the 2030 Agenda and to invite them to work on localizing and mainstreaming the SDGs. The government has also worked in partnership with the UN to enhance awareness of the Paris Climate Change Agreement among the different sectors in alignment with local policies and legislative frameworks. It is also noted that the government is now working to ensure the support of private sector companies who are in the business of logging, fishing and other extractive and resource-based activities.

In **Samoa**, the government strategically approaches civil society organizations and agencies outside the government to improve advocacy and outreach to the general population. The government asks civil society organizations to advise and give feedback through their representation on these policy-making bodies. In other words, civil society organizations and non-government agencies are considered partners and included in the institutional arrangements for advocacy, implementation and promotion. Samoa has also invited and asked for support from other non-government actors for increasing sub-national authorities' capacity. Ensuring the representation of stakeholders from multiple sectors is achieved either through dedicated financial support programs, such as the Civil Society Support Fund (CSSP) and the Private Sector Support Fund (PSSF), or political institutions and associations, such as village pulenuu (mayors) and sui o nuu (female village representatives). The government extended financial incentives to local, civic organizations and private organizations for encouraging their involvement in the SDG achievement. The government has also attempted to ensure voices from local

108 The REACH project is implemented by several government organizations, including the Ministry of Women, Children, and Poverty Alleviation and the Legal Aid Commission in order to raise the awareness of the social, economic, and legal rights of people.

leaders and representatives are duly reflected as well.

In **Tonga**, the government has sought to increase awareness of the SDGs and related policies among non-governmental stakeholders. The line ministry's corporate plan was prepared at the time of the survey to address specific SDGs that the stakeholders could work toward. Concerning climate change, the Climate Change Department also runs different awareness programs targeting the general public.

In **Tuvalu**, the government has continued to establish a high-level representation by multiple stakeholders in various sectors. Members from non-government agencies, the private sector and civil society have been involved and nominated by the government to attend regional and international meetings or training workshops on the SDGs. There is also a representative from the group in the SDG Sub-Committee which is chaired by the Secretary to the Office of the Prime Minister. Members from civil society organizations, private sector companies and citizens are invited to participate in the decision-making process by submitting their issues to respective ministries and asking the allocation of budget costs for the implementation of the SDGs in a certain area.

Finally, in **Vanuatu**, given the limited availability of resources, the government was working closely with non-government organizations (NGOs) in developing policies and legislations for better mobilizing, coordinating, and harmonizing resources of non-governmental sectors. The government has created an accountability mechanism to promote buy-in and support from NGOs as well as to build and maintain relationships with NGOs in more efficient and effective ways.

4) Coordination Mechanisms

Given high levels of decentralization and limited government and administrative capacities, the SDG implementation needs to take more transparent and inclusive approaches. Overall, the SIDS surveyed indicate that they engaged various ministries and government agencies as well as private and non-government stakeholders in the process of the SDG implementation. Some countries (e.g., the Maldives and Tuvalu) explicitly state how they have involved relevant stakeholders in public and private sectors in the planning and implementation stages. The **Maldives** has involved all public and private stakeholders in discussions on how to implement each of the SDGs and cross-cutting issues. For better informative decision-making, there are some special committees created to provide policy guidance (National Ministerial Coordination Committee) and technical support (Technical Committee). A series of regional workshops also have contributed to increasing civil society organizations' awareness of the importance of the SDGs and their involvement in achieving the SDGs.

In **Papua New Guinea**, all government and relevant institutions in the public sector, as well as organizations in the private, non-profit, and civic sectors, are represented at the different layers and levels of the governance structure. The government has coordinated these representatives to work together on works of mainstreaming the SDGs into sectoral plans and addressing technical issues associated with the mainstreaming process. The example of the formal institutional mechanism for coordinating different sectors' representatives includes the Provincial and Local-level Monitoring Authority in which issues and bottlenecks of the SDG implementation are discussed and resolved.

Samoa and **Vanuatu** widely utilize committees and task forces as a mechanism for coordinating relevant stakeholders. In **Samoa**, the government utilizes several committees and task forces in the planning (e.g., sector coordinators forum, cabinet development committee, National SDG Task Force) as well as monitoring and evaluating stages (e.g., Universal Periodic Review Task Force). In **Vanuatu**, different government agencies work jointly on the implementation of the SDGs with their involvement in national committees, including the Central Agencies Committee, the SDGs/NSDP Task Force and the Development Committee of Officials.

In **Tuvalu**, the coordination mechanism is formally institutionalized in the national plan. For instance, the TK III articulates that when potential conflicts arise, the government authorities need to consult with other (conflicting) parties to identify common ground and then reach compromises and workable solutions in the strategic areas of climate change, natural resources, environment, ocean and seas and other thematic goals. In addition, Tuvalu turns to the assistance of several organizations, including (international) development partners, regional agencies, the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) agencies and other public and private organizations to promote the integration and coordination of decision-making for the SDG implementation. For instance, the Tuvalu government invites and joins representatives from relevant stakeholders to international meetings and trainings.

How the SIDS have involved and coordinated with relevant stakeholders in the SDG implementation can be more observed in the area of disaster risk reduction. For instance, in Papua New Guinea, the government initiated a multi-hazard risk management and community-based disaster risk management approaches, and the government emphasizes training at the university level to develop suitable and well-prepared capacity. **Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu** have all developed and operated a coordinated system to improve the resilience to natural hazards at the community level as well as the national level.

5) Relation to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

The challenges SIDS face in the context of climate change include, but are not limited to, the low-lying nature of the islands themselves and their dispersed geographies, which make them vulnerable to the impact of climate change and associated extreme weather events. In response to these challenges, SIDS countries have adopted several initiatives either by incorporating the international agreements on climate change and/or by adopting new policies to improve the well-being of vulnerable and poor people. The country responses to questionnaire indicate that all responded SIDS have developed and implemented their national plans and strategies under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and contextualized the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in their plans along with the SDG implementation.

The Maldives and Samoa are among some countries explicitly indicated that they have developed their national plans in a way that follows international agreements on climate change. Specifically, the **Maldives** has adopted and implemented the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in coherence with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The national initiative focuses on the role of government in collaborating with other relevant stakeholders to develop national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. The government also produced the Maldives Climate Change Policy Framework 2015 (MCCPF) to devise and implement policies to help the state's adaptation to climate change and mitigate the expected risks entailed. **Samoa** has incorporated the possibility of climate change and natural disasters in their action plans at various levels (e.g., sectoral, regional, national and global) in alignment with the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement. **Vanuatu** also incorporated these international commitments on climate change at the level of policy and objective formulation, and the development of sectoral plans is underway.

Comparatively, other countries indicate that they are in the process of developing plans to take into account the challenges of climate change and/or natural risks. In **Tuvalu**, climate challenges were being incorporated in the Tuvalu National Strategy for Sustainable Plan 2016 - 2020 (TK III). **Papua New Guinea** is also in the process of developing several policies and frameworks to contend with challenges from possible impact of climate change, but the country is experiencing difficulties in funding and implementing policies to prepare for natural disasters and in ensuring appropriately sustainable capacities be developed.

In addition to national efforts to conform to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other international commitments, the SIDS have paid constant attention to the issue of climate change and expected natural risks. While mitigating and adapting to climate change are important national agendas that are closely related to the SDG implementation, most of the states have delegated the authority and responsibility for making policies on climate change to other government agencies, such as environment and energy agencies, which often are not the lead agencies for the SDG implementation (see Table 16).

Table 16. Government Agencies for Climate Change Actions

Country	Government Agency - Climate Change
Fiji	Climate Change and International Cooperation Division (within Ministry of Economy)
Madagascar	Not Specified
Maldives	Ministry of Environment and Energy
Papua New Guinea	Conservation Environment Protection Authority Climate Change Development Authority
Samoa	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
Tonga	Ministry of Energy, Information & Communication, Disaster, Environment, and Climate Change
Tuvalu	Office of the Prime Minister Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
Vanuatu	Ministry of Climate Change

In the case of **Fiji**, the Climate Change Division (CCD), which has been recently transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to the Ministry of Economy, has assumed the primary responsibility to prepare for climate change. The purpose of this transfer is to integrate and mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in the development and budgeting processes. While the majority of states prepare the threats of climate change with the inter-organizational format without emphasis on specific purposes, the Fijian government appears to rely on a more coordination-based mechanism with an emphasis on the threat of climate change to the island economy. The CCD has the overall responsibility for coordinating climate change policy and climate financing, as well as coordinating related agencies and sectors. This CCD also convenes the National Climate Change Steering Committee (NCCSC) to engage various ministries related to the economy and sustainable development.

In the **Maldives**, the Ministry of Environment and Energy is in charge of preparing and dealing with climate change and takes responsibility for executing the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) process in collaboration with other ministries and stakeholders.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the Conservation Environment Protection Authority (CEPA) and the Climate Change Development Authority (CCDA), which have replaced the Office of Climate Change and Development since 2016, are the two government agencies responsible for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The CEPA is tasked with protecting and regulating environments, whereas the CCDA coordinates the climate change related policies and actions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Papua New Guinean government has established relevant regulatory and policy frameworks to implement the treaty agreement. Those two government agencies also work with other government departments and agencies, UN partners and CSOs to oversee compliance with the Paris Agreement and relevant national policies to support them.

In **Samoa**, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Finance are the lead ministries for preparing for climate change.

In **Tonga**, the Ministry of Energy, Information & Communication, Disaster, Environment and Climate Change (MEDIECC) is involved in the primary activities of mitigating and adapting to climate change in line with the Paris Agreement. Interestingly, the CEO of the MEIDECC, the Head of Climate Change, and the Head of Planning are joint members of the National Determine Committee in the region. The national priorities and strategies toward the implementation of the SDG 13 on climate change are discussed in this committee.

In **Tuvalu**, the Office of the Prime Minister is in charge of climate-related efforts and works closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The Climate Change, Policy and Disaster Unit (CCPDU), under the Office of the Prime Minister, has been assigned to lead in all issues related to climate change and disaster. In addition, the CCPDU coordinates all issues among these agencies and works closely with the ECU regarding ECU monitoring and reporting to the Cabinet.

In **Vanuatu**, the Ministry of Climate Change is responsible for the coordination and implementation of climate change-related policy initiatives. The permanent secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change is also a member of a technical committee, the DCO (Development Committee of Officials) comprising all Directors General (DGs) to review the Council of Minister's submissions.

6) Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

A. Institutional Arrangements for Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

While the lead government agencies have the primary responsibilities to oversee the progress of the SDG implementation, they often either collaborate with or request the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to collect data and establish indicators on the SDG implementation (see Table 17).

Table 17. Government Agencies for Monitoring and Follow-up on SDG Implementation

Country	Monitoring and Follow-Up
Fiji	SDG Monitoring Unit (within the Climate Change and International Cooperation Division at the Ministry of Economy)
Madagascar	The Ministry of Economy and Planning and the National Institute of Statistics
Maldives	SDG Division (within the Ministry of Environment)
Papua New Guinea	Department of National Planning and Monitoring, the National Statistical Office
Samoa	National Task Force, the National Statistical Office
Tonga	National Planning Division (NPD)
Tuvalu	Evaluation and Coordination Unit
Vanuatu	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (within DPACC)

More specifically, in **Papua New Guinea**, the lead agency plays a central role in supervising and managing data across all sectors of the country, and this work is closely related to the mandate of the National Statistical Office (NSO) for data collection.

In **Samoa**, the lead agency - National Task Force comprises Foreign Affairs, Statistics, Finance/Planning - manages data in close collaboration with the Statistical Bureau and other sector coordination units. Data sources include each sector's annual review, and are used as the basis for the mid-term review of the national development strategy. However, the monitoring and evaluating process is under development and is waiting for the Cabinet's approval.

In **Tonga**, the National Planning Division carries out evaluation and follow-up on SDG implementation by mapping, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the progress of the SDGs as well as national plans such as the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) and the Government Priority Agenda (GPA). The National Planning Division works closely and together with the sectors related to the SDGs (e.g., economic, social and environmental sectors) to update the data and information on the SDG implementation.

In **Tuvalu**, the Evaluation and Coordination Unit (ECU), one of the lead agencies, gathers and collates all information and data provided by the eight line-level ministries, and prepares the TK III progress reports to present to the Cabinet and Parliament on an annual basis.

Comparatively, some countries responded that they designated a sub-agency at the division or unit level under the lead agency (at the ministry or department level) to oversee and monitor the SDG implementation. For instance, in **Fiji**, the SDG Monitoring Unit is in charge of monitoring progress, and is located within the Division of Climate Change and International Cooperation at the Ministry of Economy. In the **Maldives**, the SDG Division at the Ministry of Environment and Energy is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the SDG implementation. In **Vanuatu**, the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit at the DSPAC collects data and prepares reviews while working closely with the National Statistic Office.

In addition to these formal reviews, most states (except the Maldives) have invited stakeholders from multiple sectors and the public at large to participate in the review process, either by relying on the inputs of representatives on the SDGs committee (**Papua New Guinea** and **Tuvalu**), or soliciting independent reviews of service delivery produced by civil society (**Samoa**), or by holding a summit to inform citizens with the progress of the SDG implementation to date (all countries except the Maldives). Particularly, in the case of **Fiji**, the multi-stakeholder SDGs Taskforce has been created and operates as the prime vehicle for coordinating and engaging with civil society and other actors.

B. The Role of Parliament in SDG Monitoring, Evaluation and Follow-up

For ensuring external control of the SDG implementation, many states either designate a role or provide an opportunity to engage parliaments or other independent institutions in the process. In **Fiji**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Samoa**, **Tonga**, **Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu**, the Parliament has a role or an opportunity to oversee the implementation, monitoring and review of the country's progress in achieving the SDGs. The role of the Parliament varies among the SIDS. The Parliament conducts an annual review on the SDG implementation at the national level (**Papua New Guinea**, **Tuvalu**, **Vanuatu**) and at the national and sectoral level (**Samoa**). Samoa also enables the Supreme Audit Institution to review the SDG implementation progress with its audit functions, including performance audits and audits of project expenditure. However, the **Maldives** has not yet delegated the authority of oversight, although it was considering to engage the Parliament and independent institutions in the review process at the time of the survey.

C. Current Efforts to Monitor, Review and Follow-up

The disparity among the SIDS is observed in their efforts to collect data and analyse any gaps in the SDG achievement. Specifically, in the **Maldives**, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) collects data on the indicators of the SDG targets and conducts a preliminary review of the data availability. Through the National Statistical System, about 240 indicators are identified as relevant to the SDGs. While the NBS currently collects 64 of these indicators, more indicators need to be collected. The government body identifies another 57 indicators that can be collected, but for another 37 indicators that must be collected, the NBS has no mechanism established to collect them. **Samoa** also has completed the work of matching 143 country indicators to the 230 indicators identified globally. The government also completed a process of localizing indicators and plans to use these data to examine the context for Samoa regarding implementation. However, in many cases, although collected data are marked as available, no baselines or reference points have yet been developed. **Tonga** has utilized the Tonga Strategic Development Framework to track and review the progress of SDG implementation. The government has identified SDGs indicators through the Sector Committee, but the availability of data is limited, as the data mapping exercise project has been funded only for specific areas, such as the environment.

Comparatively, as **Fiji**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Tuvalu**, and **Vanuatu** have not yet conducted any data mapping exercise, they do not have data available to track the progress of the SDG implementation. For instance, staying at the stage of localizing the SDGs, Fiji has not yet completely identified data availability and gaps, especially regarding climate change, eco-system conservation including that of oceans and seas, sustainable consumption and environmental sustainability.

As the Voluntary National Review (VNR) provides a review of how each country is progressing with SDG implementation, it is worth to check which countries have completed and presented their VNR. While the completion and submission of the VNR does not directly reflect the current efforts of the SIDS to monitor, review, and follow-up the SDGs, it can be used as a proxy to show how the SIDS have completed an overall review of their achievements, priorities and challenges in advancing the SDG implementation.

Regarding voluntary reviews of SDG implementation, **Samoa, Madagascar, Maldives** and **Kiribati** have completed the Voluntary National Review (VNR) on SDG implementation at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). **Samoa** and **Madagascar** presented their VNR in 2016. Samoa emphasized the identification of capacity gaps and the importance of developing an implementation roadmap, as well as the mapping of SDG indicators against those used in the national development strategy. The VNR of Madagascar recalled the lessons learned from the implementation of the MDG agenda, presented the SDG process, its preliminary results, the efforts to overcome the challenges and opportunities, the next steps / perspectives of the SDG process, and Madagascar's expectations as part of the first National Volunteer Review at the 2016 High Level Political Forum. **Maldives** submitted the VNR in 2017 with emphasis on successes, challenges, and exploration of innovative methods from a SIDS perspective. **Kiribati** presented its VNR in **2018** and highlighted achievements in education and literacy; high levels of child mortality; the negative impacts of climate change; and challenges around institutional capacity, including a lack of finance for data processing and the engagement of non-state actors in its VNR preparation. **Fiji, Nauru, Palau, Timor-Leste, Tonga** and **Vanuatu** will conduct the VNRs in **2019** under the theme of "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". However, **other six countries (Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Comoros)** in this group have not yet committed to conduct the VNRs.

D. The Role of National Statistics Offices

In most countries, the National Statistics Offices play an important role in collecting and managing data on the progress of the SDG implementation. In the **Maldives**, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) conducted data analyses on the indicators of the SDGs targets and completed the preliminary data review within the National Statistical System. Other SIDS states also report that they work with national statistics offices on the preparation and exercise of data mapping for tracking the progress of the SDG achievement. However, the role of these national statistics offices are limited due to the poor progress on the identification and establishment of national and sectoral-level indicators of the SDGs (e.g., **Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu**). While some states have developed and matched their national-level indicators and made data on the SDG achievement available, the baseline to evaluate the SDG progress has not been determined. In addition, the capacity of the national statistics offices is quietly limited as the lack of human and technical capacities is a perennial issue that all SIDS have shared.

7) Public Administration Capacities for Implementation

In general, SIDS, in particular the Pacific SIDS, have relatively limited administrative capacity compared to other countries in other regions that have a similar level of income.¹⁰⁹ The limited administrative capacity in SIDS is due to the population size and the geographical characteristics of smallness, isolation and remoteness. The smallness in size and by population is also associated with the limited and small size of public administration infrastructure. The isolation and remoteness make it difficult for SIDS to provide and deliver government services to their people, particularly education and transportation services. SIDS also have limited access to specialized and professional knowledge and skills required to establish and operate civil service bureaucracies efficiently as well as effectively.¹¹⁰

The remoteness of SIDS is associated with relatively weak control of the central government. The fragmentation and isolation make SIDS more bounded by close ties within local groups than through

109 UNDP Global Center for Public Excellence. Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States. 2014. Available from http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacitydevelopment/English/Singapore%20Centre/GPCSE_Complexity%20in%20Small%20Island.pdf

110 Ibid

national identities. People have a strong tendency to rely on personal, informal relations and processes than formal and impersonal structures and procedures.¹¹¹ Given the “village” nature of many SIDS, it should be prudent when considering introducing the Weberian-type government system which emphasizes the rational-legal processes of institutions applying laws and processes impersonally in the SIDS.

Along with the tendency of people’s loyalty to local groups than to the central government, SIDS tend to use highly decentralized systems to implement sustainable development.¹¹² This indicates that SIDS can utilize local governments and traditional, informal local governance in formulating and implementing the SDG-related plans and policies, when formal governance and accountability systems are not effective and weak, particularly at the time of political unrest. Many states have focused on ensuring and improving the representation of government sectors at all levels and stakeholders from all sectors. These efforts also have been placed on the process of preparing sustainable development plans. Indeed, from the survey responses, the responded SIDS reported that governments had increased coordinating capacities for promoting collaboration with regional authorities and for developing indicators and measures to monitor and track the progress of SDG implementation at both the national and sub-national level. However, despite the emphasis on the integrated and coordinated decision-making, most countries have reported their limited capacities in that they are not able to actually adopt such decision-making practices.

Additionally, due to the high vulnerability of the SIDS to climate change and natural disasters, the SIDS have invested many resources in improving government capacity for preventing and mitigating natural hazards. For instance, the **Maldives** has sought to improve the resilience of their islands through operation of the water resources management system, implementation of several coastal protection measures and enhancement of communication technologies.

A. Financing of the SDGs

Despite the need to increase investment in sustainable development, there has been an insufficient long-term investment in the SIDS, along with the lack of private participation in infrastructure.¹¹³ Instead, the SIDS have relied primarily on international assistance and aid (including International Development Aid (IDA) to complement their scarce public resources and to explore the accessibility to external financing for sustainable development.

For instance, since 2014, **Fiji** has explored a new model of financing through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) while increasing its reliance on Official Development Assistance (ODA) and South-South Cooperation (SSC) for the SDG implementation. The Fijian government also seeks to encourage foreign and private investments by alleviating the regulations on the minimum-investment requirement on the SDG target areas. The **Maldives** mobilized financial resources through international development partners such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the GCF, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank for SDG implementation. In **Papua New Guinea**, GCF could be a possible source of specific climate-related funds for implementing the SDGs. In **Samoa**, the GCF funding is used for financing infrastructure projects, essential for SDG implementation. Additionally, the Samoan government has introduced a new tariff to broaden the tax base.

In contrast, two other countries, i.e., **Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu**, do not explicitly state which specific funds will

111 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Procurement and Corruption in Small Island Developing States: Challenges and Emerging Practices. December 2016. Available from <https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2016/V1608451.pdf>

112 Ibid.

113 United Nations (UN). Report of the Inte-agency Task Force on Financing for Development: Financing for Development: Progress and Prospect. 2018

be mobilized for the purpose of SDG implementation. Instead, Tuvalu relies on the normal channels of internal and external development assistance, but it has not yet mobilized new financial resources. Vanuatu is waiting for the completion of the Aid Coordination Framework and Policy to develop a better understanding on how to mobilize resources externally and internally. **Tonga** answered that there are no new plans to mobilize financial resources.

Overall, despite the relatively high dependence on external financial resources, the SIDS have not received sufficient international assistance and aid to develop and implement the SDGs. Indeed, while international aid particularly ODA to SIDS at a global scale have increased slightly, the increased amount of ODA has only concentrated on a few SIDS in the Caribbean region such as Cuba and Haiti. This indicates that the SIDS, in particular the Pacific and AIMS regions, have to mobilize their domestic revenues to sustain their efforts for sustainable development as they have difficulties in obtaining sufficient funding support from external sources. Along with the recent economic growth, SIDS have managed to increase domestic resources by a small margin. The increased domestic resources can lend additional support to SIDS to strengthen their efforts for pursuing sustainable development.

The fiscal capacity of SIDS should be consolidated through policy mix. In general, in terms of sources on tax revenue, SIDS have greater proportions of tax income from goods and services and personal income taxes, but the share of taxes on trade is also significant. As the trade taxes are generally considered volatile, SIDS need to diversify their sources of tax revenues by increasing reliance on direct taxes to build buffers against high fiscal risks. Additionally, the government expenditure of SIDS on social protection excluding health only stood at about 1.9% of GDP, less than that of 3.0% among the LDCs. Limited social contributions to social security (e.g., employers and workers contributions to social protection systems) entail the limited capacity for financing social protection. This also underscores the need to increase tax revenues to fulfill the funding needs of comprehensive social protection systems.¹¹⁴

Regarding budget plans and allocations, most countries have integrated the SDGs and targets into their budget plans and resource allocation methods. Indeed, **Fiji** has introduced various policies related to climate change in the 2017-2018 budget. For instance, to reduce waste and encourage the use of renewable energy, the government has imposed a levy on plastic bags which in turn increased the environment levy by 4 percentage points (from 6% to 10%) and reduced the number of regulations on electric vehicle charging stations by lowering the minimum investment threshold. The government has also utilized tax incentives to encourage private investments in SDG target sectors and regions. These tax incentives are provided to increase private investment in biofuels, commercial agriculture and agriculture product-processing as well as investment in tax-free regions. Also, the 2017-2018 national budget plan included climate change projects to help the island better adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects. The **Maldives** plans to integrate the SDGs into the budgetary process through programme budgeting in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Treasury. A series of planning is scheduled to integrate the SDGs into the budgetary process in 2018-2019. In **Papua New Guinea**, the SDGs can be implemented by aligning the annual budget with the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) to national budgetary resources through the National Planning Act 2016. In **Samoa**, while the prioritized areas for the budget remain the same because they are already in alignment with the SDGs, the government included plans for additional budget and ODA allocation to the health and education sectors. In **Tuvalu**, the government has solicited inputs from the eight line ministries in allocating budgets for the SDGs and targets under the Te Kakeega III (TK III). Regarding budget distribution, the Tuvalu national government allocates financial resources evenly to the eight island groups but has a willingness to change budget allocation in favour of the sub-national levels, if needed, to ensure more

114 United Nations, *Report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development: Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*. 2018.

effective and efficient development. In the case of **Vanuatu**, the Ministerial Budget Committee coordinates the budget submissions for national and sectoral plans, including the NSDP, corporate plans and business plan, to ensure the linkages and synergies among these plans and to make sure they address policy priorities, including the SDGs, of the government.

B. Technical Capacity - Using ICTs for Supporting the Implementation of the SDGs

The recent advancement of information and communication technology (ICT) provides great potential for SIDS to achieve the SDGs effectively and efficiently. With populations dispersed over large geographical areas, SIDS can better benefit from the technological development, including the application of e-governance, to mitigate the impact of physical distance and geographical isolation. Enhanced technical connectivity can contribute to improving the way in which governments operate more transparently, efficiently and inclusively. For instance, effective e-government helps citizens have access and contact to government officers in the processes of making and implementing public policies and programs. By transforming offline administrative practices to electronic and innovative practices, the government reduces costs and fosters a culture of innovation in government and administration. Also, the level of citizen participation could be increased with enhanced and expanded the government's relationships with other stakeholders from various sectors. Increased citizen participation can contribute to better and more transparent and inclusive governance.

While e-government can provide the tools for improving governance practices from routine decision-making to sustainable development measures, many states have not used e-government practices nor have insufficient capacities to apply ICT for not only implementing the SDGs but also reviewing its progress.

In **Fiji**, e-government is an essential tool to improve public service delivery to the poor and most vulnerable. For instance, the government has changed the way to send welfare payments from traditional offline banking to electronic banking to remove physical, locational barriers that prevent access to social transfers. The use of ICT in public service delivery has also been expanded to health services. Additionally, the government plans to implement ICT to improve education services in geographically dispersed areas. For instance, the government has also installed hotlines such as the Domestic Violence Hotline by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre. Such promises are enabled by the broadband policy in 2011, which enabled the rapid growth of ICT services. Indeed, almost the entire population in Fiji has access to the Internet via landlines or mobile phones. Moreover, the government has been working with the World Bank to expand undersea cable infrastructure with the aim of reducing the gap in access to broadcasting services between the rural and urban areas.

In the case of **Samoa**, the government has already established an ICT strategy and an e-government policy and is currently focusing on e-commerce and e-trading. Unlike other SIDS, Samoa has considerable and affordable ICT infrastructure in place and is developing robust information management systems for both the health and education sectors. However, the application of ICT infrastructure and capacity is not yet expanded to the SDG implementation. At this point, the **Maldives** is at the stage where the government is exploring the potential and possibilities of Big Data, satellite data, and drone technology for alternative data-gathering methods.

Comparatively, in **Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu**, ICT is used primarily to disseminate information, including information on SDG implementation. While these states used ICT as a means to improve awareness of the SDGs, they have expressed their concerns about their limited technological capacities as well. Furthermore, the potential of ICT for SDG implementation beyond the provision of government information has not been discussed. Finally, **Papua New Guinea**, along with Tuvalu, indicates that the government still lacks the resources and support necessary for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the SDGs.

In the case of **Tonga**, the ICT and e-government system is not yet established. Accordingly, the government is in the consultation process now while they establish some databases. However, the availability of and access to databases is limited due to the lack of consistency of data in the data sources. This is because the constructions of databases are project-based and these projects do not have enough funds and human resources to bring them to fruition. As a result, available data are only from the funded projects, engendering difficulties in reviewing the progress of SDG implementation due to the problems arising from the quality and consistency of data.

8) Common Challenges Encountered in SDG Implementation

SIDS are confronted with common challenges to fulfill sustainable development. As noted above, these challenges include their small size, remoteness and isolation, high transportation costs, vulnerability to external shocks and climate change and dependence on a narrow range of exports.

SIDS have limited human capacities due to the small population size.¹¹⁵ With limited human capacity, SIDS face lacking governing capacity. The dearth of specialized and skilled people has not been appropriately addressed so far, and the problem of brain drain has been persistent. This implies that a small number of talented people have to fulfill many roles and undertake a wide variety of duties. The relatively strong influence and increasing involvement of local governments and regional groups can incur some challenges in relation to the control of local, discretionary power and the fair allocation of funds.

The challenges from their isolation and dispersion of the population also contribute to the low level of urbanization and poor access to basic, essential human services, including drinkable water, sanitation and hygiene, public health services and primary education. As many people in the SIDS spread across a large number of islands, efforts to establish infrastructure for development (especially transportation, communication and internet access) become more costly.¹¹⁷

In addition, the economies of SIDS are volatile due to their small domestic markets and remoteness from major global markets. The lack of economic diversification and the frequent incidence of natural disasters also presents major challenges for SIDS to sustain their development. Indeed, many economies of SIDS rely largely on large service sectors (e.g., tourism), while the primary sectors (e.g., fisheries and agriculture) have a small but significant portion of the economy. While the economic growth in many SIDS is indeed driven by the secondary industry (including mining, manufacturing, energy and construction), these states have weaker land-based resources and limited financial capacities to invest and grow such a secondary sector.

Limitations in institutional capacities, instability of political climates and lack of available data are identified as significant challenges hindering the implementation of national initiatives to achieve the Agenda 2030.

The poor quality of politics and government is the significant challenge for the **Maldives, Papua New Guinea** and **Tonga**, whereas the lack of institutional capacities is more relevant to **Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu** and **Vanuatu**. For instance, in the **Maldives**, the government officials indicated that the lack of long-term strategic direction, ad-hoc based implementation of strategic plans, and frequent policy changes make it difficult to plan, budget and execute the plans. The state also requires technical assistance and financial support in institutionalizing a framework for monitoring SDG implementation. From the survey responses, the Maldives government reported that it requires support to 1) increase technical expertise

117 Ibid.

in collecting, managing and evaluating data, 2) improve citizen's awareness of the SDGs through more funding and 3) promote collaboration with other government agencies as well as private sector and civil society. Similarly, **Papua New Guinea** identifies the functioning of government authorities, the stability of political and economic climate, credible development of data and statistics and the availability of resources and capacity especially at the sub-national levels, and the establishment of infrastructure, such as roads and communications, as major challenges to implementing the SDGs. **Tonga** also identifies the current ineffectiveness of its coordination mechanism as the major challenge at the national level.

Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu and **Vanuatu** commonly indicated capacity constraints as the top challenge to implement the SDGs. Specifically, **Fiji** expressed the necessity to develop an integrated SDG monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism to facilitate timely information and feedback provision and to collaborate with the National Statistic System and sectoral M&E systems. In **Samoa**, there are concerns regarding statistical and evaluation capacity to monitor and report on the SDG implementation, as well as management capacity to efficiently and effectively use domestic and external funds and to curate required knowledge. **Tuvalu** described its capacity limitations to practice evidence-based SDG implementation, as well as the necessity of developing national indicators to better monitor and report on the implementation and to further strengthen accountability. Finally, **Vanuatu** listed limited capacity, in terms of human resources development, limited financial resources, lack of reporting and an unstable political climate as key challenges.

9) Capacity Support Required for SDG Implementation

In their survey responses, many states, especially **Fiji**, the **Maldives** and **Samoa**, requested technical assistance in data collection and analysis to enhance the national capacity of the government, including public officers. Indeed, most states have no programme specifically designed to improve the capacity of statistical institutions or line ministries that have responsibilities to monitor, review and follow-up on the progress of the SDG implementation. Although some workshops and training courses are available internationally, they are not accessible for these small island states, particularly due to funding limitations. The Maldives government recognizes the importance of data collection and management. However, the lack of human capacity and technical expertise in all sectors, either public or private, operates as a fundamental impediment to improving the availability and quality of data and statistics.

In addition to these identified challenges, the SIDS are limited in terms of their ability to protect and improve the well-being of their people, in particular the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Although SIDS have adopted some government measures to help, the specific examples of these efforts are reported in only a few countries regarding whether they have actually spent their budgets to achieve the goal of "leaving no one behind." For instance, over the last five years, **Papua New Guinea** has spent USD 5 million on the District Service Improvement Program per district per year to provide universal access to health and basic education. **Tuvalu** has also included a budget of about AUD 2.5 million for the people living in the outer islands, and called on line ministries to allocate for some portions of their budgets for the TK III targets, which reflect the SDGs and the need to reach those furthest behind first.

Some countries, including **Samoa** and **Vanuatu**, have sought to safeguard the rights and incorporate needs of their people from the planning perspective. For instance, **Samoa** has collaborated with a national human rights institution to monitor and evaluate the extent to which human rights could be protected. This collaboration helps the government identify and prioritize resource allocation for the most vulnerable groups in the country and protect human rights in the process of implementing the development framework. **Vanuatu** has established a committee consisting of all central agencies to analyse and ensure that their sectoral, business and budget plans could be developed to pursue the needs of its people, including those who live with disabilities and/or experience marginalization (e.g., women, children and youth).

10) Ways for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to Respond to the Capacity Support Needs

In general, the SDGs and relevant targets are being incorporated into national plans and priorities. SIDS have recognized the reference value of the SDGs for devising the development framework and attempted to develop their national and sub-national plans to improve and ensure sustainable development. However, the SIDS have limited economic and technical resources to implement the SDGs in all sectors and all levels of government. With this in mind, this final section suggests ways in which the international community, in particular the UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG, can support SIDS in implementing the SDGs more effectively.

A. Improving Fiscal Capacity by Helping the SIDS Explore and Encourage the Investment of the Private Sector

The UN DESA can support SIDS to develop the strategy of collaborating the private sector to assure further investment, rather than focusing on government financial resources only. With regard to financial capacity development, the SIDS have called for more support and assistance from international development partners to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change, as well as to promote sustainable development. Accordingly, the international society can maintain or improve the SIDS' financial capacity by keeping or increasing their current levels of financial assistance and aid. However, it should be noted that while the SIDS have relied largely on international assistance to finance the SDG implementation, their domestic investments have not increased significantly. Although SDG implementation is initiated and driven primarily by the government sector, the role of the private sector is not negligible.

B. Improving Government and Public Administration Capacity

Improving Institutional Arrangements of Public Administration

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can provide support for SIDS with regard to the structural arrangements of the government system. As SIDS have tended to allow politicians to exercise excessive involvement and power on administrative processes,¹¹⁸ the quality of politics can determine the performance of government and public administration. In this respect, some argue that the SIDS have challenges in adopting and implementing the rational-legal, objective Weberian model of public service, which requires the precise demarcation of political and administrative roles.¹¹⁹ UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG could guide SIDS toward how to re-structure their public administration infrastructure so that they can promote more professionalism and specialization in the public services. In the SIDS context, the blurring distinction of roles between politics and bureaucracy can hinder, rather than support, the effective implementation of the SDG-related national plans and strategies. For the sustainable implementation of public policies related to the SDGs, the SIDS need to understand and maintain the balanced relationship between politics and administration as well as the relationship between bureaucracy and democracy.¹²⁰

118 UNDP Global Center for Public Excellence. Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States. 2014. Available from http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacitydevelopment/English/Singapore%20Centre/GPCSE_Complexity%20in%20Small%20Island.pdf

119 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Procurement and Corruption in Small Island Developing States: Challenges and Emerging Practices. December 2016. Available from <https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2016/V1608451.pdf>

120 Ibid.

As successful SDG implementation requires active involvement of stakeholders at different layers, levels and sectors, the decentralization of SDG implementation can be desirable in the SID context. Given the remoteness of the islands, it is far from enough for the SIDS to strengthen the capacity of the central government. It would be also likely that the extensive involvement of local and regional leaders makes the bureaucratic structures of government more costly. Subsequently, the SIDS have relied more on participatory processes in their policy designing and implementation by adapting the traditional decision-making process to modern institutional arrangements. Reflecting such limited role of the central government, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can help SIDS design their governance structures to decentralize the SDG-related government services in terms of the delegated authority, shared responsibilities and distributed financial resources. Advancing the progress of SDG implementation may require strong central government support in the initial and development stages. However, at the same time, efficient and effective implementation of the SDG-related plans can be achieved by the active participation of stakeholders at the sub-national and local levels. Accordingly, the SIDS need to learn on how to arrange the cooperation and collaboration between central and local governments in a more systematic way.

The SIDS may also consider adopting the 'whole-of-government (WOG) approach' and the 'whole-of-society (WOS) approach' where formal institutions coexist with informal networks during the process of developing and implementing the SDGs. Following the WOG and WOS approaches, the national or central government is expected to work closely with other government agencies at both national and subnational levels, private and nonprofit entities and other non-government institutions. As noted in the analysis and findings, SIDS have a tradition or practice of engaging civil society organizations and private sector representatives in national development strategies and policies through extensive consultation processes. Moreover, SIDS governments have also tended to operate an integrated network by having informal meetings with local civic groups and other community groups. Therefore, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG should help SIDS formalize and institutionalize these informal networks by providing education and training to local leaders in civic organizations and community groups about the value and implications of the WOG approach. While international organizations assist SIDS to develop and formalize their decision-making and implementation processes, government officers of SIDS also need to be trained and learn to carry out their functions through formal meetings rather than informal occasions.

Improving Human Resource Development and Management in the Public Service

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can help SIDS improve the institutional capacity of their governments. In general, SIDS struggle to attract and retain skilled people in public services, given their low stocks of human capital. While there are some training and education opportunities provided to people living in SIDS, well-educated, trained human resources are not properly and effectively invested and managed in public administration.¹²¹ Accordingly, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG could consult with SIDS in dealing with the problem of inadequate skilled and educated public human resources.

To address the problem of limited human resources, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can explore the prospects of strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in the context of SIDS. The SHRM practices refer to the integration of the human resource function in the strategic management process. The SHRM practices are expected to improve the quality and capacity of public human resources by exploring and identifying the pattern and sequence of planned human resource deployment and activities that enable the government to achieve the SDGs. Beyond viewing human resource development (HRD) and human resource management (HRM) as reactive and administrative, the

121 UNDP Global Center for Public Excellence. Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States. 2014. Available from http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacitydevelopment/English/Singapore%20Centre/GPCSE_Complexity%20in%20Small%20Island.pdf

application of SHRM practices can help SIDS directly improve human resource outcomes (e.g., turnover, organizational outcomes (e.g., quality and service) as well as sustainable development outcomes.

Organizing workshops on strategic human resource management is one of the ways to help the SIDS recognize the importance of viewing human resources as assets for investment. To ensure that the public sector is attractive for employment, the SIDS should adjust their human resources practices to better meet national and organizational strategic goals. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can provide a learning platform where the SIDS can learn best practices of human resource strategies and human resource development plans with reference to other country experiences.

C. Improving Technical Capacity to Evaluate the Progress of the SDG Implementation

Most of the SIDS have expressed concerns regarding their lack of capacity to track and monitor the performance of their SDG implementation as well as their under-developed infrastructure (e.g., transportation and communication). Confronted with similar challenges, SIDS seek to explore the additional opportunity of establishing international or inter-governmental institutions that enable collaboration among SIDS. The UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can bridge SIDS to construct and operate such inter-national, inter-governmental institutional associations. Such institutions can help the SIDS share their experiences and learn from other states with regard to best practices for monitoring national and sub-national-level indicators related to the SDGs and targets.

Also, it would be beneficial to develop a subregional initiative that involves regional specialists to help track the performance of SDG implementation across the subregion. Given the limited human development in the SIDS, it would be less effective for each small island state to train its own statistical and technical experts. These small island states also would like to employ the potential of big data to monitor and follow-up the implementation of the SDGs, yet their human resources and technical capacities are restricted in creating and utilizing big data tools.

In this regard, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG could assist SIDS in building statistical capacity and expertise for setting up, collecting and analyzing indicators to monitor, review and follow-up the progress of the SDG implementation. The capacity building related to data mapping and management is enabled by financial assistance from international funds or by a technical support such as provision of materials, computer softwares and basic trainings. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can encourage the international community to provide such financial and material assistance so that SIDS are able to be equipped with appropriate technologies, skills and infrastructure beyond ensuring e-government capacity.

Taking into account the nature of SIDS in smallness, employing a subregional initiative that involves experts and professionals across states and regions can help address the lack of human resources capacities. Considering the expected costs of establishing and operating this subregional initiative, the SIDS may need external support to be motivated to participate in this collaboration mechanism. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can use the existing SIDS support mechanism such as the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the SIDS Action Platform to incorporate such an initiative for developing human resource capacities.

The relative weakness of civil service may be complemented by involving the civil society organizations in the monitoring of SDG implementation. Currently, the SIDS have involved civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in developing the national and subnational plans, and they should consider how to increase the levels of civic participation and oversight. The current effort of public consultation on sustainable development plans would be strengthened through soliciting valuable feedback on the needs and challenges of local communities and consumers. Using the relatively well-established allegiance with local groups, the government could benefit better from decentralizing SDG

implementation. To ensure better collaboration between national and local governments, the SIDS also should consider the important role of the national government in fair management and allocation of budgets and resources to sub-national governments and local communities.

D. Country-Specific Recommendations

So far, this section has outlined general recommendations and capacity support requests for the SIDS. Some country-specific recommendations could include the following:

Based on the survey responses, **Fiji** has successfully prepared a national development plan that integrates the SDG targets into the plan and conducted the Climate Vulnerability Assessment to identify the island's vulnerabilities to natural hazards and climate change. However, the state also suffers from a lack of tools for effectively monitoring and evaluating the SDG implementation as well as localizing and integrating the SDGs with various levels of government, including sub-national planning and implementation. As Fiji has actively implemented the MDGs and planned the SDGs, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can support Fiji to enhance its monitoring and evaluating capacities to better track the progress of its government initiatives. Also, due to the limited financial resources, the government also needs to develop partnerships with domestic and international market sources of funding and the UN DESA can provide support for this area.

The **Maldives** calls for the improvement of capacity building at all levels and sectors. The Maldives has experienced less success in the SDG implementation despite its national attention on the SDGs. The primary challenge for the Maldives in implementing the SDGs is the instability of government and frequent policy changes. While the government has underscored the importance of the SDGs, its approach to the implementation appears to be more symbolic than strategic. Indeed, government officials have pointed out that the SDG implementation is an ad-hoc task and government policies have been changed frequently. As such, international organizations should help the Maldives government develop more integrated, objective-oriented national strategies to advance the implementation of the SDGs. In addition to its national-level planning capacity, the Maldives can benefit from technical assistance to develop and manage big data for monitoring and providing feedback, and from human resource development to collect, measure, and analyze the progress of SDG implementation.

For **Papua New Guinea**, the government reported success in mainstreaming the SDGs into the national development strategic framework and implementing community-based SDG initiatives. However, the government still requires further financial support to ensure access to global resources, in terms of both funding and technical support facilities for the SDG implementation as well as technical support to improve data management and reporting capacities for monitoring the SDG implementation. The government also emphasizes that the UN assistance needs to be oriented from the long-term perspective in the area of government institutional capacity development. Their specific needs include building capacity and transferring skills, strengthening government service delivery mechanisms, supporting programme coordination and alignment and strengthening transparency and accountabilities in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action (AAA).

In **Samoa**, the government reported the advances in mapping and localizing the SDG-related indicators and operating a well-coordinated institutional framework. Regarding the areas in which UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can provide support, Samoa has specific needs in terms of building national capacities, particularly evaluation skills and developing effective partnerships. Accordingly, international organizations should maintain good partnerships with Samoa to aid the government's effort to improve the quality of its governance.

Tonga indicated that the state needs support in the areas of public service delivery and ICT development and financial assistance. As Tonga has limited ICT infrastructure, the government

highlighted its specific request for support in this area. With regard to the SDG implementation, the government has some advantages in integrated policy making and training. However, Tonga still seeks to learn about other countries' experiences in the SDG implementation and to develop curricula on SDG implementation in the public administration school.

Tuvalu described its need for more training in the use of SDG implementation tools, the development of partnerships and capacity building on integrated policy-making. Accordingly, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG needs to focus its efforts to assist Tuvalu in the whole processes of implementing the 2030 Agenda.

While **Vanuatu** succeeded in localizing the SDGs and developing the coordination mechanisms, the government reports that it still would like to learn about other countries' experiences, as well as tools and training. In this regard, UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can provide national-level assistance, including ensuring institutional development, supporting innovative public service delivery and ICTs for development and encouraging the development of partnerships.

7

Findings and Analysis on Country Group B : LDCs/LLDCs



7 Findings and Analysis on the Country Group B : LDCs/LLDCs

1) National Strategies for SDG Implementation

Mainstreaming the SDGs in National Development Strategies and Plans

All countries in the Country Group B of LDCs for which data were available, through in particular the survey response and/or VNR reports,¹²² integrated the SDGs into their national development plans. Integration of the SDGs into national development planning is considered important in terms of alignment of the strategic direction of national development and SDG implementation and avoidance of a dual track of national plans and the SDGs. It is, moreover, essential in order to enable access to the national government budget for the SDG achievement and the allocation of human resources from government agencies. The process of alignment with the national planning process means that no additional legislation on SDG implementation has been required. The SDGs are legally covered through their integration in national development planning.

The pace of SDG implementation and national development plans has not always been in synchrony. In many cases national strategies and plans were developed before September 2015, the launching date of the SDGs. Where national strategies were in sync with the start of the SDGs, like in the case of **Bangladesh**, it provided the opportunity to have mutual beneficial relations between country inputs into the SDG implementation process and the process of national development planning. This, moreover, had the benefit of being able to start early working towards the SDG achievement, as the national development planning was aligned with the SDGs from the start, without the need for time consuming assessment of alignment of national plans that had been developed earlier with the SDGs. The same goes for **Lao PDR**, where the MDG review in 2015, the SDG localization in early 2016 and the development of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan during the same period allowed for early alignment with the SDG framework.

In **Afghanistan**, the SDGs were integrated into the five-year Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2017-2021.¹²³

In **Bhutan**, analysis conducted by the Gross National Happiness Commission of the SDG goals and targets, compared to objectives of the National Eleventh Five Year Plan (2013-2018), found that most of the SDGs were integrated in the key result areas of the National Plan. While 143 of the 169 SDG targets were deemed relevant for Bhutan, 134 were already integrated in the Eleventh Five Year Plan and

122 Sources consulted concern responses to the questionnaire that was canvassed and VNR reports from 2016, 2017 and 2018 HLPF meetings, moreover, secondary data were used gathered through desk research. For details concerning survey responses and VNR reports see Table 2 on page 4, for secondary data consulted, see references in annex 6.

123 VNR Report of Afghanistan, 2017.

initiatives are underway to, moreover, integrate the 9 remaining targets that were not yet covered in the 11th Plan, in the development of the 12th National Five Year Plan (2018-2023).¹²⁴

In **Ethiopia**, the SDGs were integrated in the national development framework of the second Five Year Growth and Transformation Plan 2015/16 – 2019/20, taking into account the main directions of the Growth and Transformation Plan, which focuses on creating of a conducive condition for macroeconomic stability, ensuring fast and sustained economic development, infrastructural development, human resources and technological capacity building, while ensuring good governance and democratic systems building.¹²⁵

In **Mozambique**, the government adopted the SDGs through their integration in the five-year Government National Programme for Sustainable Development for 2015-2019, which is the programme in turn used as the base for the planning and budgeting process.¹²⁶

Box 6. Pillars of the 14th National Plan in Nepal and their Linkages to SDGs

- (i) Infrastructure.....Goals 6, 7, 9 and 11
- (ii) Social.....Goals 3 and 4
- (iii) Economic.....Goals 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 12
- (iv) Governance.....Goals 16 and 17
- (v) Cross-cutting.....Goals 5, 13, and 15

Integration of the SDGs in national level development plans has included the identification of the relationship between the various parts of the development plans and each of the 17 SDGs. Examples include **Nepal**, where the relationship between the 5 pillars of the national development plan and the 17 SDGs were identified (see Box 6); **Ethiopia**, where each of the national development priorities were linked to a number of the SDGs (see Figure 3); and **Bangladesh**, where Ministries were mapped against the SDG targets, including actions required within and beyond the 7th Five Year Plan and policy instruments available, making use of a process of intra-governmental consultations.¹²⁷

124 Lhaba Tshering and Rinchen Tshering, Bhutan Country presentation at the sub-regional workshop on data and statistics for SDG, New Delhi, September 5-9, 2016; Bhutan Rapid Integrated Assessment SDG profile, October 2015; VNR Report of Bhutan, 2018.

125 VNR Report of Ethiopia, 2017.

126 Survey Response Mozambique.

127 The mapping exercise in Bangladesh showed the extent to which SDGs were aligned with the 7th Five Year plan, with SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) most aligned and with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 14 (Life below Water), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and strong Institutions) proving most unaligned. Planning Commission, General Economics Division, Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) Project, A Handbook, Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20) September 2016 and UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Bangladesh.

Figure 3. Linkage of the First Development Priority in Ethiopia with the SDGs

Agricultural sector development continues to be the major source of an accelerated economic growth and development



Source: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, National Plan Commission, The 2017 Voluntary National Reviews on SDGs of Ethiopia: Government Commitments, National Ownership and Performance Trends, Addis Ababa, June 2017.

These examples show the complex relationships between the components of national development plans and the SDGs. This differs substantially from the MDG period, in which the individual MDGs were often considered as ‘owned’ by a single or limited number of Government Line Ministries and Agencies.

A more detailed look at the inclusion of the SDG goals and targets in national development plans was conducted making use of the MAPS tool in **Cambodia**. This assessment found that 84 SDG targets were fully covered in Cambodia’s national plans, out of a total of 110 targets analysed, while 26 SDG targets were not or only partially covered, including less ambitious targets in national plans, in absence of policy actions required and lack of focus on vulnerable groups. The prospects of implementation of the national plans were assessed by making use of budget allocations as a proxy indication. Data on the results of this assessment were, however, not yet available. The assessment, using the MAPS tool, nevertheless shows the usefulness to assess in detail the coverage of the SDG goals and targets in national development plans and levels of budgeting for their implementation, in order to get a comprehensive view on mainstreaming of the SDGs and their targets, as well as the gaps concerned.¹²⁸

In Lao PDR, a set of cross-cutting strategies to achieve the national development goals and SDG targets were identified, which concerns approaches and initiatives that can deliver results across the SDGs (see details in Box 7 below).

Box 7. Cross-cutting Strategies to Achieve the SDGs in Lao PDR

- Accelerating progress on the off-track MDGs and on the cross-cutting UXO goal (SDG 18);
- Promoting environmentally-friendly production and green growth;
- Enhancing public governance and administration;
- Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth;
- Promoting local innovation and use of science, technology and telecommunications and enhancing information and communication technologies (ICT);
- Continuing the diversification of the economy by stimulating the non-resource sector and making the private sector a cornerstone of future development;
- Increasing the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by developing human resources and infrastructure required for SME growth, and by enabling communities, farmers and entrepreneurs to access services, technologies and resources;
- Increasing productivity, especially in the agricultural sector;
- Promoting greater integration into the regional and global economy and value chains; and
- Recognizing the increasing importance of South-South partners and the emergence of new development banks and initiatives.

Source: VNR Report Lao PDR

Most of the countries in the Country Group B of the present assessment underpin their strategic development directions with the aim of becoming a Middle-Income Country (MIC), while graduating from the LDC status is made explicit in the case of Bhutan and Lao PDR. The focus on MIC status is reflected in attention to economic growth as a goal of many development strategies and programmes, often viewed in terms of inclusive growth. This aligns with the SDG target 8.1, which includes a target of GDP growth rate of 7% per annum in LDCs.¹³¹

Apart from these commonalities, the focus of national development planning and its strategic intent differ considerably across countries in the Country Group B. There appears to be considerable variation in terms of the balance between the three main foci of the SDGs, i.e. economic development, social development and environmental sustainability. While Ethiopia focuses on growth and transformation, with no social development objectives in the ten priority actions of the Growth and Transformation Plan II, Bangladesh includes poverty, hunger eradication, health, education, gender and inequality among the 12 priority areas of its 7th Five Year Plan. This shows a different stress on economic versus social development and a different perspective on how these aspects of the development process are interrelated. While social development is an explicit objective in Bangladesh, it appears more of an indirect objective in the context of Ethiopia.¹³²

Focus on aspects of environmental sustainability, as a third pillar of the SDGs, has in several countries been paired with the inclusion of the objective of 'green growth' in national development strategies, like in Uganda and Lao PDR.

The change in strategic focus of national development plans between the MDG and SDG periods is quite pronounced and has been reflected in the names of the national level programmes and strategies concerned in both periods, as shown in the cases of Ethiopia and Uganda in Box 8.

Box 8: Characterization of Development Periods: Ethiopia & Uganda

Ethiopia

- Sustainable development and Poverty reduction program (SDPRP-2002/03-2004/05)
- Plan for the Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (2005/06 to 2009/10)
- Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP I: 2010/11 to 2014/15 and GTP II from 2015/16 to 2019/20)

Uganda

- Post war reconstruction (1986 - 1997)
- Poverty eradication (1997 - 2009)
- Social-economic transformation (2010 -2020)

Sources: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, National Plan Commission, The 2017 Voluntary National Reviews on SDGs of Ethiopia: Government Commitments, National Ownership and Performance Trends, Addis Ababa, June 2017
Republic of Uganda, National Planning Authority, Review Report on Uganda's Readiness for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Theme: Ensuring that no one is left behind, Kampala, July 2016.

129 United Nations, The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015, New York, 2015; MDG Report 2015, Final assessment of progress toward achieving the MDGs, 6 July 2015, Global launch (PowerPoint presentation).

130 VNR Report of Afghanistan, 2017.

131 Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1), Final list of proposed Sustainable Development Goal indicators, June 2016.

132 VNR Report of Bangladesh, 2017; Survey response and VNR Report of Ethiopia, 2017.

In some cases, changes in strategy are linked to the specific context of countries concerned. In Nepal, for example, where in response to the conflict during the first decade of this century, focus had been on peace building. The endorsement of the new Constitution by the Second Constituent Assembly in September 2015, replacing the Interim Constitution of 2007, enhanced the enabling environment and contributed to priorities shifting to infrastructure development, hydropower development and industrialization. While investments in the MDG period focused on social development, it is now considered time for Nepal to pay primary attention to infrastructure development.¹³³

In some cases, a country specific SDG has been added, like in Cambodia, where the SDG 18 concerns land mine clearance. This is in effect an extension of MDG 9 on 'De-mining, Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and Victim Assistance', which was added to the 8 global goals of the MDG period.¹³⁴ Also in Lao PDR, an 18th SDG was added on 'Lives Safe from UXO', which concerns a follow-up to Lao PDR MDG 9 on reducing the impact of UXO.¹³⁵

2) National Institutional Arrangements for SDG Implementation

In order to implement the SDGs, as included in national development strategies, plans and programmes, a variety of institutional arrangements have been made in the countries concerned. Most of the countries that are part of the present assessment made use of the Ministry of Planning or the Ministry of Finance to guide SDG implementation. In three cases of **Bangladesh**, **Bhutan** and **Lao PDR**, leadership is organized from the Office of the Prime Minister. Political leadership at times is provided directly through the cabinet, as in the case of **Rwanda**. In all cases, responsibility for the oversight over the 2030 Agenda is located at a high level of Government, which is beneficial to secure the need for continuous high-level political support to the SDG implementation process. Country specific details are presented in Table 18.¹³⁶

Line ministries in many countries are operating in relative isolation of one another, in what is often described as a 'silo' approach. The SDGs, with their cross sectoral characteristics, call for an integrated approach to the goals and their targets and thus require substantial involvement across the various government agencies concerned. In order for such involvement to go beyond ad hoc initiatives and be strategic, many countries have established a high-level committee, with inputs from a wide range of government stakeholders, as in Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Lao PDR. In **Bangladesh**, a high-level national committee was established for the implementation of the SDGs, led by a newly created position of Principal Coordinator for SDG Affairs as part of the Prime Minister's office. In **Lao PDR**, a National Steering Committee was established by Presidential decree to guide SDG implementation, chaired by the Prime Minister.¹³⁷

Given the complex relations between the SDGs and national development goals and objectives, as indicated above, several countries have started mapping out the support requirements of line ministries and other government agencies for each of the SDGs. This has resulted in a relatively complex set up of inputs and responsibilities from multiple line ministries and government agencies for each of the goals.

133 VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

134 Poch Sovannody, Deputy Director General of Planning, Ministry of Planning Cambodia, SDG Localization into Cambodian Context and Financing for Implementation, PowerPoint Presentation Incheon, Republic of Korea, October 2017; Royal Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Planning, Progress in Achieving Cambodia Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Opportunities, July 2007.

135 Lao PDR Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 18: Lives Safe From Harm, accessed 02 March 2018, available at http://www.la.undp.org/content/lao_pdr/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/sdg-18--lives-safe-from-uxo.html; MDG progress in Lao PDR, accessed 02 March 2018, available at <http://www.la.one.un.org/sdgs/about-the-mdgs/mdg-progress-in-lao-pdr>.

136 UN DESA: Overview of institutional arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level, Issues Brief (Zero draft for comments), March 2017; VNR reports; Survey responses.

137 Ibid.

Table 18. Government Agencies for Monitoring and Follow-up of SDG Implementation

Country	Leading Agency / Executive Mechanism for SDG Achievement
Afghanistan	Ministry of Economy , with a SDG Secretariat within the Ministry and the process overseen by the SDG Executive Committee with membership of Ministry of Economy, Office of Chief Executive and UNDP.
Bangladesh	A high level Inter-Ministerial Committee was established under the Prime Minister's office for SDG implementation and monitoring of results. The Committee is comprised of Secretaries from 21 Ministries. The position of Principal Coordinator for SDG Affairs was created at the Prime Minister's Office to head the committee. The General Economics Division of the Planning Commission serves as secretariat to the Committee.
Bhutan	The Gross National Happiness Commission acts as the high-level SDG committee, which consists of 15 members, chaired by the Prime Minister and assumes the responsibility of overseeing SDG-related matters at the highest level. The commission consists of the Finance Minister as the Vice-Chair, the Secretaries of each of Bhutan's ten ministries, the Cabinet Secretary, the Secretary to the NEC and the Secretary to the Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat.
Cambodia	Ministry of Planning , General Department of Planning in terms of planning, financial support and coordination of SDG implementation, with the National Institute of Statistics (part of Ministry of Planning) in terms of data gathering on SDG indicators.
Ethiopia	National Planning Commission leads and is responsible for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the national development plan (Growth and Transformation Plan II) which is aligned with the SDGs. The Commission is responsible for ensuring the allocation of budget to the national priorities and has an advisory role to the government.
Lao PDR	The National Steering Committee for SDG implementation, established by Presidential decree and chaired by the Prime Minister, leads SDG implementation, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs as vice chair. A National SDG Secretariat was established. Key roles in overseeing SDG mainstreaming are with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which houses the National SDG Secretariat and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, including the Department of Planning and the Lao Statistics Bureau.
Malawi	The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and in particular its Department of Economic Planning and Development is lead government agency.
Mozambique	The Ministry of Economy and Finance is in the lead and chairs the SDG Reference Group, the composition of which is under discussion. Other important agencies for SDG implementation concern the Ministry of International Affairs and the National Institute of Statistics.
Nepal	National Planning Commission leads SDG implementation, with a High level Steering Committee, led by the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the NPC, with membership of key Ministers and representatives of the private sector, NGOs and cooperatives, to provide policy direction and to create a conducive policy environment for SDG implementation.
Rwanda	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning with strategic orientation to be provided by the cabinet.
Tanzania	The Ministry of Finance and Planning is the lead agency, which concerns a merger of the Ministry of Finance with the former Planning Commission. This Ministry also led the formulation of the five-year development plan.
Uganda	Office of the Prime Minister leads SDG implementation, for which a Delivery Unit was established within this office, in order to fast track implementation of core projects and presidential initiatives, while ensuring that the critical priority areas are being efficiently resourced and implemented.

In **Bangladesh**, the Government has mapped out responsibilities for Ministries and Government agencies against each of the goals and targets of the 17 SDGs, through the identification of lead, co-lead and associate Ministries and agencies. The exercise identified all ministries/divisions which are associated with selected targets, which included 41 lead ministries, which are directly linked to attainment of targets and 31 co-lead ministries/divisions which are indirectly linked to achievement of targets. The results of the mapping exercise were published in a Handbook, which in addition to responsibilities on targets, identifies actions required to achieve the targets during the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) and actions required beyond that period, as well as existing policy instruments, of use to reaching targets concerned. In this way, the SDGs and their targets have been mainstreamed within the Government structure. The exercise identified some duplication of efforts and is expected to enable synergy between Ministries and agencies that share joint responsibilities on the SDG targets concerned.¹³⁸

Engagement of Sub-National Level Government

In all of the countries of the Country Group B for which data were available, the integration of the SDGs has taken place primarily at the national level, integrating the goals and targets in national level development strategies and plans. This has been much less the case yet at the sub-national level, where the process of integration of the SDG targets into provincial, district and commune level planning and budgeting is only just starting or presently under development.

Nevertheless, engaging sub-national authorities is an important aspect of SDG implementation, as sub-national government departments and agencies are usually more aware of the regional and local development context. Moreover, they are responsible for the delivery of a range of public services, which are at the heart of achieving the SDGs. Some countries have developed a road map for mobilization of local government, while others have made use of regional level authorities to reach out to local level administrations. Local government associations as well as city authorities can play an important role in the process.

Sub-national level involvement is especially important in terms of localizing targets and indicators at sub-national levels, informed by specific contextual issues, including the present stage of development, local level opportunities and constraints and local perspectives on development requirements. Engagement at this level is in particular critical in countries with relatively high levels of decentralization, in which part of government functions and related budgets have been devolved to sub-national government agencies.

All countries that are part of the assessment make note of national level government having engaged with the sub-national level in terms of SDG implementation, while the levels of engagement vary.

In **Ethiopia**, the sub-national government agencies have meaningfully participated in the development of the national development plan, through consultations at the level of regional and city administrations. This has resulted in the SDGs being integrated into the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II of regional states and city administrations. Involvement has been in particular at regional and city level and less at the local level.¹³⁹

In **Uganda**, awareness raising events have been organized at the sub-national level, in order to develop capacities on the roles of sub-national level authorities in SDG implementation. Moreover,

138 Government of Bangladesh, General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission, Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning (SSIP) Project, A Handbook, Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of the SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20), Dhaka, September 2016; VNR report Bangladesh; UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Bangladesh.

139 Survey response Ethiopia; VNR report of Ethiopia, 2017.

further localization of the SDGs in the sub-national context is planned, to tailor the SDGs to sub-national challenges and needs.¹⁴⁰

In **Malawi**, the Department of Economic Planning and Development, together with the Malawi Local Government Association, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Local Government Accountability and Performance program, has been engaging district and city councils to ensure localisation of the SDGs in District Development Plans. A variety of sensitisation meetings and trainings have been conducted to this effect, in collaboration with UNDP.¹⁴¹

In **Nepal**, the need to engage with sub-national authorities is well realized, but the process of decentralization has recently undergone a number of changes, with new provincial and local government levels under formation. Therefore, the SDGs are yet to be fully aligned and incorporated into the sub-national level planning and budgeting processes.¹⁴²

In **Rwanda**, sub-national authorities have been included in a gap analysis and the inclusion of the SDG targets in sub-national level strategic planning exercises. Awareness raising and communication campaigns have been conducted at the local level, to raise awareness on the SDGs through traditional as well as social media.¹⁴³

In **Tanzania**, capacity development efforts have included local government agencies as well as civil society and youth organizations. Several workshops were conducted to raise awareness on the SDGs.¹⁴⁴

3) Engagement with Non-Government Actors

Given the scope and complexity of the SDGs, there is a need to mobilize a broad range of stakeholders beyond governmental actors, including civil society organizations, the scientific community and the private sector as well as development partners, UN agencies and citizens. In some countries, the media is explicitly included as a stakeholder. Governments have a role in terms of sensitizing of non-governmental actors to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, in order for these organizations to support the process of planning, implementation and review of SDG-related development initiatives. Partnerships with relevant non-governmental stakeholders are throughout considered essential for the implementation of the SDGs. Although involvement of these actors is important, the actual types of organizations involved and the level of intensity of engagement with non-governmental actors differs across the countries included in the assessment. The variations are related to the specific country context, including the prevalence and capacities of non-governmental actors.

Civil society engagement is an important aspect in this respect and has, in many cases, continued on from the MDG period. In several countries, SDG discussion fora have been established which include civil society actors. The role that civil society organizations can play varies and includes contributing support to the SDG implementation process, as well as holding government to account in terms of results achieved. Academia is another important actor in the SDG implementation process, in particular in terms of capacity development on the SDG related issues, as well as in terms of possible support to monitoring, review and follow-up processes.

While in the MDG period, the focus on participation of non-governmental actors was on civil society

140 Survey response Uganda; VNR Report of Uganda, 2016.

141 Survey response Malawi.

142 VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

143 Survey response Rwanda.

144 Survey response Tanzania.

and academia, with the more comprehensive goals of the 2030 Agenda, the interest to include the private sector has increased substantially. This is partly considered in terms of private sector investment in national economic development initiatives. On the other hand, this is meant to be realized through Public-Private Partnerships on selected issues, as well as through private sector support to selected development interventions. Private sector engagement is meant to enhance productivity, create jobs and boost economic growth, while on the other hand provide support to 'green growth' and climate change mitigation initiatives. In the case of Nepal and Lao PDR, the limitations of government financial resources are explicitly mentioned to justify private sector engagement. Inclusion of non-governmental actors, moreover, comprises efforts to inform the general public on the relevance of the SDGs and their implementation and to enable citizens' participation.

The Government of **Bangladesh** has adopted a 'whole-of-society' approach, to ensure wide participation of non-governmental agencies in the SDG implementation process. This includes, in addition to civil society and development partners, the private sector, professional groups, labour associations, women networks, ethnic minorities and the media.¹⁴⁵ All these groups were consulted in the SDG planning process, raising their awareness and generating their commitment to the 2030 Agenda. This approach builds on the earlier practice in Bangladesh of engagement with a wide group of stakeholders in national development planning processes, including five-year development planning and Vision 2021, outlining Bangladesh's way to achieving upper-middle-income country status.¹⁴⁶

In **Bhutan**, the Government conducted a series of sensitization and awareness programmes over a two-year period, in recognition of the importance of ensuring participation and inclusiveness in aligning of the national goals to the SDGs. Extensive SDG sensitizations were, moreover, carried out during the formulation process of the 12th Five Year Plan, with, apart from all Government agencies, the inclusion of civil society organizations, private sector entities, parliamentarians, political parties, local governments, youth representatives and citizens. This concerned awareness raising on the three normative principles of the 2030 Agenda: universality, indivisibility and leaving no one behind. An SDG communication strategy was developed for continued awareness raising and to further enhance ownership of the SDGs. The 'Triple C framework' is about mobilizing collaborative efforts between public and private sectors, communities, civil society and academia, for realization of the national development goals. The 16 National Key Result Areas of the plan and the key performance indicators are aligned with the SDGs.¹⁴⁷

In **Lao PDR**, the Department of International Organizations and the National SDGs Secretariat, both of which are part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have been leading public awareness and engagement activities. Sub-national authorities are considered to still lack sufficient knowledge and capacity to support awareness raising on the SDGs to stakeholders at the local level.¹⁴⁸

In **Nepal**, cooperatives have joined the implementation of the SDGs. Cooperatives are an important actor in the national economy, with over 33,000 cooperatives and their six million members contributing an estimated 18% to the GDP in 2014. In addition to a focus on economic development, the cooperatives include health, nutrition, education and gender-related components.¹⁴⁹ The

145 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/bangladesh>

146 VNR Report Bangladesh; UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Bangladesh.

147 VNR Report of Bhutan, 2018.

148 Lao PDR Survey Response.

149 In addition to 12,440 cooperatives in Nepal engaged in agricultural production, 450 cooperatives are working on production and distribution of clean energy, while 112 focus on health, operating clinics and hospitals that provide affordable health care. Cooperatives are considered to play an important role in poverty reduction and improvement of food and nutrition security and to contribute to gender equality, with over half of their members being female and a relatively large proportion of them involved in governance of the cooperatives. Through literacy programmes, cooperatives contribute to education and life-long learning. VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

National Cooperative Federation of Nepal celebrated its 60th Cooperative Day in April 2017 under the slogan of 'Cooperatives for Sustainable Development'.¹⁵⁰ every government institution has its own 'public wing' which provides a platform for non-government stakeholders and government agencies to discuss common developmental objectives. These public wings, moreover, play a role in development planning as well as evaluation of results achieved.¹⁵¹

In **Uganda**, civil society organizations have been able to engage in the 2030 Agenda through a coordinated process. The National CSO Core Reference Group on SDGs is a consortium of CSOs supporting work related to the SDGs. The group is hosted by the Uganda National NGO Forum and through its leadership, the CSOs concerned have engaged in a number of processes and consultations that in turn contributed to creating citizen awareness on the SDGs. The CSOs, under the coalition of the National Core Reference Group, have embarked on monitoring of SDG implementation.¹⁵²

4) Coordination Mechanisms

To enhance the coordination required across the various ministries and government agencies as well as with non-governmental stakeholders and to guide SDG implementation, countries have set up a variety of committees and working groups. Higher level committees have been set up to provide political leadership on SDG nationalization and implementation. These can be led by the Prime Minister's office, as in Bangladesh and Uganda, or by the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Economy or the Ministry of Finance as in Nepal, Afghanistan and Mozambique respectively. These high-level committees usually consist of the Prime Minister, Ministers and Deputy Ministers of a variety of line agencies and can include selected development partners. The committee provides the political leadership on SDG implementation and the linkage of the 2030 Agenda to national level development planning. An SDG Secretariat at times supports the management of such committees.

There is often a separate committee that guides the SDG operationalization across all the SDGs, through concrete interventions. The committee reviews progress, and the results of the review are used to inform recommendations to the high-level committee. In addition, technical committees or task forces and working groups have been installed to support technical aspects of SDG implementation. These latter committees often support the implementation of specific SDGs from a technical perspective and enable coordination across government and other stakeholders from a variety of sectors working on targets of the same SDG. The inclusion of members of multiple sectors is an important aspect of the various committees, task forces and working groups, reflecting the cross-cutting characteristic of the SDGs. Examples of organizational set-ups are provided from Uganda and Nepal in Box 9.

Although the organizational set-up of SDG coordination and implementation arrangements can be detailed, there is little information, so far, on how the different coordination mechanisms at the different levels work in practice, and what lessons have been learned regarding coordination within government as well as with a wider range of non-governmental actors, let alone the way and extent to which enhanced coordination affects the achievement of intermediate level results.

In order to avoid the effort of coordination taking up too much of the available time and resources, it will be important to establish the parameters concerned, including critical issues, essential periods in time and levels of coordination required across line ministries, other government agencies and non-governmental actors. Additionally, one needs to establish when and where each of these

150 VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

151 VNR Report of Ethiopia, 2017.

152 VNR Report of Uganda, 2016.

stakeholders can take their own responsibilities in terms of the implementation of initiatives aimed to contribute to one or more SDGs.

Box 9. Country Level Organization Set-up of SDG Implementation

Nepal

- **SDG Steering Committee** led by the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the NPC, with membership of key Ministers and representatives of the private sector, NGOs and cooperatives, to provide policy direction and to create a conducive policy environment for SDG implementation.
- **SDG Coordination and Implementation Committee** under the leadership of the Vice Chairman of the National Planning Commission. The committee guides SDG implementation at national and sub-national levels and arranges financial, human and technical resources required. The NPC member is, as joint-coordinator, responsible for the macro-economic affairs concerned.
- **SDG Implementation and Thematic Monitoring Committees** are theme specific committees under the leadership of the related NPC member. These committees support the preparation of SDG related plans, policies, programmes, budgets and monitoring and evaluation. They coordinate with sectoral government agencies, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and other partners.
- **Provincial, District and Municipality Coordination Committees** are expected to be formed at the sub-national level as part of the re-organization of the country into 7 provinces, which committees will take the lead in coordination of SDG implementation at the local level. All committees need to coordinate with private sector, civil society, development partners, cooperatives and other non-government stakeholders.

Uganda

- **The SDGs Policy Coordination Committee** is chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising of members of Cabinet, Heads of UN Agencies and Heads of Missions. The Committee provides policy guidance and direction to Ministries, Departments and Agencies on SDGs and reviews implementation.
- **The SDGs Implementation Steering Committee** is chaired by Head of Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet and comprises of Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Agencies and Development Partners. This committee will review progress on SDG achievement and make recommendations to the Policy Coordination Committee.
- **The SDGs National Task Force**, chaired by the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, comprises of technical officers from this office, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, National Planning Authority, UN, NGO Forum and Private Sector Foundation of Uganda. The committee meets quarterly to review reports from technical working groups for consideration by the Implementation Steering committee.
- **Five SDGs Technical Working Groups (TWGs)** to engage various ministries as follows: Coordination, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting TWG led by OPM; Data TWG led by Uganda Bureau of Statistics; Planning TWG led by NPA; Communication and Advocacy TWG led by OPM; and Finance TWG led by Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Sources: Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, National Review of Sustainable Development Goals, Kathmandu 2017. Republic of Uganda, National Planning Authority, Review Report on Uganda's Readiness for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Theme: Ensuring that no one is left behind, Kampala, July 2016.

5) Relation to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.¹⁵³ Additionally, the Agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the

153 <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

impacts of climate change. The Paris Climate Agreement is related to the wider United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), an international environmental treaty, which was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994 after the ratification of a sufficient number of countries.

The objective of the UNFCCC is to ‘...stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system...’¹⁵⁴

As part of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, all countries included in the present assessment submitted the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC. These provide the individual contributions that each of the countries intends to make towards the worldwide goals on climate change. They are registered with the UNFCCC Secretariat. The contributions are voluntary and are not binding under international law.

In most countries, the aspects of climate change mitigation and adaptation need to be reconciled with the countries’ development endeavour to become a middle-income country. Several countries have developed a ‘green growth’ economic strategy, which includes aspects of inclusive economic growth and environmental protection, an approach discussed as a development paradigm at the Rio 20+ United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. In addition to inclusion of mitigation objectives in NDCs, countries have made a linkage with disaster risk prevention and reduction strategies, through inclusion of a focus on strategies for adaptation to climate change. In several of the NDCs, the need for financial and technical support to realize the contributions identified is included.

Lead agencies in terms of climate change differ across the countries of the Country Group B. In some cases, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Vice President’s Office provide leadership, as in case of Uganda and Tanzania respectively, while in other cases the national response is led at the level of a ministry. The latter is usually done by the ministry that is dealing with environment and natural resource management issues. At times, climate change is explicitly in the name of the ministry, like in Ethiopia. In Rwanda, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs is leading. For an overview of principal government agencies on climate change aspects, see Table 19.

The NDC of **Bangladesh** includes a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 5 percent unilaterally and to up to 15 percent by 2030, with appropriate international support in the form of finance, investment, technology development and transfer and capacity building. A roadmap to implement the NDC is under preparation.¹⁵⁵

In **Lao PDR**, the National Strategy on Climate Change was approved in early 2010 and includes the vision on how to address climate change in the country:

“To secure a future where Lao PDR is capable of mitigating and adapting to changing climatic conditions in a way that promotes sustainable economic development, reduces poverty, protects public health and safety, enhances the quality of Lao PDR’s natural environment and advances the quality of life for all Lao People.”¹⁵⁶

The Lao PDR National Social Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) includes a Green Growth Strategy, which aims to balance sustained inclusive economic growth with natural resource and environmental protection.¹⁵⁷ The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the main government agency

154 Source: http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php, accessed 30 March 2018.

155 Bangladesh Survey Response; Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF), Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC), September, 2015.

156 Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, September 2015.

157 Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Ministry of Planning and Investment, 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), June 2016.

to lead climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the Paris Agreement. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the main government agency to lead climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the Paris Agreement. The Prime Minister has issued a Decree No. 95/PM, dated 8 December 2016, to establish the National Secretariat on the Green Growth Economy.¹⁵⁸ In the presentation of Lao PDR's NDC, mention is made of the requirement of technical and financial support, in order to be able to deliver on the mitigation and adaptation initiatives concerned.¹⁵⁹

Table 19. Overview of the Government Agencies Leading Climate Change in Countries included in Group B

Country	Leading Agency for Climate Change
Bangladesh	Ministry of Environment and Forests
Bhutan	National Environment Commission
Burundi	Ministry of Water, the Environment, Land Management and Urban Planning
Cambodia	National Council for Sustainable Development, presided by Prime Minister and chaired by Ministry of Environment and its Executive Committee
Ethiopia	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
Lao PDR	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with involvement of the National Secretariat on the Green Growth Economy
Malawi	Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, in particular the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services and the Environmental Affairs Department with a steering committee involved, led by the Secretary to the Treasury
Mongolia	Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism
Mozambique	Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Development is leading and there is an inter-institutional group on climate change) which is composed by key ministries including: Agriculture and Food Security, Energy and Extractives, Economy and Finance, National Institute for Disaster Management, Water Management.
Myanmar	Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry
Nepal	Ministry of Population and Environment
Rwanda	Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs
Tanzania	Vice President's Office, Division of Environment is the focal point on climate change mitigation and adaptation
Uganda	Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Environment and Water, National Forestry Authority, National Environment Authority, National Meteorology Authority, National Planning Authority. Moreover, climate change focal persons in selected Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies
Zambia	National Climate Change Development Council

Source: Country specific NDC documentation available at: <http://www4.unfccc.int/ndcregistry/Pages/All.aspx>

158 Survey Response Lao PDR.

159 Lao People's Democratic Republic, Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, September 2015.

In **Ethiopia**, the government has been proactive in taking into account the impact of climate change on socio-economic development. Given the present agrarian nature of the Ethiopian economy, the government mobilized the rural population to undertake natural resource conservation. Ethiopia's development paradigm is based on its Climate-Change-Resilient Green Economy Strategy, including commitment to the reduction of carbon emissions. Its NDC includes a reduction of CO₂ emissions over the development phase from 2010-2030. While emissions amounted 150 Metric Ton CO₂ Emission (MT CO₂E) in 2010, the aim is to reduce this to 145 MT CO₂E in 2030. A conventional economic growth strategy towards the MIC status, on the other hand, would result in more than doubling of emissions in the same time frame. The approach to climate change includes the National Disaster Management Policy and Strategy, which is considered as instrumental in coping with the impacts of climate change-induced droughts in Ethiopia in two consecutive years 2015/16 and 2016/17. All government institutions are required to integrate mitigation and adaptation measure for climate change in their plans, with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change taking a coordinating role and a platform for coordination under development. Awareness raising on the Paris Agreement and Ethiopia's NDC has been conducted within government agencies.¹⁶⁰

In **Malawi**, the Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) III (2017-2022) includes climate change issues and aspects related to the Paris Agreement. The National Climate Change Programme is implementing programmes and projects that are responding to climate change issues. Nevertheless, the MDGS III and development interventions concerned are expected to increase carbon emissions in the next 5-7 years, when they will reach a peak, after which carbon emissions are expected to reduce. A steering committee, led by the Secretary to the Treasury, has been put into place, with a technical committee chaired by the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services of the Ministry of Natural resources, Energy and Mining. In order to reduce disaster risks and enhance preparedness, the Government of Malawi has developed a Disaster Preparedness Plan and a National Resilience Plan, in addition to a National Climate Change Management policy.¹⁶¹

In **Rwanda**, climate change and environmental issues are cross-cutting areas of the National Strategy for Transformation as well as the Sector Strategic Plans and District Development Strategies, which all cover the period of 2018-2024. Rwanda's NDC is based on the 2011 Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy and defines the contributions for both climate change mitigation and adaptation up to 2030. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs is in charge of coordination between climate change and SDG mechanisms. Climate change issues have been included in disaster risk reduction, preparedness and management strategies.¹⁶²

6) Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

In terms of monitoring, review and follow-up, countries can set up their own modality, as long as these are in line with the global principles, set out for follow-up and review by the United Nations General Assembly.¹⁶³ Many countries have started to develop modalities to be used in this respect. The SDG indicator framework¹⁶⁴ forms the backbone of the monitoring efforts, with an important role of National Statistical Offices, who need to cooperate with other government agencies and institutions in terms of data gathering. Moreover, Supreme Audit Institutions play a role, with the international-level guidelines on audit preparedness for SDG implementation being developed. In addition to government agencies,

160 Survey response Ethiopia.

161 Survey Response Malawi.

162 Survey Response Rwanda.

163 United Nations General Assembly: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, October 2015. Ref: A/RES/70/1.

164 Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on sustainable Development Goal Indicators, Annex IV: Final list of Proposed Sustainable Development goal indicators. March 2016, Ref: E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1.

civil society actors and the scientific community are being engaged in reviewing progress of SDG implementation and in tracing development results that contribute to SDG implementation.

Institutional Arrangements for Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

Efforts to monitor the progress of SDG implementation are usually coordinated by the agency leading the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with actual monitoring conducted by the in-country statistical office in terms of census and survey data and by the various line ministries and government agencies, in terms of administrative data. The process is supported to varying degrees in the various countries by the scientific community and civil society organizations.

In many countries, consultations with civil society and the scientific community have been conducted and both actors are considered key partners in monitoring and review, although their role in this respect has not necessarily always been sufficiently established. The latter also goes for the private sector, which is a relatively new actor in this respect. In Tanzania, where CSOs are member of the SDG Data Roadmap Steering Committee, it is considered that enhancing their role is needed. In several countries, mention is made of the need for data from the private sector stakeholders, although no mechanisms are specified to collect and share such data. Annual SDG reviews are a means for Parliaments to scrutinize the progress of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the role of Parliaments is important in terms of accountability towards achieving the SDG.

In **Bangladesh**, the government has started the process of integrating the SDG targets into the government performance management system. In this respect, the Secretary of each of the ministries or divisions signs an agreement with the Cabinet Secretary at the beginning of the financial year, which includes goals and targets with corresponding performance indicators. In this way, ministries and divisions are held accountable for the results that contribute to achieving the National Development Goals and the SDGs.¹⁶⁵

In **Bhutan**, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs is the responsibility of the Secretariat of the Gross National Happiness Commission, whose mandate is to operationalize the principles of Gross National Happiness into development plans, programs and policies, including evaluation of new policies through the use of the Gross National Happiness screening tool. The Secretariat, moreover, formulates and evaluates long and medium term national plans, policies and programs and monitors and troubleshoots implementation issues and advises the government on matters related to public policies and social welfare. The Secretariat reports to the Prime Minister and the Commission. For the preparation of the VNR report, a multi-sectoral task force was formed, comprising of senior government officials from the Cabinet Secretariat, the National Statistics Bureau and from the sectors relevant to the thematic SDGs to be reviewed during the 2018 HLPF.

In **Nepal**, there has been longer term high-level political commitment to monitoring and evaluation of national development plans. During the implementation of the Eight Plan (1992-1997), the National Development Action Committee (NDAC) was established. At the level of ministries, the Ministerial Development Action Committees (MDAC) were formed. In the early 2000s, results matrices were introduced to enable results-based management of public expenditure. In 2013, the National Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Guidelines were developed, providing a comprehensive overview of all aspects of M&E, including results frameworks, roles and responsibilities and tools and guidelines for their application. Results indicators at micro level have been linked with sector level results at macro level, enabling projects and programmes to establish their contributions to higher level objectives. These same mechanisms are to be used to conduct SDG monitoring. However, given the

165 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Bangladesh.

decentralization process, which is changing the sub-national-level government structure, it is yet unsure which new agency will take up the role that has been so far performed by the District Planning Monitoring and Analysis system. The Government of Nepal is in the process of approving a Monitoring and Evaluation Act, which has been drafted by the National Planning Commission and which will provide a legal basis for the integration of monitoring and evaluation in the various levels of government and to enhance evidence-informed decision-making.¹⁶⁶

The Role of Parliament in SDG Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

With Parliament's critical legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, their engagement in SDG achievement is increasingly recognized. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has supported comprehensive reviews of existing national legislative responses in member countries, in order to ensure that laws related to the 2030 Agenda are consistent with those related to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. To mainstream the SDGs, Parliaments might have to review some of their internal processes, such as setting up a dedicated SDG parliamentary committee.¹⁶⁷

In **Bhutan**, the oversight on the SDGs has been embedded into parliamentary practice through the adoption of a resolution, which:¹⁶⁸

- Approved the standing committee of the National Assembly to engage on the SDGs
- Allotted one day sitting during every parliamentary session for deliberation on the SDGs
- Affirmed Parliamentary oversight in ensuring the integration of the SDG in the next five year plan
- Determined to mobilize adequate resources for the National Assembly to facilitate the House's oversight role in relation to the SDGs
- Institutionalized a requirement for all parliamentarians and parliamentary delegations visiting abroad on SDG-related trips, to report to the plenary of the National Assembly on the SDGs for better understanding of the House on SDGs

In **Lao PDR**, the National Assembly reviews the implementation of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDPlan) and the related SDGs and assesses compliance with national economic and social development plans adopted by the Assembly.

In **Ethiopia**, the Parliament reviews the annual performance assessment, as well as the next year plan of each government ministry and agency, making use of the SDG achievements as one of the criteria for evaluation, in order to inform decision-making on the budget proposed for the coming year.

In Tanzania, the Parliament is planning to establish a sub-committee on the SDGs.

In **Uganda**, an SDG Parliamentary Forum has been established for monitoring of SDG integration and achievement.

Current Efforts for Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

Several countries have conducted mapping of existing data, assessing the number of indicators, out of the total of 230 indicators of the SDG framework, that are considered relevant for the country concerned and that they could provide data for and have identified data gaps. Monitoring data are used in annual reporting to detail progress in SDG implementation, which reports are usually shared

166 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Nepal.

167 UN DESA: Overview of institutional arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level, Issues Brief (Zero draft for comments), March 2017.

168 VNR Report of Bhutan, 2018.

with the parliament, and which informs the next national budgeting cycle. In several countries web-based data repositories are being developed, which can enhance access to data for government agencies and, if made accessible to the public, for citizens. This can facilitate data analysis and reporting. The National SDG review process is in most countries guided by the M&E framework of their national development strategy, as well as by the Indicator Framework of the SDGs.¹⁶⁹

In **Bangladesh**, an assessment of the availability of data concerning the indicators of the SDG monitoring framework, conducted in 2016, showed that data were readily available for 70 indicators, while data were partially available for 108 indicators, with data being unavailable for the remaining 63 indicators. More detailed analysis showed responsibilities for data gathering across the various government ministries and agencies and financing needs to gather data on indicators across the SDGs.¹⁷⁰

In **Bhutan**, the results-oriented planning approach, based on the principles of theory of change used in formulation and implementation of the five-year plans and programmes, has been adapted to integrate the indicators and targets of the SDGs. Assessment showed that 64 of the SDG indicators, or 26 percent, have been fully adopted, while 32 indicators, or 13 percent, have been partially adopted, with 104 indicators, or 43 percent, relevant to the context, but not yet adopted and the remaining 44 indicators, or 18 percent, that are not relevant to Bhutan. In terms of data availability on the SDG indicators, 84 indicators, or 34 percent, have data available, while for 66 indicators, or 27 percent, data are partially available. For the remainder of 94 indicators, or 39 percent, no data are available so far.¹⁷¹

In **Cambodia**, of all indicators considered applicable and assessed, 15 percent were readily available, while an additional 16 percent could be available with few efforts and a further 49 percent with strong efforts, adding up to a total of 80 percent, with the remainder considered not feasible to be collected, even with strong efforts applied.¹⁷²

In **Lao PDR**, the results framework of the NSEDP contains 160 indicators. 92 of these are linked with the SDGs, while 68 of the indicators are not. Of the total of the 230 SDG indicators, at least 138 would need to be gathered apart from the results framework of the plan.¹⁷³ A handbook for monitoring of the implementation of the NSEDP was developed, which contains the meta data of the indicators in the NSEDP results framework, including details on definition, measurement, development context and relevant references.¹⁷⁴ While the NSEDP M&E Framework includes systematic reference to the SDGs, the Handbook makes more limited reference to the SDG targets and indicators. Green growth is assessed through a total of 15 green growth indicators, including those on forest cover, biodiversity, stability of agricultural production, disaster impact, economic growth in non-resource sectors and labour productivity in resource and non-resource sectors.¹⁷⁵

In **Uganda**, data mapping indicated that data on 80 indicators were readily available, with for 113 indicators no data available and the remaining 37 not considered applicable. Out of the 80 indicators with readily available information, only 33 proved to have baseline data. For the indicators where there

169 Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1), Annex IV: Final list of proposed Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

170 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, General Economics Division (GED), Data Gap Analysis of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Bangladesh Perspective, January 2017.

171 VNR Report of Bhutan, 2018.

172 Localizing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs: UNDG's "MAPS" approach in Cambodia, PowerPoint presentation, not dated.

173 Lao People's Democratic Republic, Ministry of Planning and Investment, 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), June 2016.

174 Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Handbook on the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Eighth National Socio-Economic Development Plan, Vientiane, August 2016.

175 Lao People's Democratic Republic, 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) (Officially approved at the VIII th National Assembly's Inaugural Session, 20-23 April 2016, Vientiane).

are no readily available data, new mechanisms for data mining or data gathering are meant to be designed.¹⁷⁶

VNRs have been conducted at the national level and started in 2016, when globally a total of 22 countries participated. In 2017, a total of 43 countries conducted VNRs. In 2018, the number of countries which conducted VNRs increased to 46. Seven out of the nineteen countries included in the Country Group B of the present assessment, have conducted a VNR. Uganda was the only country among the five that conducted the review in 2016, while Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Nepal did their review in 2017 and Bhutan and Lao PDR conducted theirs in 2018. In addition to data on selected indicators, the VNR reports include details on the institutional arrangements for SDG implementation and the ways in which monitoring and review systems were set up.

Review of the VNR reports produced in 2016, through a study of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), revealed that most of the countries depended on their existing M&E systems, linking review of the progress on SDG implementation to the system for monitoring and review of the national development strategy. At times, SDG monitoring was linked to the system for the Rio process from 1992 or to the system developed for MDG review in the period 2000-2015.

Some limitations to the monitoring, review and follow-up so far have been identified. The IIED study observed that SDG review has made primarily use of quantitative data. Focus has been on monitoring progress through assessment of the status of quantitative indicators. So far there has been less attention paid to intermittent evaluation, including the analysis of monitoring data gathered, complemented by additional gathering of in particular qualitative data on SDG implementation processes and results achieved. In many countries, there is a lack of national evaluation policies and systems, which could support such an approach. This has limited the opportunity to link progress on SDG achievement identified, with policies and other measures and initiatives implemented, which has limited the identification of what can be considered good practice and other lessons learned in terms of the contribution of a variety of interventions to progress in SDG implementation.¹⁷⁷

The IIED study concludes that attention in VNR reports so far has been focused on assessment of indicators and reaching yearly targets, rather than on the analysis of these data through a broader based evaluation process. The report identifies the need to put more attention to evaluation into the VNR process, in order to complement quantitative indicator-based monitoring with qualitative methodologies, with analysis of aspects of cause and effect and with the assessment of the role of the country monitoring and evaluation systems in VNR processes.¹⁷⁸

Nepal is an example of a country in which the government has developed the evaluation function at multiple levels, informed by its monitoring system. Every evaluation has to mandatorily include a management response, informed by the evaluation results, in particular its conclusions and recommendations. In this way, evaluation results have been used to inform policy making.¹⁷⁹

The Role of National Statistics Offices

National Statistics offices play an important role in the monitoring and review of the SDGs. Their roles concern in particular the conduct of census and surveys, in order to gather relevant quantitative data on the SDG indicators. While surveys are usually conducted with a 2 to 5 year interval, a census is often

176 Survey response and VNR Report of Uganda, 2016.

177 IIED, Eval SDGs and EvalPartners, Evaluation: a missed opportunity in the SDGs' first set of Voluntary National Reviews. May 2017.

178 Ibid.

179 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into development planning, Nepal.

makes data concerned available on a more regular basis.¹⁸⁰

Another role of national statistical office is coordinating on data gathering, which concerns in particular the part of the data on the SDG indicators obtained from administrative data from the various line ministries. For example, this was an important role for the statistics office in Rwanda.¹⁸¹ In Bangladesh, the Bureau of Statistics is required to establish an integrated framework for ensuring availability, authenticity and reliability of administrative data, collected by different government ministries and agencies.¹⁸² In Nepal, the Central Bureau of Statistics has formed an inter-ministerial SDG Indicators Coordination Committee to coordinate among ministries, provinces and local levels on tracking progress of the SDGs.¹⁸³

Capacities of the statistical offices across the countries vary, although there appears to be a need to improve the capacity of the statistical offices in all of the countries in the Country Group B. Several countries have developed a national statistical capacity building strategy or programme, in order to address data gaps and to enhance capacities concerned.

In **Bangladesh**, the data gap analysis showed the importance of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, with 89 of the SDG indicators identified as under the responsibility of the Bureau in terms of data gathering, with all other agencies responsible for less than 25 indicators, while most of these for less than 5 indicators.¹⁸⁴ The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics developed an SDG portal which enables policy makers and other SDG stakeholders to track annual progress against each target. Moreover, they have developed an SDG Dashboard, which facilitates government ministries and agencies to consolidate available data for each SDG and compare it against performance thresholds, using a visual interface. This provides an easy way to monitor targets and identify where the greatest progress is being made and where the progress lags behind the target and thus requires additional support.¹⁸⁵

In **Bhutan**, the National Statistics Bureau, in cooperation with the Gross National Happiness Commission, conducted a review in 2016 and 2017 to establish the immediate needs of Bhutan's statistical system to meet the data expectations for assessment of the SDG achievement. The review highlighted the need for investment in human resource capacity, institutional arrangements and an enabling legal and policy environment in order to raise the quality, frequency, disaggregation, utility and analysis of critical data for SDG monitoring and evaluation. Limited communication and coordination with the national statistical system is seen as a major source of data problems, resulting in inconsistent or contradictory information from various sources, due to variations in underlying definitions and differing operational contexts. Moreover, regularity of data gathering and reference periods vary. Thus, improving coordination between line ministries and the National Statistics Bureau is considered a priority.

In **Ethiopia**, the Central Statistics Agency (CSA), which is accountable to the National Planning Commission, is in charge of sample surveys, census, inventories and studies. These sources are estimated to contribute 30% of the data used in performance management of Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II, with 70 percent originating from administrative data. A national statistical

180 In Cambodia, Socio-Economic Surveys have been conducted by the National Institute of Statistics from 2004 onwards, and are implemented annually since 2007. Source: <http://www.nis.gov.kh/index.php/en/about/general-information>. In Nepal Household Surveys are conducted annually with a focus on the structure and the level of household consumption and current labor force statistics along with socio-demographic information. This while the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Cluster Indicators Survey are conducted less frequent. The Nepal Living Standards Survey and Labor Force Survey are conducted less regular. Source: Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Central Bureau of Statistics, A Compendium of National Statistical System of Nepal, Kathmandu, 2017.

181 Survey response Rwanda.

182 VNR report of Bangladesh, 2017.

183 VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

184 Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, General Economics Division (GED), Data Gap Analysis of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Bangladesh Perspective, January 2017.

185 VNR report of Bangladesh, 2017.

capacity building strategy has been developed, which is expected to address weaknesses in the Central Statistics Agency, including capacities for data management and to enhance the consistency and credibility of data gathering systems.¹⁸⁶

In **Rwanda**, the situation is slightly different, with the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) in the lead in terms of the monitoring and review process. The NISR is, moreover, responsible for coordination of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics as well as statistical work of government ministries, departments and agencies. Given the importance of administrative data in SDG monitoring, their collection and management are increasingly being systematised and improved in many sectors in Rwanda, including health, education and agriculture, under the guidance of NISR.¹⁸⁷

7) Public Administration Capacities for Implementation

Public administration systems perform important functions towards achieving the SDGs. Implementation of the 17 SDGs will require new ways of working, new capacities and a substantial amount of commitment from public institutions and public servants. They will need to be able to support the integrated implementation of the interrelated set of goals, to identify and reach underserved groups and areas and collect and analyse relevant data and statistics on intermediate and longer term changes. They need to do this while paying attention to aspects of transparency and accountability of their institutions while at the same time being involved in multi-stakeholder initiatives and related decision-making processes. Many countries have been implementing public administration reform measures, in order to reform and improve public service delivery, with special attention to reaching the poor and providing social services in underserved areas.

The capacities of the public administration system in the countries assessed are likely to be challenged by the implementation of the SDGs. The broad and comprehensive agenda requires the inclusion of many governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in a coordinated approach. The complexity of the goals provides considerable challenges for their realization. The countries included in this assessment appear to have enhanced the institutional capacities of their public administration system, through the establishment of organizational structures for SDG implementation and have put into place means to support coordination across the various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Although putting structures for coordination and cooperation in place is important, it still needs to be seen to which extent these prove effective in practice and are able to support and enhance the realisation of results.

In addition to the institutional aspects of the capacities of the public administration system, there are capacity issues at the local level and the level of individual civil servants to perform their function. Although some countries appeared to have started some capacity development at the individual level, there is a long way to go before the needed capacities can be expected to be in place, which goes for civil servants at all levels of the administration. Yet, in many parts of the world, the public service system seems to be in a crisis, with low levels of motivation and morale in the public sector, in part related to low pay and austerity measures. Developing a 'new public passion' seems needed to support the realization of 2030 Agenda in this respect.¹⁸⁸

186 Survey Response and VNR Report of Ethiopia, 2017.

187 Survey Response Rwanda.

188 In the words of Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator this 'New Public Passion' is needed in order to: "nurture high job satisfaction by ensuring that all civil servants feel directly engaged in improving the lives of their fellow citizens ... [and] that our contributions can help instill and renew such a sense of passion for development in public officials around the world." UNDP/Global Centre for Public Service Excellence: Public Service Motivation and the SDGs, An unacknowledged crisis? Notes on Public Service Excellence #13.

In **Lao PDR**, there is specific attention to public administration development within the eighth five year NSEDP, with the enhancement of the effectiveness of public governance and administration as a cross-cutting outcome area.¹⁸⁹

In **Bangladesh**, the Access to Information (a2i) Programme of the Prime Minister's Office has decentralized the delivery of public services, through the establishment of over 4,500 one-stop information and service delivery outlets, known as Union Digital Centres (UDCs) in all Union Councils, the lowest tier of government. The UDCs are meant to ensure that underserved citizens, such as rural women, people with disabilities and the elderly - regardless of their literacy and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) capacity - can access vital government information and services.¹⁹⁰

Financing of the SDGs

With the comprehensive agenda of the SDGs and the limitation of government resources, in particular in LDCs, the ways in which the SDGs are resourced require attention. There appear to be multiple constraints to ensuring sufficient resources for SDG implementation are in place. Issues concerned include the assessment of the expected resource needs for the SDG achievement and the way in which required resources can be mobilized from national sources as well as from international development partners. FDI is one of the means for several countries in terms of resource generation for achieving the SDG, although the volatility of related capital flows does not necessarily align with longer term SDG realization.¹⁹¹

The Government of **Lao PDR** organizes annually a Roundtable Meeting, with participation of donors, UN Agencies, CSOs, INGOs and the private sector, in order to raise funds for the implementation of the NSEDP and the SDGs. The government, moreover, has a policy to promote FDI.¹⁹²

Bangladesh is one of the countries that conducted an assessment of the financial implications of the 2030 Agenda. The results of the study indicate that an additional USD 928 billion will be required, amounting to USD 66.3 billion per year, which compares to 18.5–20 percent of annual GDP. For the implementation of the SDGs, the Government of Bangladesh foresees a combination of national resource mobilization, in combination with international support, although the latter has been declining over the past two decades. Moreover, Bangladesh is working to enhance FDI into the country from USD 2 billion in FY 2015-2016 to 9.6 billion by 2020. Remittances are another important resource and the government is enabling the use of formal channels for remittance inflows, which are estimated to amount to USD 15 billion annually.¹⁹³

In **Bhutan**, the intertwining of the SDGs with the GNH means that a significant portion of SDG financing concerns resources for the implementation of the national development plan. Five year plans have been primarily financed through domestic resources (at 64 percent of development expenditure) and ODA. Domestic resource mobilization has been increased through broadening of the tax base and the implementation of the Bhutan for Life program, an innovative green financing mechanism to increase resources for conservation initiatives. Efforts to enhance Foreign Direct Investment have so far not been very successful, with net inflow reported at only 0.4 percent of GDP in 2015. Mindful of rising debt levels, a comprehensive Public Debt Policy was adopted in 2016. Though resources needed for

189 Lao People's Democratic Republic, 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) (Officially approved at the VIII th National Assembly's Inaugural Session, 20-23 April 2016, Vientiane).

190 VNR report of Bangladesh, 2017.

191 United Nations, Towards Human Resilience: Sustaining MDG Progress in an Age of Economic Uncertainty, Chapter 3: Private Capital Flows: Foreign Direct Investment and Portfolio Investment.

192 Survey response Lao PDR.

193 VNR report of Bangladesh, 2017, and UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Bangladesh.

achieving the SDGs have not been assessed, it is considered likely that there is a gap in financing the SDGs in Bhutan.¹⁹⁴

In the view of the Government of **Nepal**, sustainable financing can be achieved through strengthening of the national, provincial and local level capacity for financial resource mobilization. Nepal aims to mobilize sufficient financial resources from its public, private and development partners to achieve the SDGs. A lesson from the MDG period was that the government lacked adequate resources to achieve them. The limited size of Nepal's economy and its GDP means that a big financing gap for meeting the SDG targets through national resources is to be expected, although the exact financial resource needs to achieve the SDGs are yet to be calculated. Nepal's annual budget is unlikely to be sufficient, while ODA, although increased in absolute terms, has declined over the past decade in terms of percentage of GDP, as well as in terms of disbursement levels.¹⁹⁵

In **Uganda**, the means of implementing the 2030 Agenda are enshrined in the NDP II Fiscal Strategy, which emphasizes domestic revenue financing for sustainable growth. In the medium term, there are efforts to enhance domestic revenue mobilisation, by expanding the tax base, reforming the structure of taxation, reducing the size of the informal sector, and improving efficiency in tax collection and compliance. In a bid to utilize new and innovative sources of finance, the government is using a broader range of financing modalities to meet the country's infrastructure investment requirements. A public debt strategy for the medium term was approved. A technical working group on financing of the SDGs has been established, chaired by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to review and address financial issues of SDG implementation.¹⁹⁶

In **Ethiopia**, the government has given a high emphasis for the GTP II period to increase domestic resource mobilization through widening the tax base, strengthening and ensuring full implementation of tax information administration system, enhancing taxpayers' education and communication, enforcing tax laws and strengthening revenue and customs institutional capacity. The government has set the target in GTP II to increase tax revenue from 12.7 percent of GDP in 2014/15 to 17.2 percent of GDP in 2019/20. The development of public private partnerships is pursued in order to address the financing of infrastructure. A financing needs assessment study is expected to be launched, in order to further inform the resourcing of the integration of achieving the SDGs as part of the GTP II.¹⁹⁷

8) Challenges Encountered in SDG Implementation

Respondents of the countries in the Country Group B and VNR reports concerned identified challenges for SDG implementation. Starting with those most frequently mentioned, the challenges include the following:

1. Lack of sufficient mechanisms for coordination across government and non-governmental stakeholders at national and sub-national levels, limiting their engagement in SDG implementation processes, constraining a holistic and coherent approach across sectors and stakeholders.
2. Limitations in financial resources available, with traditional sources of funding proven insufficient to implement the SDGs, while ODA and FDI flows appear unstable and difficulties exist in mobilizing domestic resources.

194 VNR report of Bhutan, 2018.

195 VNR Report of Nepal, 2017.

196 Survey response and VNR report of Uganda, 2016.

197 Survey response and VNR report of Ethiopia, 2017.

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3. Limited capacity of data generation systems and challenges in collection, analysis, disaggregation and dissemination of monitoring data and information, with many data gaps in monitoring frameworks, limiting the use for decision-making and informing policy development.
 4. Localization of the SDGs in line with development plans and strategies at national and sub-national levels and their inclusion in both short term plans and longer term strategies, in line with the fiscal space of the country concerned.
 5. Limitations in human resource capacities in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, including capacity of civil servants at all levels of government, to implement the SDGs.
 6. Lack of knowledge and understanding of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs by citizens, including in rural and remote areas.
 7. Building resilience at national and sub-national levels in the view of threats related to climate change.

Moreover, several country-specific challenges were identified:

Bangladesh: lack of technology to transfer towards low carbon and low natural resource demanding pathways towards development

Bhutan: the need to enhance the productive capacity of the economy as the most crucial enabling factor, with the need to diversify exports into value-added goods and services, with increased participation of vibrant, small and medium enterprises

Lao PDR: lack of knowledge, experiences and lesson learned on how to implement the SDGs more effectively

Nepal: economic development constraints, including the lack of macro-economic policy reforms to achieve higher levels of economic growth and lack of off-farm jobs for youth

Ethiopia: drought and declining market prices for export commodities

Mozambique: lack of active involvement of key actors other than the Government

Malawi: lack of collaboration amongst the various sector agencies

9) Capacity Support Required for SDG Implementation

In terms of country priorities and support required, there are understandably a lot of overlaps with the issues identified as constraints. Key aspects of support, required across the countries of the Country Group B that were part of the assessment, include:

1. Support to the further development of the capacity of the public sector in general and particularly in terms of its capacity to implement the SDGs. Building capacities of national and sector-based implementing mechanisms and the use of innovative approaches to public service delivery, including the use of ICT. This includes integration of environmental sustainability aspects in development processes. Assistance will be needed for the development of coordination mechanisms, within government and the public administration as well as between government and other stakeholders, to support SDG implementation.

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2. Support for the development of institutional and individual capacities in monitoring of the SDG progress, including the gathering of data, the management and storage of what will be a vast amount of data and the analysis of data, to enhance lesson learning, use for accountability and inform management, as well as policy decision-making. This will include the development of the capacities of the national agency in charge of statistics. An important aspect concerns the disaggregation of data, in order to inform addressing issues of exclusion and marginalization. There is a need to assess country-specific data gaps and support countries in dealing with issues concerned. In addition to support to survey and census data, there is a need to support the collection and use of administrative data and to improve data quality.
 3. Support to the funding for the SDGs through development of innovative funding mechanisms, which tap into public as well as private resources and make use of domestic resources as well as international resources, including development aid. Development of capacities for resource mobilization needs to be rolled out to the sub-national level. Mobilizing resources for SDG implementation will need to be integrated into the regular domestic resource mobilization initiatives, enhancing revenues as a proportion of the national GDP.
 4. A cross-cutting issue identified for support concerns the need for learning across countries in a peer learning environment. This concerns several aspects of SDG implementation, including the systems and resources put in place to achieve results as well as aspects of public service delivery and the use of ICT. This will need to be informed by systematic review of a selected number of issues and lessons learned. In addition to the organization of workshops, seminars and training programmes, this would include the development of knowledge products. This needs to encompass development of innovative approaches to cross-country learning which make use of ICT.

For a more limited number of countries, the following issues were identified for support:

5. Planning for SDG implementation, including integration of the SDGs into development plans, integration of the SDG indicators into the reporting framework of the National Development plans, enhancing multi-sectoral planning for implementation and development of capacities concerned. This includes prioritization of SDG implementation, given the limitations in resources in countries concerned, identifying those interventions that would have a multiplier effect and a large beneficial result for the poor, marginalized people, women and other vulnerable groups.
6. Mobilization of citizens to participate in development programmes and developing an SDG communication and advocacy strategy, to create awareness on the SDGs to the general public. This could include ways to engage people in the SDG decision-making processes.
7. Support for rallying the private sector, civil society, citizens and other partners towards implementation of the SDGs and establishing Public-Private Partnerships.
8. Support for capacity development of local governments for implementation of the SDGs and monitoring and reporting of results at the local level.
9. Reaching the unreached and addressing last mile challenges in line with the principle of 'leaving no one behind'.

10) Ways for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to Respond to Support Needs

In order to respond to the challenges in SDG implementation faced by countries, in particular LDCs, in line with the needs that countries have identified in terms of support required, it is recommended for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to tailor support to the following issues:

- ***Support the development of capacities of public administration at national and sub-national level, to incorporate the SDG goals and targets in national and sub-national development plans and to mainstream them throughout the government.***

With many governments developing new multi-year plans in the coming decade, it will be important for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to support this process. This would mean to gather experiences and lessons learned so far on the inclusion of the SDGs in development plans that were developed before 2015 and to analyse these data to inform guidelines for the incorporation of the SDGs in new multi-year national and sub-national development plans.

Work with the pre-service and in-service institutes that instruct civil servants in order to support the inclusion of aspects of the SDGs into the curriculum used by these institutes. The curriculum would need to deal with the contents of the SDGs as well as ways to incorporate the goals and targets into national and sub-national planning processes and mainstream them across ministries and government agencies. Support the development of guidelines on mainstreaming the SDGs and use these in the capacity development of civil servants.

- ***Support the development of mechanisms to enhance coordination across government stakeholders as well as between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the implementation of the SDGs.***

Assist inquiry of systems and mechanisms presently used for coordination and cooperation across government agencies and between government and non-government actors, to support implementation of the SDGs in a variety of national and sub-national context. This would include the identification of institutional and other enabling and constraining factors for coordination as well as the documentation of the critical moments and aspects of development processes where substantial coordination is required.

Analyse lessons learned and good practices in terms of coordination amongst government parties and with non-governmental actors, including practices that can be applied more broadly across countries and those that are more closely related to specific development contexts.

Use the results of the inquiry to support learning on coordination in SDG implementation through sharing of the findings of the inquiry through meetings and workshops and making use of the results to support peer learning processes across selected countries.

- ***Development and implementation of innovative funding mechanisms at national and sub-national level, tapping into domestic and international resources as well as private and public resources***

Support countries in the conduct of an assessment of the financial resource requirements for SDG implementation, specifying details for each of the SDGs, while taking into account aspects of synergy amongst the various goals and targets.

Provide support on ways in which countries can fund the implementation of the SDGs with a combination of public and private, national and international resources.

Support countries to develop ways to assess existing capacities for resource mobilisation from private, national and international resources, in order to inform plans to develop such capacities at both institutional and individual levels.

Document good practice examples of public finance mobilisation through enhanced tax revenue in terms of revenue to GDP ratio and allocation of such resources for SDG implementation, including planning and budgeting mechanisms at national and sub-national levels.

In selected countries, conduct focused case studies on private sector support to SDG implementation, either through private sector investment, Public-Private Partnerships or FDI and document these. Conduct meta-analysis on the case studies in order to distil more general lessons and good practices, which can be used to inform government engagement with the private sector for SDG achievement.

- ***Development of capacities for monitoring, review and follow-up of the SDG indicators, including data gathering, analysis of development results and the use of data and information to inform the SDG implementation process in order to enhance results.***

Support will need to start with providing countries with a simple tool that allows for conducting an assessment of the readiness of the government monitoring system to assess progress of SDG implementation through monitoring of the SDG indicators. Such a tool would focus on institutional aspects as well as human resources and financial aspects of the monitoring system and include a data gap analysis concerning availability of data on the SDG indicators.

Based on the result of a readiness assessment, a capacity development plan can be developed and implemented at the country level, including data gathering, data management system, data analysis, disaggregation of data, reporting and dissemination. Each stage of the capacity development process can, in turn, be supported and informed by existing agencies.

Support needs to be provided for building capacities in data gathering on the indicators included in the SDG monitoring framework, in particular on Tier II and III¹⁹⁸ data gathering processes. This requires both improving the administrative data gathering systems as well as developing statistical capacities on the gathering of survey data.

In addition to strengthening institutional capacities, there is a need to develop capacities at individual level of the staff in these agencies. The need for disaggregated data has to be taken into consideration at the data gathering stage, including adaptation of the sample size and producing data on measuring vulnerability.

Data management systems need to be supported for managing all relevant SDG data, including survey data and administrative data and to provide a means for data analysis.

198 Definitions of the three Tiers of SDG indicators:

Tier 1: Indicator conceptually clear, established methodology and standards available and data regularly produced by countries.

Tier 2: Indicator conceptually clear, established methodology and standards available but data are not regularly produced by countries.

Tier 3: Indicator for which there are no established methodology and standards or methodology/standards are being developed/tested.

Source: Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators, 21 September 2016.

The intermittent process of data analysis needs to be encouraged and assisted, reviewing data gathered and analysing these, making use of a selected set of criteria, including effectiveness, comparing results with the targets set in the SDG monitoring framework, as well as aspects of efficiency, participation and other process issues.

Analysis needs to pay particular attention to the principle of 'leaving no one behind', through the disaggregation of data by relevant vulnerability criteria. Moreover, specific case studies could be supported, in those circumstances where vulnerable groups are known or have been identified, but where statistical survey data do not sufficiently enable disaggregation to get an understanding of the living conditions of the members of these groups, in order to inform initiatives to improve their status. Review processes may, moreover, require gathering of other additional qualitative information to underpin the analysis of the review.

Results from monitoring and review need to be reported in a way that is useful to policy and other decision-makers at the national and sub-national levels and that can be used by government and non-governmental stakeholders in policy level engagement in order to enhance SDG implementation.

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG could play a role in organizing meetings and workshops for government officials responsible for SDG monitoring to support the development of their capacities on the various issues related to SDG monitoring, review and follow-up. Moreover, it would be important to promote attention to the institutional requirements for monitoring, review and follow-up of the SDGs in meetings with high-level government officials, in order to ensure that they will support the implementation of organizational requirements for monitoring, review and follow-up.

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG will need to work closely with the scientific community, civil society and the private sector in the enhancement of monitoring, review and follow-up processes, based on the capacities of each of these actors in the specific country contexts. Each of these actors can play an important role in the monitoring, review and follow-up process as well as in the capacity development aspects concerned. In particular, universities could play an important role in enhancing capacities on monitoring, review and follow-up of the progress of SDG implementation and more in general on the assessment of the results of development policies and plans, through the inclusion of monitoring and evaluation as a topic of study. However, for this to be realized, their own capacity might need to be enhanced, something that could be supported by UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG.

- ***Support learning on the good practices of SDG implementation across countries, including across LDCs as well as between LDCs and other countries, in a systematic way.***

Provide support to create an enabling environment for learning on the good practices of SDG implementation in multiple ways:

- Enhancing opportunities for learning through the organization of meetings and workshops on key topics of SDG implementation in the relevant regions

- Playing a coordinating role for countries in the region in terms of matching demand and supply of lessons learned, good practices and other relevant experiences identified in SDG implementation and facilitate related learning opportunities across countries

Start the learning process across countries with a focus on the key needs of LDCs identified in the present assessment:

- Development of capacities of public administration
- Coordination across government stakeholders and with non-government actors
- Monitoring, evaluation and follow-up
- Localizing the 2030 Agenda at national and sub-national levels
- Citizen engagement in SDG implementation

Work with universities, other education and adult learning institutes to enhance their interest in the 2030 Agenda and to involve them in the process of SDG implementation, in particular in the inquiry of implementation processes and their results and the development of knowledge products on SDG implementation, that can be shared across countries and that can be used in development of capacities of staff of a variety of actors in SDG implementation.

Make use of ICT to develop a learning platform for stakeholders involved in SDG implementation in the Asia and Eastern African region, where they can share lessons and discuss issues concerned in a constructive way.

8

Findings and Analysis on Country Group C : Low- and Middle-Income Countries



8 Findings and Analysis on the Country Group C : Low- and Middle-Income Countries

1) National Strategies for SDG Implementation

Mainstreaming the SDGs in National Development Strategies and Plans

Most of the countries in the Country Group C have mainstreamed the SDGs into their national development plans, while in some cases the SDGs have been reflected in the longer term development strategies. For example, in **Indonesia**, the planning cycle of the National Medium-term Development Plan of 2015-2019 allowed for the inclusion of Indonesia's contribution to the development of the SDGs into the formulation of the National Medium Term Development Plan.¹⁹⁹

In **Thailand**, the government declared the 2030 Agenda as a national agenda after the Prime Minister attended the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015 for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. The government has formulated the 20 year National Strategy (2017-2036) to set the national goals of sustainable development as a longer term strategy beyond the 2030 Agenda timeframe. The objectives of the 12th National Socio-Economic Development Plan were mapped against the 17 SDGs (see Figure 4 below).²⁰⁰

Figure 4. Mapping of the National Plan Objectives versus the SDGs of Agenda 2030 in Thailand²⁰¹



199 Survey Response Indonesia, UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Indonesia.

200 VNR Report of Thailand, 2017.

201 Ibid.

The same goes for **Malaysia** where the SDGs were taken into account in the development of the 11th Malaysia Plan 2016-2020 as well as in the mid-term review of the plan in the middle of 2017. During the last quarter of 2016, budget proposals for the 2017 budget have been reviewed in explicit alignment with the SDGs, in addition to previously existing criteria as the basis for selection of funding of proposals. A revised submission format was developed as part of the budget guidelines for this purpose.²⁰² Moreover, an SDG roadmap was developed.²⁰³ In May 2018, the newly elected government of Malaysia committed to implementation of the SDGs, a promise that was included in the manifest of the elected government.²⁰⁴

In **Mongolia**, the government created a country specific Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030 (SDV) and prepared a national development policy, integrating both the SDGs and the SDV. Sectoral policies are meant to be assessed against the SDGs and the SDV.²⁰⁵

In **Viet Nam**, the SDGs were integrated into the national action plan, after which all related agencies and line ministries were to develop sector and local action plans concerning SDG implementation.²⁰⁶ Viet Nam has localized the global 2030 Agenda to fit its national context in the SDG National Action Plan with the 17 SDGs and 115 specific targets, which fit national conditions and development priorities. One of the tasks in this plan is: "Integrating sustainable development goals during the formulation of annual Socio-Economic Development Plans (SEDPs) of the country, strategies, policies, master plans of ministries, sectors, localities, agencies".²⁰⁷ By 2020, Viet Nam's sustainable development goals are planned to have been fully mainstreamed into the SEDP for the 2021-2030 period, the SEDP for the 2021-2025 period and sectoral, local development master plans for the 2021-2030 period.²⁰⁸

In the **Philippines**, the timing of the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 allowed for harmonization with the 2030 Agenda. The planning guidelines of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) required government agencies to align targets with the 2030 Agenda as well as with the long-term vision of the Philippines.

In **Sri Lanka**, the alignment of government strategies and plans with the SDGs has been conducted at three levels: at the level of Vision 2025, the longer-term goal of sustained growth in Sri Lanka, aiming to establish a prosperous country where all citizens enjoy better living standards; the comprehensive four-year Public Investment Programme, which allocates resources among medium-term development priorities; and the 'Blue Green Budget' of 2018, which allocates short-term annual funds of the Government, with a focus on environmentally sustainable economic growth. Assessment of the level of alignment showed that 64 percent of the Public Investment Programme targets were aligned with the SDGs, out of which 59 percent were fully aligned and 41 percent partially aligned. In particular the SDGs that prove less aligned are considered to need additional focus in the next Public Investment Programme (PIP). Regarding the five themes of the SDGs, Prosperity and People proved most aligned, while Partnerships and Peace proved least aligned.²⁰⁹

201 <http://www.mfa.go.th/sep4sdgs/contents/filemanager/images/sep/VNR%20English.pdf>

202 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Malaysia. VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017; Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020.

203 National SDG Road Map for Malaysia, phase 1, 31 May 2017.

204 Buku Harapan, Rebuilding our Nation fulfilling our Hopes.

205 Survey Response Mongolia.

206 Survey Response Viet Nam.

207 http://www.un.org.vn/en/publications/cat_view/166-government-agency-publications.html

208 Survey Response and VNR Report of Viet Nam, 2018.

209 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

2) National Institutional Arrangements for SDG Implementation

In order to implement the SDGs as a part of national development programmes and plans, a variety of institutional arrangements have been made in the countries concerned. Most of the countries that are part of the present assessment installed high-level cross-sectoral committees or councils to lead the SDG implementation process. Political leadership of these committees and councils is usually provided by the Prime Minister, as in the case of Thailand and Malaysia, while the SDG Steering Committee is chaired by the President of the Nation in Indonesia.

In other countries, SDG implementation is guided by specific ministries or institutes, as in the case of India, where a policy think tank, headed by the Prime Minister, is leading the SDG implementation. In both Pakistan and Viet Nam, use is made of existing planning ministries to guide the SDG implementation process, with the Ministry of Planning and Investment in Viet Nam and the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms in Pakistan as the lead agency. In all cases, the integration of the goals of the 2030 Agenda is at a high level of government administration, which is beneficial to meet the need for continuous political support for the SDG implementation process.

The issuing of legislation to install the organizational setup for the SDGs has been limited in the countries included in the Country Group C, with only Indonesia and Sri Lanka making use of a Presidential Decree and an Act, respectively, to guide their SDG implementation.²¹⁰

In **Sri Lanka**, the integration of the SDGs into national development planning was based on the enactment of the Sustainable Development Act no. 19 of 2017, which provided the legal framework for implementation of the SDGs.²¹¹ Country-specific details are presented in Table 20.

210 VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017, and VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018, Survey Response Indonesia.

211 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

Table 20. Overview of the Leading Agencies for SDG Implementation in the Countries of the Country Group C

Country	Leading Agency for SDG Implementation
China	China has established an inter-agency mechanism for the SDGs, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs , which is responsible for formulating the implementation plan, reviewing the progress of implementation and strengthening policy coordination and communication. The inter-agency mechanism includes 43 line ministries and government agencies, which will draw up the implementation plans for the SDGs and targets specific to their respective portfolios.
India	National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) is the Government policy think tank responsible for the coordination and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. NITI Aayog is chaired by the Prime Minister. It has mapped out the 17 Goals and assigned each of the targets to the appropriate ministries (called "Nodal Central Ministries"), agencies and major government programmes.
Indonesia	The institutional arrangement is based on a Presidential Decree and consists of the SDG Steering Committee chaired by the President and the SDG Implementation Team , coordinated by the Head of Bappenas, the national Planning Ministry and chaired by the Deputy of Maritime and Natural Resources of Bappenas. This SDG Implementation Team guides four working groups on social, economic and inclusive development and environment. These working groups include representatives of government, civil society organizations, academics, philanthropy, business community and experts.
Malaysia	At the apex of the SDG governance structure is the National SDG Council , chaired by the Prime Minister of Malaysia. The Council plans and monitors SDG implementation and reports to the global HLPF. The Council is supported by the SDG Steering Committee , chaired by the Director General of the Economic Planning Unit (EPU). The Steering Committee consists of five SDG Cluster Working Committees on Inclusivity, Well-being, Human Capital, Environment and natural resources and Economic growth. These committees are headed by section heads of the Economic Planning Unit and include representatives of government ministries/agencies, civil society, the private sector, academics, United Nations agencies and youth representatives. Under each of these committees there are Task forces for each of the goals included.
Mongolia	In order to develop an integrated national development policy, the National Development Agency was formed in September 2016. This agency is directly under the Prime Minister. The primary mandate of the National Development Agency is to ensure integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions in long and medium term, sub-national and sectoral policies, by designing coherent and comprehensive policies conducive to systematic implementation of the Global Agenda 2030 and the Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision-2030. The National Development Agency has assessed the linkage between the SDGs and SDV objectives and found that 45 percent of the SDG objectives are reflected in the SDV. Therefore, the Medium-Term Plan reflects both SDGs and SDV and identifies priority policy actions.
Pakistan	Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms at the federal level is the lead agency on the SDGs, while Planning and Development Divisions at provincial level lead implementation at the sub-national level. Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform is working to enhance effectiveness of inter-governmental coordination and collaboration through establishment of inter-ministerial coordination and repositioning of local governments as the SDG focal tier. The National Committee on SDGs includes representatives from the corporate sector, academia, parliamentarians and civil society.
Philippines	With a new administration installed in the first year of SDG implementation, a Technical Oversight Committee on SDGs has been proposed under the National Economic and Development Authority Board, with the committee composed of the heads of the various national government agencies concerned and chaired by the Socio-economic Planning Secretary. Horizontal linkages with line agencies and high-level committees and vertical linkages with sub-national levels need to be further clarified.
Sri Lanka	The SDG process is led by the Sustainable Development Council , established through the Sustainable Development Act in 2017. The Council is mandated to formulate the National Policy and Strategy in conformity with the SDGs and associated targets, which policy and strategy is to be approved by Parliament and meant to be in force until the end of the year 2030. The council moreover, facilitates and monitors the mechanisms and review processes of the progress made on implementation of the National Policy and Strategy on Sustainable Development. The Council consists of 12 members of which four ex-officio members: Secretary to the President, Secretary to the Minister of Sustainable Development and Wildlife, Secretary to the Minister of National Planning, Secretary to the Minister of Environment and eight other members, including three members nominated by the provincial councils on a rotational basis.

Thailand

The implementation of the SDGs in Thailand is driven by the **National Committee for Sustainable Development (NCSD)**, chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising of deputy prime minister, ministries' permanent secretaries, business sectors, academics and NGOs. The **National Economic and Social Development Board** is the secretariat of the national committee. The main task of national committee is formulating policies and strategies on national sustainable development and oversee their implementation, including the SDGs. It has established **three sub-committees** to advance three interconnected processes namely: implementing the SDGs, raising awareness on sustainable development and compiling data and statistics to support the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. **Three task forces** are established to review and recommend legal, economic and social measures needed to achieve the SDGs, coordinate across the numerous agencies and report on progress so far, including the VNR report.

Viet Nam

The **Ministry of Planning and Investment** is responsible for leading and coordinating with concerned ministries, sectors, localities and relevant institutions and organizations to deploy the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP), including: integration of the SDGs into the 5 year Socio-Economic Development Plans, development of guidelines on how to achieve this, development of a roadmap for SDG achievement and a monitoring system, overseeing the implementation of the National Action Plan and mobilizing resources. The **National Council for Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Improvement**, established in 2005 (then named the National Sustainable Development Council), plays an advisory and consultative role to the Prime Minister in the implementation of sustainable development initiatives.

Engagement of Sub-National-Level Government

In all of the countries included in the assessment, attention is paid to engagement of sub-national government agencies, although engagement differs in terms of the administrative levels concerned and the arrangements put in place. The organization and processes involved can be more complex in larger and federative states with relatively high levels of decentralization, which goes for India and Malaysia as well as Indonesia and Pakistan.

In **India**, each of the different states has its own specific focus in terms of achieving the SDGs, with different approaches in terms of balancing economic and social development and environmental sustainability. For details see Box 10 below.

Box 10. State Level SDG Initiatives in India

Assam has set up a Centre for SDGs under the Planning and Development Department and an integrated framework for implementation has been adopted. The state has developed its own vision for realizing the SDGs, namely, ASSAM 2030. A pilot is being undertaken in a few villages and towns for demonstrating full attainment of the SDG agenda. A robust technology platform is being set up for tracking progress.

Andhra Pradesh as part of its Vision 2029 has identified indicators for each of the 17 SDGs. It has also outlined the baseline, targets, milestones as well as key strategies for realizing the SDGs.

Bihar is in the process of finalizing the roadmap for SDG implementation. The state government is already focusing on a number of areas that are covered under the SDGs, including road connectivity, drainage, sanitation, clean drinking water, electricity, higher education, skill development and gender equality.

Haryana has prepared its Vision 2030 document, following extensive consultations with a range of stakeholders. The strategies are based broadly on five principles: integrated and decentralized planning, equitable development, development of human capital, promoting citizen centric services and green growth.

Maharashtra is focused on balanced regional development and emphasizes sustainable livelihoods, taking initiatives to improve management of water, land and forests, improve access to health and education and developing skills for employment generation.

Kerala has set up elaborate indicators and standards for achieving SDG 3 on health. The state has sector specific plans for 2030, with emphasis on encouraging entrepreneurship in production sectors, developing the key bases of knowledge economy and ensuring environmental and social sustainability.

Karnataka focuses on technology in 12 sectors: education, medical science, health care, food & agriculture, water, energy, environment, habitat, transportation, infrastructure, manufacturing and ICT.

Madhya Pradesh has established an SDG cell. The State Planning Commission has established a Planning and Policy Support Unit, a Project Monitoring Unit, a Knowledge Management Unit and an International Division in order to meet SDG challenges.

Tamil Nadu focuses on infrastructure development in six major sectors: energy, transportation, industrial and commercial infrastructure, urban infrastructure and services, agriculture and human development.

Punjab has set up an SDG support process under the Planning Department. This involves provisions on technical and facilitative support at the state level to different departments on improving programme implementation and generating data and evidence to inform public policy and implementation of the SDGs.

Source: VNR Report of India, 2017.

India has a tradition of strong local government with the Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural areas and urban local government bodies in urbanized areas. With substantial financial devolution under the award of the 14th Finance Commission, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been supporting village-level local governments in planning and implementing development initiatives in their respective areas. The national development agenda including the SDG framework informs and guides the capacity building of local-level governments, as well as the actual local-level planning processes.²¹²

In **Pakistan**, SDG support units are working in Sindh and Punjab provinces, while establishment of such units is in process in provinces of Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other regions (Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Federally Administered Tribal Areas).

In **Indonesia**, mainstreaming SDGs in the development plan has taken place at all line ministries and departments at national as well as sub-national level. Each of the 34 provinces is required to coordinate with their districts for the development of a sub-national SDG action plan, no later than one year after the presidential decree on the SDGs. Each province is to submit an annual report on SDG implementation to the National SDG Implementation team.²¹³ Factors identified in the VNR report of Indonesia which make SDG implementation effective at the local level include: strong political commitment and capacity of the local government to operationalize the SDGs into action and the presence of committed civil society organizations (CSOs), business actors and universities. In some sub-national areas, there has been particular commitment, with specifically focused plans on selected SDGs.²¹⁴

At sub-national level, provinces in **Indonesia** are required to coordinate with districts and municipalities in the development of sub-national action plans, which is achieved through sub-national SDG coordination teams guided by the sub-national Development Planning Authority (Bappeda). The sub-national coordination teams include government as well as non-government actors. In Riau province, an inclusive structure of the SDG coordination team was developed in line with the SDG principles of inclusiveness, integration and partnership with the representation of government, business and philanthropy, non-governmental organizations, community groups, mass media and academics to collaborate and work together using their respective resources and programmes towards achieving the SDGs. The organizational structure has been subject of a Governor Decree, which regulates the membership, tasks and functions of the coordination team and its four technical working groups. An important ingredient in SDG implementation teams is trust and equality in order to enable the discussion of substantive issues and in this way inform decision-making with regard to SDG implementation.²¹⁵

²¹² VNR Report of India, 2017.

²¹³ Survey Response Indonesia.

²¹⁴ VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017.

²¹⁵ Survey Response Indonesia and UNDP good practice Indonesia.

In **Malaysia**, the state-level planning units are members of the federal-level committees. State level and other sub-national authorities have shown interest in the SDGs. One of the lessons learned, identified in the Malaysia VNR report, concerns the critical importance of local capacity to implement the SDGs, with a need to further develop capacities concerned, recognizing the need to invest in people, creativity and innovation at the local level in order to build resilience and sustainability. Malaysia aims to enhance sub-national engagement through replication at state level of the federal multi-stakeholder governance structure and to enhance vertical and horizontal policy coherence. SDG roadshows were organised in all 13 states to raise public awareness, increase knowledge and create a sense of ownership of the 2030 Agenda at the sub-national level. During these events, SDG-related materials were made available in the national language. The government of Malaysia made use of several innovative approaches to increase public participation in SDG implementation (for details see Box 11 below).²¹⁶

In **Sri Lanka**, focal points have been established at the level of provincial councils in order to coordinate SDG implementation at the sub-national level. After passing the National Policy and Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Parliament, sub-national entities as well as line ministries and agencies are required to prepare Sustainable Development Strategies in line with the national policy and strategy within a one-year period and carry out SDG implementation within their scope. They are required to submit progress reports, conduct environmental and social audits for new development projects and include a statement on compliance of their activities with the national policy and strategy in their annual reports.²¹⁷

Box 11. Innovative Approaches to Increase Participation in SDG Implementation in Malaysia

Lab Approach

Introduced by the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) in 2009, the lab approach is part of an 8-step process used by Malaysia to drive transformation. The approach involves lab sessions with participation from government and private sector as well as NGOs to identify industry needs, initiatives to be undertaken and allocation of resources. Particularly, labs involved people in sectors most affected by a given issue so that they could participate in developing effective solutions. Participant feedback showed that lab sessions allowed hierarchical and jurisdictional divisions to be temporarily set aside to allow people on the ground to take ownership of highlighted problems.

National Consultations using the method of Open Space Technology

First piloted by the UN Country Team and Economic Planning Unit (Office of the Prime Minister) during the post-2015 discussion titled 'The Malaysia We Want' in 2014, this method allows participants to determine the topics, schedules and length of group discussions in relation to the wider topic under discussion. Plenary sessions at the beginning and end of each day allowed participants to share key points, experiences, feelings and comments about how to move forward. While the methodology has limitations, the method can be easily replicated at different scales and allows participants to better understand issues that they may be interested in but did not previously know much about. The platform allows participants to build networks that lead to future partnerships and to feel included in the discussions on development.

Source: VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017

216 VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017.

217 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

In **Viet Nam**, consultations at sub-national level administration are conducted in order to inform the national development plan. Once the national plan is developed, all local authorities are obliged to integrate the SDGs into their own local development plans and to contribute to national achievement of the targets concerned.²¹⁸

The Union of Local Authorities in the **Philippines** is one of the organizations that are given early orientation on the SDGs as it performed a critical role in mobilizing the local government units to help the national government in mainstreaming the SDGs into local development processes.²¹⁹

3) Engagement with Non-Governmental Actors

Several countries apply the “whole-of-society” approach, meaning the involvement of a variety of non-governmental stakeholders in SDG implementation, including UN agencies, civil society organizations, academics, private sector actors, development partners and philanthropic organizations. Linkage with non-governmental stakeholders provides an opportunity to inform the development process with the concrete needs of people at the local level, in particular those of underserved areas and groups. These non-governmental actors are usually part of the technical level working groups and task forces, which provide advice to the policy level entities.

Thailand appears to be an exception where non-governmental actors are included at the highest level, in the National Committee for Sustainable Development,²²⁰ which is chaired by the Prime Minister. This Committee has, moreover, set up a platform to consult with civil society in order to receive their inputs, reflecting the interests of diverse groups, which is considered to benefit policy planning and implementation.²²¹

In Thailand, non-governmental stakeholders are, moreover, involved in setting priority goals and targets for SDG implementation. The academia is instrumental in designing the methodology and processes for prioritizing the SDG targets in accordance with the country context, making use of a statistical method, ensuring the objectivity of the process. The private sector, academia, civil society and general public are invited to take part in five brainstorming sessions to prioritize the SDG targets. The secretariat of the National Committee for Sustainable Development has conducted discussions with the private sector on the implementation of the SDGs. Many private sector enterprises have initiated their own projects to contribute towards the SDGs.²²²

The need to engage with non-governmental organizations in addition to governmental agencies was clearly expressed in the VNR Report of **Sri Lanka** which states:

“The key stakeholder categories involved in the process include: all sectors and all levels of the government including the Parliament, civil society, private sector and academia. Successful achievement of the SDGs depends on how strongly these stakeholders identify the SDGs with their own needs and aspirations. In other words, stakeholders should perceive a sense of ownership about the SDG implementation process.”²²³

218 Survey Response Viet Nam.

219 VNR Report of the Philippines, 2016.

220 The National Committee for Sustainable Development comprises 37 members, including 26 members from public sectors, 3 academics, 2 from the private sector, 2 from civil society and 4 independent experts on sustainable development. Additional sectors are invited to participate in the sub-committee meetings in order to be part of the mechanism that drives forward sustainable development. VNR Report of Thailand, 2017.

221 VNR Report of Thailand, 2017.

222 Ibid.

223 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

To enable a strong sense of ownership of the SDG implementation process in Sri Lanka and to ensure maximum levels of participation, a stakeholder engagement plan was developed as part of the preparation for the VNR report to guide the participation of stakeholders in the VNR process and SDG implementation beyond. Use was made of a framework which includes five levels of public participation, including inform, consult, involve and collaborate, which are all meant to contribute to empowerment, the fifth level, with specific public participation tools to be applied to each of these levels. The latter include a SDG web portal, planning meetings, online SDG networks, national and sub-national workshops and a multi-stakeholder SDG reference group.

In addition to the “whole-of-government” approach, the government of **Indonesia** has applied a “whole-of-society” approach for SDG implementation, involving non-governmental stakeholders throughout the process. This has been based on a well-established practice of consultations about programme and budget planning at national and local levels. Non-governmental agency and citizen involvement in development planning has been further enhanced since the launch of the decentralization process in 1999, when the government enhanced citizen participation in regional and community level planning, which was further enhanced by the Law of the National Development Planning System of 2004. The newly elected government of 2014 introduced the use of web-based means for providing inputs to the development planning process through e-planning and e-budgeting, which have shortened the time needed for the decision-making process.²²⁴ Participation of non-governmental stakeholders has been organized through four platforms, each with its own roles and approaches to SDG implementation.²²⁵ For details see Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. SDG Platforms for Different Types of Stakeholders in SDG Implementation in Indonesia



Source: VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017

224 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Indonesia.

225 VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017.

In the **Philippines**, civil society organizations are extensively included in awareness raising and campaigning on the SDGs and play an important role in enhancing the weight provided to social development and environmental sustainability. While the ten point socio-economic agenda of the new Philippine administration focused primarily on economic development and to a lesser extent on human capital development, social protection and health-related issues, the priorities of the consultation process of the post-2015 agenda, on the other hand, prioritized poverty reduction and social inclusion, environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation and disaster risk management as well as accountable government under the rule of law and peace and security.²²⁶

Nevertheless, civil society plays an important role in promoting the SDG agenda in the Philippines, such as through a workshop on child rights organized by the Visayas Forum, where the SDG framework was used to identify advocacy opportunities in order to influence decision-makers in addressing priority issues on child protection. The Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development Foundation organized a voters' education forum on food and nutrition security in order to identify food and nutrition security policy proposals that need to be prioritized in terms of addressing the SDGs 2 and 3.²²⁷

In **Malaysia**, an SDG alliance has been set up by civil society organizations, which concerns an informal group of organizations that come together for networking, cooperation, joint actions and liaison with the government and is committed to effective implementation of the SDGs. The initiative started in October 2015 and comprises four umbrella CSOs and 25 individual CSOs and institutions, translating to more than 200 CSOs. These CSOs can broadly be grouped into four types: development- and service-based; human rights-based; environment-based; and think tanks. The alliance called amongst others for a formal mechanism of CSO engagement at national, state and district levels, the appointment of SDG focal points in line ministries and funding for CSOs for work pertaining to achieving the SDGs.²²⁸

226 VNR Report of the Philippines, 2016.

227 Ibid.

228 VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017; Dr Denison Jayasooria, Civil Society Organisations & the Implementation of the SDGs in Malaysia, November 2016; Dr Denison Jayasooria, Malaysian Case Study: Review of National CSO Engagement on the SDGs.

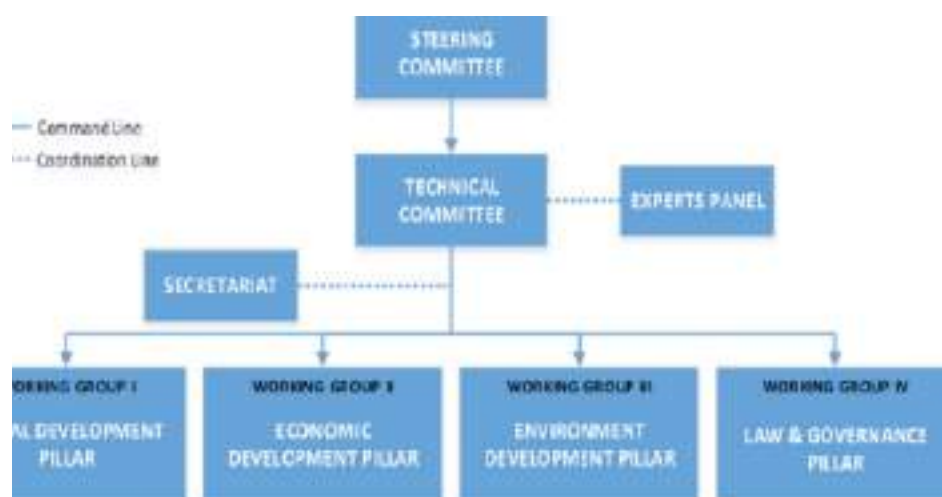
4) Coordination Mechanisms

There is a clear realization that the achievement of SDGs can only be realized with a sufficient level of coordination across the various stakeholders, including coordination across the various sector-based line ministries, across national and local level government institutions as well as between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Means to achieve such coordination at national and sub-national level have been developed in the countries in the Country Group C, while less is yet known about the results of such coordination.

In **India**, the National Institution for Transforming India (Niti Aayog), the leading SDG agency, has been conducting workshops, in which states and union territories of India presented their lessons learned and good practices in their SDG implementation so far. The contents of discussions are then published and shared across all states in the country as well as with central government ministries and departments.²²⁹

In **Indonesia**, the Presidential Decree on SDG implementation regulates institutional arrangements for coordination concerning the implementation of the SDGs. The President leads the SDGs Steering Committee and membership is inclusive to all relevant ministries. At the operational level, the Ministry of Development Planning (Bappenas) is the coordinator of SDG implementation, heading SDG implementation Team and overseeing the work of the four working groups formed under the implementation team. With the membership of the implementation team including representatives from the government, civil society organizations, academics, philanthropy, business community and experts, it is a means to coordinate across the various stakeholders in the SDG implementation process. For details see Figure 6 below.²³⁰

Figure 6. Structure of the SDG National Coordination Team in Indonesia



Source: VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017

229 VNR Report of India, 2017.

230 VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017, and Survey Response Indonesia.

The VNR Report of **Malaysia** included an important lesson on coordination across the various line ministries, in particular with basic development needs already being addressed in the context of an upper-middle-income country. For details see box 12 below.²³¹

Box 12. Lesson Learned on Coordination in the Context of Malaysia

“With basic development needs mostly addressed, the complexity of development has increased and its nature has become increasingly cross-cutting. The challenge therefore lies in breaking down the operational culture of working in “silos”, based on legal or defined jurisdictions. Responsive, flexible and collaborative systems and new work cultures are needed to move forward.”

Source: VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017

In **Mongolia**, coordination is underpinned by the Parliamentary approval of the Development Policy Planning Law of November 2015, which serves as a legal basis for policy coordination and for accountability for implementing long, medium and short term national and sub-national policies.²³²

In **Pakistan**, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform is working to enhance effectiveness of inter-governmental coordination and collaboration through the establishment of inter-ministerial and inter provincial coordination committees. The government has designated SDG focal points in line ministries and departments at the federal and provincial levels as well as in other government institutions to develop an effective mechanism for development of integrated policies and programs and for data sharing on SDG implementation.²³³

In **Thailand**, the government has established the National Committee for Sustainable Development as the mechanism to drive SDG implementation. Seventeen organizations were identified as the focal points to take responsibility for each of the 17 SDGs. These organizations develop specific roadmaps to contribute towards the goal of sustainable development over the next 15 years and they report on the progress of SDG implementation to the National Committee bi-annually.

In **Viet Nam**, the National Council on Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Enhancement was established in 2012. This Council has been designated as the inter-ministerial coordination agency in the implementation of the SDGs in Viet Nam. It is responsible for advising the Prime Minister and the government on leading and guiding the implementation of the National Action Plan and to provide recommendations on measures to ensure effective coordination amongst ministries, sectors, localities, mass and social organizations, business communities and citizens in order to effectively achieve the SDGs.²³⁴

In **Sri Lanka**, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife was established in 2015 as the responsible line ministry for sustainable development to which the regional development portfolio has been added since May 2018. The Ministry is the focal point for coordinating, facilitating and reporting on the implementation of the SDGs. A Consultative Committee on Sustainable Development was established, consisting of representatives from the public sector, the private sector, CSOs and academia, to ensure the consultation of non-state stakeholders in the preparation of the VNR report and beyond to the SDG implementation process.²³⁵

231 VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017.

232 Survey Response Mongolia.

233 Survey Response Pakistan.

234 Survey Response Viet Nam.

235 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

5) Relation to the Paris Climate Agreement

Climate change has been incorporated into the national development plans of most of the countries in the Country Group C, with a focus on both mitigation and adaptation measures and with attention to aspects of finance, technology, capacity development, transparency and accountability, participation and international cooperation.

In **China**, achievement of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) is related to a wide range of development strategies, policies and plans, including national and regional strategies, economic, environmental and social policies and plans as well as technological and international aspects concerned. For details see Box 13 below.

Box 13. Strategies, Policies and Plans to Fulfil the Nationally Determined Contribution in China

- Implementing Pro-active National Strategies on Climate Change
- Improving Regional Strategies on Climate Change
- Building Low-Carbon Energy System
- Building Energy Efficient and Low-Carbon Industrial System
- Controlling Emissions from Building and Transportation Sectors
- Increasing Carbon Sinks
- Promoting the Low-Carbon Way of Life
- Enhancing Overall Climate Resilience
- Innovating Low-Carbon Development Growth Pattern
- Enhancing Support in terms of Science and Technology
- Increasing Financial and Policy Support
- Promoting Carbon Emission Trading Market
- Improving Statistical and Accounting System for Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Broad Participation of Stakeholders
- Promoting International Cooperation on Climate Change

Source: China's First NDC Submission.

The **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** (DPRK) aims to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement based on the mobilization of domestic resources and international support. Their NDC includes aspects of mitigation through contribution to reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, while adaptation aims to:

"...recover degraded natural eco-environment, improve its function, establish economic, social and environmental structures coping with climate change and raise up adaptation capacity to negative impacts of climate change into the advanced level."²³⁶

The Prime Minister of **India** launched the International Solar Alliance at the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in alignment with the philosophy of 'One World' and the Global Partnership for the SDGs. This alliance aims to reduce the price of solar energy through enhanced cooperation among 121 countries, leading to standardization of solar technologies and boosting research and development.

236 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, September 2016.

In **Indonesia**, the NDC has been aligned with the SDG targets. In order to enhance awareness of the Paris Agreement, the government has mainstreamed climate change into the national and sub-national development plans. Five priority sectors have been identified to reduce GHG emissions: forestry and peat land, agriculture, energy and transportation, industry and waste. Those sectors are part of Indonesia's SDG targets. The GHG Reduction Action Plan supports coordination among the government agencies concerned, including the Ministry of National Development Planning, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Ministry of Marine and Fisheries Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Disaster Management Agency. In addition, Indonesia developed a national and sub-national action plan on climate change adaptation. The national report on climate change mitigation and adaptation is part of the SDGs implementation reporting.

In **Malaysia**, climate change has received emphasis since the 10th Malaysia Plan (2011-2015). The aim of its NDC is to reduce emissions intensity up to 45 percent by 2030 in energy, transport and industrial sectors. The 11th Malaysia Plan includes a transformative green growth strategic framework, in order to address the impact of climate change and to enable the management of natural resources in a sustainable way. With the recognition that climate change issues are cross-cutting in nature, within the interest of several line ministries, including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, a number of institutional arrangements were developed to enable coordination:

1. National Council on Green Technology and Climate Change (chaired by the Prime Minister)
2. National Steering Committee on Climate Change
3. Various technical working groups including mitigation, adaptation, GHG Inventory

The National Council coordinates across ministries and government agencies. Civil society organizations, the scientific community and the private sector are part of the National Steering Committee and the various technical working groups.

In **Mongolia**, the National Action Program on Climate Change was the first policy document addressing climate change in the MDG era and was approved by the Parliament in 2000. It has been updated in 2011 with the intention to underpin meeting the UNFCCC obligations and commitments of Mongolia through the establishment of national policies and strategies for sustainable development, strengthening social and economic sectors while maintaining ecological balance. The first phase of the updated National Action Plan for the period 2011-2016 has been implemented.

In order to transform the development strategy of Mongolia into an environmentally friendly pathway, the Green Development Policy was adopted in June 2014, with the implementation plan approved in 2016. This national policy serves as the basis for the Mongolia NDC, which Mongolia has committed to implement by 2030.

The government approved the livestock programme including climate change measures for animal husbandry, one of the key economic sectors in the country. Additional initiatives have been taken in water, forestry, desertification and arable farming. Mongolia's second assessment report on climate change was developed in 2014 and reflected the observed climate change aspects and their impact on the national economy and the livelihoods of local communities.

In **Pakistan**, the NDC has been prepared in collaboration with concerned government institutions to respond to the challenges of climate change. Legal and institutional arrangements have been made at the national, provincial and local levels. At national level the following have been put into place:

-
1. National Climate Change Policy and Implementation Framework
 2. National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Framework
 3. Establishment of National Disaster Management Authority and Provincial and District level Disaster management bodies

The Climate Change Council, the highest body concerned, is headed by the Prime Minister and has been established to support coordination between agencies concerned and with the SDG implementation agencies. The Ministry of Climate Change is the lead agency for implementation in close collaboration with other ministries including the Ministry of National Food Security & Research, the Ministry of Water and Power and the Ministry of Industries and Production. Climate Change focal points have been appointed in each ministry for coordination. Within the Ministry of Climate Change, the think tank National Consultative Group, consisting of experts from government, research institutions, trade and industries, civil society organizations and parliamentarians, has been established to advise the Ministry on issues concerned. To enhance coordination amongst donors on climate change issues, the Environmental Climate Change Donor Coordination Committee has been established under the leadership of UNDP in Pakistan. The government has been raising awareness on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change among civil society organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and citizens through several workshops, seminars and media briefings.

In **Thailand**, main plans concerning climate change include the Climate Change Master Plan 2015-2050, which consists of several strategies: climate change adaptation, GHG mitigation and low carbon development as well as capacity building for sustainable development. The National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan of 2015 focuses on development of provincial and local plans in areas identified as disaster risk areas across the country. A roadmap for reaching SDG 13 on climate change has been developed.

The Office of National Resource and Environmental Policy and Planning under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the focal point for the UNFCCC. This office often conducts seminars, meetings, workshops and training programmes for various groups of stakeholders to develop awareness and capacities on climate change. The National Committee on Climate Change Policy, a cross ministerial committee, is the national coordination mechanism for agencies related to climate change.

In **Viet Nam**, challenges and risks of climate change and natural disasters and the related international agreements of the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework have been integrated into national social and economic development plans and national target programmes. Consultation workshops were organized to increase awareness amongst civil society organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and citizens on the 2030 Agenda. With donors shifting their focus to global issues, including climate change and green growth, Viet Nam has received significant funding from international climate change funds, amounting to about USD 5.2 billion in the period of 2010-2014, the biggest amount regionally, which largely consists of favourable loans with a small percentage of grant aid including a small percentage of grant aid and largely favourable loans.

6) Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

Institutional Arrangements for Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

In terms of review and follow-up, countries can set up their own modality, as long as these are in line with the global principles set out for follow-up and review by the United Nations General Assembly. Many countries have started to develop modalities to be used in this respect. The SDG indicator

framework forms the backbone of the monitoring efforts with an important role of National Statistical In terms of review and follow-up, countries can set up their own modality, as long as these are in line with the global principles set out for follow-up and review by the United Nations General Assembly.

Offices who need to cooperate with other government agencies and institutions in terms of data gathering. Moreover, Supreme Audit Institutions play a role, with the international-level guidelines on audit preparedness for SDG implementation being developed. In addition to government agencies, civil society actors and the scientific community are being engaged in reviewing the progress of SDG implementation and in tracing development results that contribute to achieving the SDGs. Much of the effort so far has focused on monitoring the indicators of the SDG framework, which is a huge task, while a fair number of countries have conducted reviews, which are meant to be followed up in planning and programming.

In all countries of the Country Group C, monitoring, review and follow-up systems have been put into place. In some countries, such as Indonesia, use is made of the existing government monitoring system to assess the progress on SDG implementation. In other countries, such as India, specific arrangements for SDG monitoring and review have been put into place. Departments and agencies of statistics provide survey data, while line ministries provide management data to inform the indicator database. In some instances, the agency responsible for implementation of the SDGs is also responsible for monitoring, review and follow-up, as in the case of India and Viet Nam. In other countries, these functions have been more clearly separated, with different committees and agencies in charge, resulting in a more independent review system, as in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. For details see Table 21 below.

Table 21. Overview of SDG Monitoring, Review and Follow Up Arrangements in Countries of Group C

Country	Arrangements for SDG Monitoring, Evaluation and Follow-Up
India	NITI Aayog provides overall coordination and leadership, as part of its oversight responsibility and led the process of VNR. A multi-disciplinary Task Force is constituted to coordinate the review. The Ministry of Statistics coordinates monitoring with a high-level committee being formed, headed by the Chief Statistician, to oversee the national-level SDG monitoring.
Indonesia	The Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas) leads all activities related to implementing the SDGs, including monitoring, review and follow up in collaboration with other ministries and non-state actors and the National Bureau of Statistics, which coordinates the One Data System.
Malaysia	The Economic Planning Unit coordinates monitoring, review and follow-up with the Department of Statistics, and line ministries provide much of the monitoring data. A total of 78 government agencies were identified as data providers.
Mongolia	The National Development Agency works on policy coherence and integrated planning, while the National Statistics Office provides data on indicators, and the Government Cabinet Secretariat compiles sectoral administrative reports.
Pakistan	The Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms is leading monitoring, review and follow-up with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in charge of providing data on relevant indicators. Assessment of data availability has started.
Philippines	The National Economic and Development Authority , together with the Philippine Statistical Agency, are in charge of monitoring, review and follow-up. The Philippine Statistical Research and Training Institute builds capacities to support the PSA and other agencies to generate the data for the relevant SDG indicators.
Sri Lanka	The Department of Census and Statistics is the national statistical organization responsible for collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating statistical information needed to track the progress of SDG implementation. The Department of Project Management and Monitoring has established a proper monitoring mechanism to capture regular updates from all development projects through respective project directors and line ministries.
Thailand	The National Economic and Social Development Board , as the secretariat of the National Committee for Sustainable Development, leads monitoring, review and follow-up, with the Office of National Statistics serving as the focal point on data collection and the in-country SDG data hub. The board reports to the national committee on a bi-annual basis to inform the committee meetings.
Viet Nam	The Ministry of Planning and Investment is responsible for overseeing, assessing and consolidating information on the implementation of the SDGs and of the National Action Plan and preparing annual reports on their implementation to the government and the National Assembly.

In **India**, the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), chaired by the Prime Minister, provides overall coordination and leadership. As a part of its oversight responsibility, the institute has led the process of VNR preparation and conducted a series of consultations at national as well as sub-national levels with the participation of state governments, local governments, civil society organizations, technical experts, academics, international organizations and other stakeholders. From the sub-national level, state and union territory governments report their progress on the various programmes and initiatives. A multidisciplinary task force was constituted to coordinate the review, process and analyse information and develop the report. The process is supported by preparatory workshops of UN DESA and meetings by UNESCAP.

The government is considering setting up a high-level Committee, headed by the Chief Statistician of India, to oversee the monitoring framework for the SDGs at the national level. The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation is on the verge of completing an initiative to evolve national indicators to reflect the global SDG indicators. Disaggregated data is considered as vital to enable the formulation of effective policies for targeting disadvantaged groups and underserved geographical areas in the country.

In **Indonesia**, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up is conducted through the existing system of Bappenas, the central planning agency. The National SDG Secretariat has developed specific metadata for indicators, as it has identified 319 indicators to assess the progress on the 162 indicators of their present SDG monitoring framework. BPS-Statistics Indonesia has mapped out data availability, baseline data and data gaps in relation to the SDG indicators. In order to integrate data from BPS-Statistics and data of sectoral ministries as well as data from private and public sources, Indonesia has developed the One Data System.²³⁷

In **Sri Lanka**, the Department of Project Management and Monitoring has established a monitoring mechanism in order to capture regular updates from all development projects through respective project directors and line ministries. A web-based information platform is planned to strengthen the system through facilitation of online reporting and review. For the purpose of mainstreaming evaluation, the Department has formulated the National Evaluation Policy, making use of a wide-ranging participatory process, which is expected to be operational in 2019. This is expected to enhance the capturing of development project and programme outcomes for sharing lessons for future planning in line with the SDG agenda.²³⁸

The Role of Parliament in SDG Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

With Parliament's critical legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, their engagement in achieving the SDGs is increasingly recognized. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has supported comprehensive reviews of existing national legislative responses in member countries, in order to ensure that laws related to the Agenda 2030 are consistent with those related to the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. To mainstream the SDGs, parliaments might have to review some of their internal processes, such as setting up a dedicated SDG parliamentary committee.²³⁹

In Sri Lanka, the Parliamentary Select Committee for Sustainable Development was established to provide political leadership for the implementation of the SDGs. The committee consists of 15 members of the Parliament and is mandated to make recommendations on a range of SDG-related

237 Survey Response Indonesia.

238 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

239 UN DESA: Overview of institutional arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level, Issues Brief (Zero draft for comments), March 2017.

issues, including formulation of national policies and laws, allocation of domestic resources, funding through international resources, coordination amongst government implementing agencies, networking at national and sub-national level, reviewing progress, obtaining support of UN agencies and CSOs and sharing experiences among countries at regional and global level.

Current Efforts for Monitoring, Review and Follow-Up

Monitoring of the SDG-related indicators has started in all countries. Often an assessment of data availability has been made to assess the extent to which data is already being gathered on the SDG indicators and the availability of baseline data for indicators concerned. Data gathered on indicators has been used in VNRs conducted at the national level, a process which started in 2016. The first VNRs were focused on the arrangements made for SDG implementation, while from 2017 onwards, monitoring data have been included, especially in relation to the SDGs selected for review in the HLPF (see Figure 2 on page 13). Eight out of the twelve countries included in the Country Group C of the present assessment have conducted the VNR. China and Philippines were the only countries among the eight that conducted their review in 2016, while India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand did their review in 2017. Sri Lanka and Viet Nam conducted their VNR in 2018.

In **Indonesia**, mapping of data availability showed that, among the 230 global SDG indicators, data is currently available for 85 national indicators matched to the global indicators. 76 national indicators are used as proxy indicators to the global indicators and 75 global indicators will be developed, while Indonesia will not collect data for the five global indicators which are not relevant in the country context. Data for the SDGs will be disaggregated by socio-economic status, gender, age group and domicile, as well as administrative level, to enable addressing the 'no one left behind' principle.

Malaysia is developing strategic partnerships and building a statistical learning centre that will collect, analyse and interpret disaggregated data. An integrated database system will be developed to enable systematic data compilation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and sharing of SDG datasets and information across agencies and states. This is expected to contribute to more efficient and effective use of statistics, not only for development planning but also in communication of findings to the wider public. Assessment of data availability on the SDG indicators showed that 41 percent was available, 26 percent partially available, 16 percent requiring further development and 12 percent unavailable, with 5 percent considered not relevant in the country context. Malaysia is committed to develop statistical capacity to measure an additional 32 indicators proposed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in support of more in-depth thematic analysis on education. The VNR Report included relevant learning concerning indicators (see details in Box 14 below).²⁴⁰

Box 14. Lesson Learned on the Use of Indicators in the Context of Malaysia

"... there is need to balance the costs and benefits of monitoring every single indicator, especially with the 244 SDG indicators proposed. The challenge lies in framing the indicators right and measuring what is useful to help Malaysia pursue development that is sustainable, resilient and inclusive in the true spirit of the SDGs."

Source: VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017

240 Survey Results and VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017.

In **Mongolia**, an SDG indicator assessment was conducted by the National Statistics Office, supported by UNDP. The National Development Agency, leading M&E, is planning the development of a web-based SDG monitoring dashboard, in cooperation with the National Statistics Office.

The Philippines has been practicing results-based management in government programmes and has incorporated the SDG targets into national development plans that express societal and sectoral outcomes, which are expected to support the successful implementation of the SDGs. The National Economic and Development Authority, together with the Philippine Statistical Agency, conducted an assessment of the relevance, availability and feasibility of data gathering on the SDG indicators in the Philippine context. The Electronic Philippine Statistical Development Program is a web-based application that aims to facilitate coordination between data producers and planners and manage the data demands for the monitoring of the SDGs. The VNR Report of the Philippines makes explicit reference to the lessons of the MDG period and identifies good governance, a clear implementation plan and an appropriate data monitoring system to support the accountability mechanism as requirements for success.²⁴¹

In **Sri Lanka**, an assessment was undertaken by the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka to develop suitable indicators and identify baselines for measuring the SDG progress. The Department publicized the 'Status of Sustainable Development Goals Indicators in Sri Lanka' and launched a website with the SDGs indicator framework. The government, in cooperation with the UN country team, organized the National Symposium on Data for the SDGs in March 2018. This provided a multi-stakeholder platform to discuss the status of the SDG indicators in Sri Lanka and to strategize regarding improving data, knowledge management and ways to support evidence-based policy making.²⁴²

In **Viet Nam**, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, who oversees monitoring, review and follow-up, is expected to finalize the quantitative indicator database for SDG assessment by 2020. The Ministry coordinates on monitoring, review and follow-up of SDG implementation with other ministries, sectors, localities and institutions.

The Role of National Statistics Offices

National statistics offices play an important role in SDG monitoring and review as they are the agencies that conduct national censuses and national- and sub-national-level surveys that are vital in terms of data to assess the progress of SDG implementation intermittently.

In **India**, the Chief Statistician is considered to be appointed to oversee the monitoring framework for the SDGs at national level, as the head of a high-level committee.

In **Indonesia**, the National Bureau of Statistics plays a key coordinating role in the integrated data provision system for the SDGs, coordinating the One Data System. This system aims to integrate the data of the Bureau of Statics with sectoral data of line ministries and makes use of innovative approaches to big data from private and public sources. Moreover, the provincial bureaus of statistics play an important role, like in Riau Province, where the local bureau of statistics works together with the Local Development Agency in developing an SDG data system as part of a wider provincial data forum. This is aimed to enable the local government institutions to assess SDG achievement and to make use of these data to inform planning and related decision-making processes. Regional and local development information systems are used, in addition to administrative data from departments and their Ministries.²⁴³

241 VNR Report of the Philippines, 2016.

242 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

243 UNDP Indonesia good practices document and Indonesia survey response.

In **Malaysia**, the Department of Statistics has been appointed as the national focal point for SDG indicators, tasked with coordination, measurement of development progress and participating in the National Monitoring Programme. The Department led the preliminary assessment of the SDG indicators in January 2017, aimed to assess the availability and reliability of data for the SDG indicators and review data needs and methodologies, for survey as well as administrative data, from government ministries and agencies. Use is made of the 'tiers' framework proposed by the United Nations Statistical Commission's inter-agency group on SDG indicators.²⁴⁴

In **Thailand**, the National Statistics Office is the lead agency on SDG monitoring and is the secretariat of the sub-committee on Developing Information System for supporting Sustainable Development under the Committee for Sustainable Development, which is meant to support policy-level decision-making. Eight working groups support the work of the sub-committee. The National Statistical Office and other relevant agencies are tasked to expedite the implementation of the monitoring system by using the country's official statistics as the main database, collecting, compiling and developing additional statistical data and indicators and enhancing statistical capacity of relevant agencies and personnel to make the database and indicators for the SDGs as comprehensive as possible. Gathering of SDG indicator data is built upon accumulation and integration of data from different sources such as civil registration databases, reports, surveys and censuses, in order to address the indicators concerned.²⁴⁵

In **Sri Lanka**, the Department of Census and Statistics appointed a committee to study the availability of data on the SDGs for Sri Lanka, including those compiled by the department and statistical units of the department setup in other key department and ministries. Data that could be provided by the department proved to have its limitations, and a total of 131 indicators were identified to require data gathering to be undertaken by other agencies, with the need for other agencies to get involved in producing data for the SDG indicators. In addition to other departments and ministries, this includes research institutes, universities and private sector organizations.²⁴⁶

7) Public Administration Capacities for SDG Implementation

Public administration systems perform important functions towards achieving the SDGs. Implementation of the 17 SDGs requires new ways of working, new capacities and a substantial amount of commitment from public institutions and public servants. The public administration systems need to be able to support the integrated implementation of the interrelated set of goals, to identify and reach underserved groups and areas and collect and analyse relevant data and statistics on intermediate and longer-term changes. They need to do this while paying attention to aspects of transparency and accountability of their institutions, while at the same time being involved in multi-stakeholder initiatives and related decision-making processes. Many countries have been implementing public administration reform measures in order to reform and improve public service delivery, with special attention to reaching the poor and providing social services in underserved areas, contributing to SDG achievement.

In **India**, the federal government has restructured the framework of the expenditure budget. This restructuring process is expected to enable the government to monitor the results of different public expenditure initiatives in terms of their impact on the SDGs and undertake course corrections

244 Malaysia VNR Report and survey response.

245 VNR Report of Thailand, 2017, and Survey Response Thailand.

246 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

whenever needed. Sunset clauses have been introduced for all public expenditure programmes, to allow the government to divest from unproductive 'legacy' expenditures and deploy the freed resources towards programmes that will contribute to achieving the SDGs. In this way, the public financial management system allows the government to track expenditure flows in relation to objectives in real time, thus contributing to increased effectiveness in public expenditure management. These improvements in efficiency and predictability of public expenditure are aimed to play an important role in securing financing for the SDGs.²⁴⁷

Also, the Indian government launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, which is the world's largest financial inclusion programme. It aims to provide access to bank accounts and banking services including loans for vulnerable groups. By leveraging the programme, the government has been able to disburse a cumulative amount of USD 25 billion to 329 million beneficiaries through the Direct Benefit Transfers. This is seen as a major step towards enhancing the efficiency of government programmes.²⁴⁸

In **Indonesia**, the national health system policy covers more than 160 million people, making it one of the largest systems in the world. Implementation of a conditional cash transfer programme targets poor and vulnerable families through the Family Hope Program. The coverage of this programme has increased almost six-fold from 1.1 million families in 2011 to 6 million families in 2016, and it aims to reach 10 million families in 2018.²⁴⁹

In **Malaysia**, where poverty incidence at the national level has been reduced to less than one percent, the focus of the government has shifted to enhancing the quality of life of the bottom 40 percent of households, aiming to double their average income between 2014 and 2020 and include them into the middle class of households. The approach includes improving access to affordable housing, quality health services and basic amenities.²⁵⁰

Enhancing service delivery with citizens at the centre is one of the strategies of the 11th Malaysia Plan, which is aimed to be achieved through amongst others:

- Reducing public service bureaucracy and non-core services;
- Improving delivery process to increase responsiveness; and
- Expanding outreach of services with greater public engagement.²⁵¹

For the examples of innovative approaches to public service delivery in Malaysia, see Box 15.

247 VNR Report of India, 2017.

248 VNR Report of India, 2017. Critics of the programme argue that a large number of bank accounts has remained unused and that the access to credit has been limited, with the Reserve Bank of India reporting in 2017 that levels of unsecured debt through non-institutional sources such as money lenders remains high, generating high costs for Indian households. Thus, they conclude that 'the evidence presented so far does not suggest that the precarious conditions of indebtedness that poor people of this country find themselves in has seen any signs of abating as a result of the JDY (i.e. the financial inclusion programme)'. Dipa Sinha and Rohit Azad in The Hindu Newspaper, 29 May 2018.

249 Survey Response Indonesia.

250 VNR Report of Malaysia, 2017.

251 Survey Response Malaysia.

Box 15. Innovative Public Service Delivery in Malaysia

Malaysia has introduced Urban Transformation Centres (UTCs) and Rural Transformation Centres (RTCs) in urban and rural areas throughout the country. These centres provide a variety of government services for users in a single location, including immigration, passport and identity card services; car insurance services; processing of tax documents; road tax payments; requests for loans and scholarships for tertiary education; company registration services; and applications for vehicle licenses. These services are made available at locations and at times convenient to users, which significantly raised accessibility of vital government services as well as productivity of users.

The rural service centers, moreover, provide access to services of agriculture authorities reflecting the different needs of rural residents, such as veterinary services, agro-marketing, fishery services and agro-banking. More than 34 government agencies, private companies and NGOs partnered in the implementation of the UTC and RTC programmes. By September 2017, 14 UTCs, 9 RTCs and 2 mini RTCs were established.

Source: UNDP Good Practice Malaysia

In **Pakistan**, the Ministry of Planning Development and Reforms is planning to launch a series of awareness and sensitization programmes for public servants and designated SDG focal points to develop new skills required at national and sub-national levels.

In the **Philippines**, the government makes use of a performance-based incentive system to encourage government agencies and their employees to contribute towards sectoral and societal outcomes, with their performance assessed against outcomes concerned. Two types of incentives are given - Productivity Enhancement Incentives for civil servants with at least four months of satisfactory service and a Performance-Based Bonus for civil servants of eligible agencies. To be eligible for the bonus, the agency must satisfy the following criteria: 1) good governance conditions - accountability, transparency and frontline service provision; 2) performance - achievement of targets for the delivery of the Major Final Outputs; and 3) quality of management, budget utilization and submission of the Budget and Financial Accountability Reports. Performance assessment is informed by both individual and organizational performance. Once the results-based management system is fully in place, resource allocation and performance of government agencies and staff will be geared toward achieving results - i.e. outcome level changes.²⁵²

In **Thailand**, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has been applied to national development and public administration since the 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002 - 2006). The philosophy is the core principle in the current Constitution and the 20-Year National Strategy Framework and concerns an approach towards balanced and sustainable development. It espouses moderation, reasonableness and self-immunity as a development framework based on knowledge and virtue.²⁵³

Financing of the SDGs

The countries included in the Country Group C in the category of Middle-Income Countries (MICs) have experienced a decrease in their access to ODA and related grants, as has their ability to access concessional finance. This means that resource mobilisation needs to be adapted in order to obtain the financial means required for SDG implementation. This is done in a variety of ways, including tax reform, Public-Private Partnerships, attraction of FDI and prevention of capital outflows. Moreover, in particular

252 UNDP, Good Practices integrating the SDGs into Development Planning, Philippines.

253 VNR Report of Thailand, 2017.

for lower MICs, it remains important for developed countries that are part of the OECD DAC to abide by their commitment to spend 0.7 percent of GNI on ODA.

In all countries, the SDGs are largely financed through the budget for the national development plans in which the SDGs are incorporated. Mainstreaming of the SDGs in the national development planning processes has meant that budgeting for the national development plan includes budgeting for SDG implementation, with use of the existing public financing procedures for the implementation of the SDGs.

In **Indonesia**, the SDGs have been mainstreamed into the national development agenda, which includes five-year as well as annual development plans. This means that the resources to support programmes and activities related to the SDGs mostly are secured and sustained through the regular government budget. Priority programs and activities are stated in the national SDG action plan. This mechanism will also be implemented at the sub-national level.

The government of Indonesia is by law obliged to fund education and health at national and sub-national levels. These earmarked budget allocations ensure that fiscal resources are available to achieve health and education goals and objectives. Fiscal legislation, moreover, stipulates for the central government to allocate 26 percent of national domestic revenue as an unconditional General Allocation Transfer Fund to local governments. The main objective of this is to equalize fiscal capacities across the provinces to finance their development plans. Since regional and local governments are the main actors in delivering the SDG-related programmes to communities, the trend toward greater fiscal decentralization is conducive to meeting the SDGs.

Domestic resource mobilization is strengthened through the promotion of public-private partnership in the funding of strategic projects and development of banking services and increasing tax revenues. In addition, the government has tapped into resources from civil society, philanthropy and business, including the financial sector and pension funds. The most difficult part to get financed through non-government resources proved to be monitoring and evaluation of SDG achievements.²⁵⁴

In **India**, a path-breaking tax reform agenda is being readied, to optimize domestic resource mobilization. The tax-GDP ratio in India is significantly lower than the average for the 'BRICS' countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Thus, there is a considerable scope for boosting domestic resources by expanding the tax base. This includes direct tax reforms as well as the Goods and Services Tax, a uniform and simplified form of indirect taxation. Pro-active policy reforms have boosted FDI flows during the last three fiscal years. This has included opening up of defence and railways for foreign investments. India has, moreover, a large Public-Private Partnership programme. To enable the implementation of development interventions by sub-national governments, fiscal devolution to states has been increased substantially (from 32 to 42% of the central pool of tax proceeds). To prevent illicit financial flows and moving of profit out of the country, India, with support from the G77 and China, proposed stronger international tax rules and advocated for an inter-governmental tax body, which, however, has not succeeded so far.²⁵⁵

In **Malaysia**, the SDGs are financed through the implementation of the 11th Malaysia Plan, the regular government five-year development plan, which, in three consecutive phases, adds up to 15 years of the SDG period. In addition, funding is supplemented through collaboration with the private sector, NGOs, civil society and international agencies. In the environment sector, Malaysia is exploring alternative sources of financing through initiatives such as the Biodiversity Finance Initiative, Reduced Emissions

254 Survey Response and VNR Report of Indonesia, 2017 and UNDP Good Practice paper Indonesia.

255 VNR Report of India, 2017.

from Deforestation and Degradation and Payment for Ecosystem Services. Other resource opportunities explored include aligning the SDGs with the Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, encouraging social enterprises to take up SDG-related objectives and crowdfunding, with the latter successfully applied during the Ranau earthquake.²⁵⁶

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In **Thailand**, SDG implementation is funded through the annual budget allocated to government agencies, as the SDGs have been integrated into the 20-year National Strategy Framework and the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan. For the goals, targets and indicators that need to be implemented in an integrated manner by at least two agencies and are considered as important issues, covering all three dimensions of sustainable development, agencies can request for strategically integrated funds from the central budget, instead of submitting for budget of each line agency. In this way, the implementation can be interconnected in an efficient, cost-effective way, and duplication can be avoided.²⁵⁷

In **Viet Nam**, the budget for SDG implementation is allocated through the Socio-economic Development Plan and the National Target Programmes. The amount of ODA has substantially decreased since Viet Nam became a middle-income country in 2010. For the SDG funding, FDI is important, which has increased rapidly, since Viet Nam became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Overseas remittances are another important source, as is domestic private finance, which has sharply increased in recent years. Resources are being mobilized from the private sector and through tax reform and debt management. Emphasis is, moreover, placed on the efficient use of current resources, limiting public spending and enhancing public investment efficiencies.²⁵⁸

In **Mongolia**, on the other hand, there has been ad hoc funding for programmes on selected issues, but a systematic and effective funding mechanisms is considered lacking.²⁵⁹

In **the Philippines**, the government has used the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework since 2007, in which a three-year budget is prepared on a rolling basis, which translates strategic priorities into concrete programmes by allocating predictable funding, ensuring the completion of the initiatives. It makes use of a results-based management system and applies performance-based budgeting, aligning programme budget with agency mandates and outcomes and linking programmes with outcome indicators of the Philippines Development Plan and the SDG indicators. In this way budget is allocated to relevant and high performing programmes.²⁶⁰

In **Sri Lanka**, the need to improve and increase domestic revenue collection capacity has been realized, and action is being taken to simplify the tax structure while broadening the tax base. Poor revenue

256 VNR Report of Malaysia, 2018, and Survey Response Malaysia.

257 VNR Report of Thailand, 2017, and Survey Response Thailand.

258 Survey Response Vietnam and VNR Report of Viet Nam, 2018.

259 Survey Response Mongolia.

260 VNR Report of the Philippines, 2016.

performance has resulted in the government depending increasingly on borrowing to finance the budget deficit, resulting in the total annual debt increasing over 6% annually, standing at a massive 79.3% of GDP at present. In addition, Sri Lanka is boosting export earnings and FDI to bridge the savings-investment gap. Efforts are being taken to liberalize the economy in this respect, to facilitate doing business and to establish a single window for new business registration.²⁶¹

8) Challenges Encountered in SDG Implementation

Key challenges encountered in the countries of the Country Group C include constraints faced in monitoring, review and follow-up, lack of technical capacities of human resources in a variety of fields and limitations in financial resources.

Challenges in performance assessment include the lack of data, including disaggregated data that could inform identification of results for vulnerable group, in order to inform application of the principle of 'leaving no one behind'. Moreover, there is a lack of data sharing with NGOs and insufficient methodological support on data collection and analysis. Issues regarding human resource capacities are varied and range from ICT, environmental and cost-benefit analysis and e-governance. The lack of resources focuses on the wide range of issues covered through the 17 SDGs and the limitations of financial and technical resources to address all these.

Challenges that are mentioned to a lesser extent include coordination across stakeholders, sub-national implementation of the SDGs and process issues. In terms of coordination, the silo approach of government agencies is mentioned as a constraint as well as the lack of tools to integrate cross-cutting aspects across the SDGs.

Sub-national constraints refer to the understanding of the SDGs by local government and people, capacities required at the sub-national level and the need to have the goals make a real difference at the local level. Finally, the broad range of goals and the fact that some are unsuitable in specific national contexts are also referred to as challenges.

Challenges that cut across all countries concern the uncertainties and fluctuations of the global economy. This is of particular concern as most countries on their way to becoming a middle-income economy have become more integrated in the global economic system and are increasingly affected by economic uncertainties over which they have no direct control.

Climate change and its effects are another challenge that most countries face, although impact both in terms of type of effects as well as their severity would differ substantially across countries.

9) Capacity Support Required in SDG Implementation

In terms of support requirements, most of the countries in the Country Group C indicate that they require support on monitoring, review and follow-up, including data gathering, analysis and reporting and in particular support on working on complex indicators. This includes tools for monitoring and evaluation, training in data gathering and analysis, with attention to the complexity of indicators and the interrelatedness of changes across the goals and their targets. Development of capacities on

261 VNR Report of Sri Lanka, 2018.

reporting on the indicators and changes in the areas of economic development, social development and environmental sustainability is required.

Moreover, there is a need for capacity development on a variety of other issues, including policy coherence across the various sectors and agencies involved in sustainable development and in planning for SDG implementation. Particularly, it is essential to ensure that performance data from monitoring and review of SDG implementation is used in on-going planning processes and advantage is taken of best practices to promote SDG implementation.

An important field for development of capacities concerns the mobilization of resources, including financial as well as technical resources. The mobilization of resources will be critical for realization of the goals. Capacities in terms of financial resources include capacities to attract investment, including national as well as foreign investments, to enhance the business climate, reform tax systems and widen the tax base while maintaining the use of a social development perspective. Countries also require support in mobilization of technical resources. This concerns a wide range of issues, given the wide coverage of development aspects addressed by the SDGs.

An important aspect of SDG implementation concerns the localization of the SDGs, and many countries voiced their needs for support. This includes support to adapt the SDGs and their targets to the national context of countries concerned as well as adaptation to specific regional and local conditions, in particular concerning underserved areas and groups, fine tuning the SDGs to the specific characteristics and needs of social groups and geographical areas.

Support for South-South learning will be important, as there are a lot of opportunities for countries to learn from good practices and successes in other countries. The related support will need to focus both on the countries that need technical knowledge in specific fields and on countries that have developed good practices and gained experiences in reaching some of the goals and targets of the SDGs. This concerns in particular countries in the Country Group C, most of which have reached the middle-income status and have important lessons to share and could benefit from lessons from others to cover the gaps concerned. In this sense, South-South cooperation can become a truly two-way process, in which countries provide roles as both 'recipients' as well as 'providers' of learning and good practices. Good practices and experiences that are being shared need to be underpinned by solid data, including those of the monitoring and review system, to be able to support evidence-based practices and experiences.

10) Ways for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to Respond to the Support Needs

The recommendations for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG in support of SDG implementation in the countries of the Country Group C have been informed by the challenges faced and support needs identified by countries concerned as well as by the expectations of the UN support as identified by countries in their survey responses. Given the focus of DPIDG/UNPOG on governance, aspects of the preparedness of the public administrative mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda appear of particular interest (for details on challenges, support requirements and roles for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG, see Table 22).

- ***Support public administration development, in particular in terms of innovative approaches to enhance public service delivery and ensure access to services for all areas and people***

Regarding public administration, there are expectations in terms of support for public service delivery, in particular for innovative approaches including the use of ICTs for development. There is also an opportunity to support the broader institutional development of the public administrative

system and its capacity to implement the 2030 Agenda. This includes the means for planning and developing programmes as well as the means for reinforcing transparency and accountability.

Innovative ways to provide public services and enhance public service delivery is an important part of support to public administration development, given that in order to reach the SDGs, public services will need to be enhanced in all relevant sectors.

- *Provide support to enable the coordinated assessment of the interrelatedness of the SDGs and changes concerned in order to identify and support opportunities for synergies across goals and targets and to prevent that progress in one of the goals and its targets is related to negative consequences in others*

With the complexity of the SDGs and their interrelatedness, there is a need for integrated policy-making and programming, with the achievements in one of the SDGs affecting the results of other Goals and Targets. It is in particular the search for initiatives that create synergy across the Goals and Targets that will be important, with the avoidance of measures that lead to positive change in one goal but result in negative consequences in other fields of development. In this respect, it will be particularly important to provide countries with the means to balance economic, social and environmental objectives.

An important aspect of making use of the interrelatedness across the Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda is support to coordination mechanisms across the different types of stakeholders involved in their achievement, including government, civil society, academia, the private sector and media, with different interests in the various Goals and Targets. Through the application of an inclusive approach, taking into account the perspectives of the variety of stakeholders concerned, opportunities for win-win situations can be explored and promoted through a consensus-seeking approach.

- *Support for raising public awareness in order to enhance citizen awareness and participation in SDG implementation*

For the implementation of the SDGs, support and involvement of citizens is important, and government agencies will need to avail of the means to engage with citizens at the various levels of government and in the wide variety of Goals that the SDGs cover. Support from UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG will need to include the use of innovative approaches to public communication and engage people in decision-making processes on SDG implementation. The use of social media and web-based means of information sharing and the creation of discussion platforms will be important approaches to be supported.

- *Provide support to the development of new forms of partnerships between and across the variety of stakeholders involved in SDG implementation*

Given the complexity of the 2030 Agenda and the realization of the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation across stakeholders, UN support on partnerships is considered critical, with a need for the development of new types of partnerships across the various stakeholders involved in SDG implementation, including governmental and non-governmental stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. Support the development of modalities for partnerships that concern a variety of levels of involvement of stakeholders concerned, including informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering, representing different levels of engagement in decision-making processes with involvement ideally developing towards the empowerment level.

-
- *Provide support to the further development of existing monitoring, review and follow-up systems in line with the requirements of SDG monitoring, review and follow-up, with particular attention to the institutionalization of these functions and the organizational- level capacity needs as well as policy-level enabling mechanisms in place*

With the capacities for monitoring, review and follow-up varying across countries, there is a need to support the development of capacities concerned. This will need to include an enabling policy environment, the systemic parts of the monitoring and review system, as well as support to each aspect of the system, i.e. monitoring, review and follow-up on conclusions and recommendations concerned.

In order to start the support process, an assessment of present capacities, in terms of the policy environment, organizational aspects and technical terms will be required. Based on such an assessment, capacity development plans can be developed and supported.

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG support will need to include attention to the ability of the monitoring, review and follow-up system to inform the implementation of the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, which is of particular importance in an MIC context, in which an increasing number of indicators will be met at an aggregated national level, but not necessarily for all social groups and geographical areas. Thus, particular attention will need to be paid to the capability of the monitoring system to disaggregate data along relevant aspects of vulnerability and marginalization and to provide reports that analyse such data and provide relevant recommendations to address inequalities in reaching targets on development objectives for those left behind. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG will need to work closely with the scientific community, civil society and the private sector for the enhancement of monitoring, review and follow-up systems and processes.

- *Support the mobilization of resources tailored to the specific requirements of middle- income countries and the specific contexts of individual countries*

Given the comprehensiveness of the 2030 Agenda, there is a need in MICs for the mobilization of resources, in addition to the regular government budget. Given income levels and investment opportunities, there are various methods to achieve this, in response to the specifics of the country context and the economic development processes concerned.

UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG support for resource mobilization needs to include support to the development of a tailored resource mobilization plan, specific to the country context. This can include support by private sector agencies through corporate social responsibility, enhancing the tax resource base, national investment in the private sector and attracting FDI. Documenting and sharing good practices would be an important approach to share learnings.

- *Support for the localization of SDG implementation at sub-national level, adapting the approach to reach the Targets and Goals to the requirements of specific underserved areas and groups, ensuring monitoring and review of changes concerned*

The ‘localization’ of the SDGs and their targets has meant, on the one hand, to adapt them to the specific country conditions concerned so that the Goals and their Targets are realistic given the specifics of the country context. On the other hand, localization has meant providing tailored support at sub-national level in order to reach those areas and groups within a country that are left behind. While many countries in the present assessment have been engaged in the first type of localization, there has been less attention to localization to specific requirements of left-behind areas and groups, which are of specific concern in the context of MICs, where many targets have been reached at an aggregated national level.

Those part and groups of a country that have so far not been reached with regular government initiatives and social services are often unlikely to benefit from an enhanced effort to reach them through a mainstream approach. Often these areas and groups require specifically targeted and tailored approaches to reach the marginalized and vulnerable people concerned.

There is a role for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG in providing technical support to develop methods and tools in the identification of underserved areas and groups and the development of targeted policies and programmes to reach these. This will need to involve local-level authorities and participation of targeted groups, with clear means in place for monitoring of changes over time. This can be done through ensuring the inclusion of these areas and groups in the regular SDG monitoring, review and follow-up processes or to develop tailored means for monitoring and review specifically for the areas and groups concerned.

- *Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation, based on demands, playing a matchmaking role and enhancing learning exchanges across countries through regional and global platforms*

An important role for UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG includes support to South-South and triangular cooperation, based on demands concerned, in this way addressing capacity gaps in selected countries. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can support these cross-country learning processes by playing a matchmaking role, linking needs and supplies, making use of the UN knowledge about both the needs for learning as well as the good practices and lessons learned in the countries concerned. UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG can act as a facilitator in this respect, assisting with the connections between countries. Moreover, there is an opportunity to strengthen regional and global platforms for learning exchange, providing support to networks and communities of practice and providing opportunities to showcase results.

Table 22. Challenges, Support Requirements and UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG Role Identified

Challenges	Support Required	UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG Role
<p>1. Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data availability to ensure that no-one is left behind; Data gaps; availability of disaggregated data such as by age, sex and disability, complexity of an indicator assessment process at the global level Lack of data collected in the past/insufficient expertise on some indicators/no database addressing some targets and indicators appropriately Data sharing with non-governmental organizations Monitoring and evaluation system, integration mechanism for all sectors and authorities to integrate the SDGs into their development plans and statistical systems to evaluate indicators Insufficient information of methodology to collect and analyse information described in the metadata (tiers 2, 3) and Coherence in scope and definition of domestic indicators and those produced by Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators' (IAEG-SDGs) and duplication in some indicators <p>2. Human Resources Technical Capacities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building and institutional strengthening at all levels Weak and limited human capacity specialized in designing results-based policy designs and frameworks in all processes of SDG/SDV implementation Weak technical capacity to mainstream environmental and economic cost-benefit analysis Absence of tools for mainstreaming green economy and climate change aspects into national policy planning Lack of capacity building for human resources (especially at sub-national level) on e-government which is being applied at central level and will be promoted in the coming time; no specific strategy for ICT/e-Government as yet <p>3. Financial Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited resources to achieve all ambitious targets Resource mobilization (funds, capacity, expertise) Funding (system set up and retaining expertise) Funding to conduct research for ensuring cross-sectoral trade-offs and effects as well as undertaking extensive advocacy on sustainable development policy objectives Mobilizing adequate financial and technical resources <p>4. Means for Coordination and Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing 'silos' approach in national development and policy planning Absence of tools to integrate cross-cutting aspects of the SDGs into national policy planning Insufficient institutional arrangement in implementing the SDGs effectively and coherently Frequent changes and incoherency in policies and government staffs due to election cycles <p>5. Sub-national Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to transfer national policies for implementation to local authorities and communities across the country through their programmes, activities and cooperation How to provide information and knowledge of the SDGs, targets and indicators to all sectors broadly in order to make people understand the SDGs Capacity building on developing sub-national action plans How to ensure that the spirit of the 2030 Agenda trickles down to sub-national levels and makes real impact <p>6. Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building trust amongst stakeholders involved in the process Promoting ownership and participation Sustaining commitment of numerous stakeholders <p>7. SDGs themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad topics and scopes of the SDGs targets There are goals and targets that are not suitable for the country context or the development priorities of a country 	<p>1. Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools for M&E and reporting the progress of SDG implementation Training in data gathering and analysis of complex indicators Training on monitoring and reporting of SDG implementation and the SDG indicators <p>2. Capacity Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools to be used for ensuring policy coherence between different sectors at national and sub-national levels (i.e. mainstreaming green economy and climate change aspects) Capacity building of planning and M&E officers in alignment of SDG/SDV in short and medium-term policies, plans and strategies Learning best practices of effective institutional/ coordination/ implementation mechanisms for the implementation of the SDGs Training and capacity building <p>3. Resource Mobilization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilization of financial and technical resources Support for mobilisation of experts and funding in some activities which are complicated Support for mobilization of fund <p>4. South-South Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning about other countries' experience on SDG implementation <p>5. Support at Sub-national Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to LGUs to localize the SDGs 	<p>1. Public Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting innovative public service delivery and ICTs for development Institutional development Reinforcing transparency and accountability Innovative public service delivery Use of ICTs Integrated policy making, participatory decision making <p>2. Public Awareness Raising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative public communication on the SDGs, especially to raise public engagement in SDG implementation Engaging people in decision-making and implementation Raising awareness and advocacy <p>3. Partnerships Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing partnerships for development <p>4. Guidance for Monitoring, Review and Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines for VNR and annual reports to enhance comparability across countries and regions <p>5. Mobilization of Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for mobilization of funding <p>6. Sub-national Level Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for SDG implementation at the sub-national level

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Annex 1: Questionnaire for the Capacity Needs Assessment of National-Level Government Institutions

UNITED NATIONS SURVEY

Capacity needs assessment of government institutions to implement the 2030 Agenda and identification of priority areas for capacity development in the Asia and Pacific region and Eastern Africa



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG)

May 2017

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all Heads of State and Government at the United Nations in September 2015 (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>), with 17 ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core.

The present Survey aims to assess public institutions' approaches, priorities and needs in implementing the SDGs. It will help gather information on steps taken by countries to adapt the SDGs to national contexts, develop policies and action plans, mobilize and adapt their institutions, engage civil society, private sector, scientific community and people, as well as establish the framework for reviewing progress in the implementation of the SDGs.

It will be used in analyzing the progress in the implementation of the SDGs at international level, as well as for developing the training and capacity development work of UNPOG working in cooperation with other international and regional organizations and UN Country Teams.

The Survey is addressed to developing countries in Asia and the Pacific and Eastern African region. It is intended for Governments but the engagement of UN country teams is greatly welcomed. The questionnaire was prepared with guidance from the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DPADM/DESA). The mission of DPADM/UNDESA is to assist the Member States in fostering effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, innovative and people-centred public governance, administration and services for sustainable development. UNPOG, as a subsidiary project office of DPADM since 2006, is mandated to support the strengthening of the capacities of public administration to translate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into institutional arrangements, strategies and programmes at country-level.

The outcome of the assessment will provide an overview of progress thus far in SDGs integration in national development planning and institutional arrangements as well as of capacity needs and priorities of government institutions in developing countries of the Asia and Pacific region and Eastern Africa to implement the 2030 Agenda.

The survey may need the feedback of several institutions. Please feel free to provide answers from multiple sources and provide answers only to the questions you feel you know about. For any questions, please contact suh@un.org.

PART I
Integration of the SDGs in the National Development Process

1. Did your government ensure the adoption of new or updated legislation to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? If so, what was done and when were such texts adopted/amended? What actions has parliament taken in this respect?

2. Has your government set national level targets reflecting the ambitious goals and targets of the SDGs? What have been/are/would be the key challenges in doing this?

3. What steps is your government taking to integrate the SDGs and targets into its national level economic, social and environmental development plans, policies and strategies? What have been/are/would be the key challenges in doing this? What are those strategies and policies?

4. Please list your country's priorities in pursuing the implementation of the goals and targets as well as cross-cutting issues concerned, indicating any expected time frames.

5. What key challenges has your country identified so far for implementing the SDGs? Please, if possible, rank the challenges, starting with the greatest challenge.

6. Does your government take into account the challenges and risks of climate change or natural disasters, and the related international agreements from Paris and Sendai, in its national development plans or policies? How has this been done?

7. In response to the SDGs, did your government adopt any new policies or take any new measures (including budget allocation) to improve the well-being of the poorest and most vulnerable people (people living in extreme poverty, older persons, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, migrants and refugees, among others) in order to “leave no one behind”? Please provide details on policies and measures concerned.

8. What measures has the government of your country taken to ensure that its national plan, policies and strategies take into account the interrelations amongst the sectors or areas addressed by the 17 SDGs (such as poverty eradication, health, education, water, energy, employment, cities etc), including trade-offs and synergies between them? Do you feel your country is sufficiently equipped to ensure an integrated and coordinated decision-making process for SDGs implementation?

9. Has your government taken any measure or policy to improve public services in key sectors, such as health, education, job creation and the environment, as well as reaching out to the poorest and most vulnerable people, in particular since the adoption of the SDGs? Please provide details on measures and policies concerned.

10. What other actions have been or will be taken by your government to implement the SDGs or make progress in the areas they addressed?

11. Is there a link between your country's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Climate Change Agreement and your national targets and plans for implementing the SDGs? Please provide details.

12. What innovative practices for disaster risk prevention and reduction in your country can be shared with other countries? Please list them.

PART II

Public Administration and Public Service in SDGs Implementation

13. What is the lead government agency in your country for SDGs implementation? What are the roles/functions that this agency will play and how have these roles/functions been institutionalized? How does this compare with the previous institutional set-up for MDG implementation?

14. What steps has your government taken so far to update or review its institutional set up (beyond the SDGs lead agency) in order to support the SDGs implementation:

- A. How have the SDGs been mainstreamed across government institutions, including sectoral and other Ministries?
- B. What mechanisms for inter-ministerial coordination are used or have been put into place?

A:

B:

15. Did your government take steps to engage sub-national level authorities, including mega cities, provincial, district and community level authorities, in design and implementation of policies and measures related to SDGs realization (for example by encouraging the localization of the SDGs or the design of local strategies)? If so, what initiatives have been taken in this respect and what have been results and challenges so far?

16. What actions (if any) has your government taken to raise awareness of the SDGs among public servants and to develop new skills required at national and sub-national levels?

17. To what extent have sub-national authorities been enabled to raise the awareness of and engage with local level civil society, private sector organizations, scientific community and citizens? Please provide details concerned.

18. Which government agencies are involved in climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the Paris Agreement? What mechanisms have been put into place to support coordination among those agencies? And what mechanisms have been put into place to support coordination between those agencies and agencies in charge of SDGs implementation?

PART III

Mobilising Civil Society, the Private Sector, Scientific Community and Citizens

19. What measures (if any) has your government taken A: to increase awareness of Agenda 2030 among civil society organizations, scientific community, the private sector and citizens - B: to enhance awareness on the Paris Climate Change Agreement amongst the same stakeholders?

A:

B:

20. What institutional arrangements or mechanisms are in place to engage civil society organizations, private sector, scientific community and citizens in the design and implementation of the policies and measures related to SDGs achievement?

21. Has a curriculum for SDGs implementation been established in schools of public administration or in other educational programmes? Please provide details concerned.

PART IV
Resources and Technology

22. What changes (if any) have been made in the budgeting process and in resource allocations to reflect the implementation of SDGs at national level? What (if any) changes have been made in resource allocations to the sub-national level?

23. Has your government been mobilizing new financial resources for SDGs implementation and if so, how? For what parts of SDGs implementation is it most difficult to mobilize funding?

24. Is your government using information and communication technologies (ICT) for supporting implementation of the SDGs? Please list challenges and/or any innovative approaches for overcoming these challenges. Does your country have a strategy for ICT or for e-Government? Please provide details concerned.

PART V
Monitoring, Review and Follow-up

25. Did your country already carry out a National Voluntary Review (NVR) of SDGs implementation at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF)? What was the focus? IF no NVR has been conducted so far, is there a plan for one?

26. Has your government conducted any other national assessment of the situation on the SDGs and how does your government plan to review progress in implementing the SDGs? Please provide details concerned.

27. Has your government conducted any data mapping exercise for identifying data availability and gaps in terms of SDGs monitoring and review? Please provide details concerned. What critical gaps were identified in terms of data availability?

28. Does your government have any programme to enhance the capacity of statistical institutions and line ministries for monitoring, review and follow-up? Please provide details concerned.

29. Which agency will lead monitoring, review and follow-up? Please provide details on roles and responsibilities concerned.

30. Regarding the institutional arrangements for monitoring, review and follow up of SDGs implementation:

A: What institutional arrangements have been put into place to gather monitoring data from across Ministries and other stakeholders concerned?

B: What institutional arrangements for intermittent review of progress on SDGs achievement at national level have been put into place?

C: What arrangements have been made to ensure follow up on recommendations provided through review?

A:

B:

C:

31. Will parliament in your country have a role in reviewing SDGs implementation? Will Supreme Audit Institutions have a role? Please provide details on roles, responsibilities and arrangements concerned.

32. What institutional arrangements or mechanisms are in place to engage civil society organizations, scientific community and private sector in the monitoring, review and follow-up of the SDGs?

PART VI
**UNDESA Expected Role in Supporting Capacity Development Efforts of
Countries in Special Situations**

33. Please indicate two priority areas regarding SDGs institutionalization/coordination/ implementation where your government/organization would need support in order to effectively implement the SDGs (e.g. learning about other countries' experience, training, tools, support for mobilization of funding, partnerships arrangements, integrated policy making, participatory decision making, peer-to-peer learning, curricula on SDGs implementation in school of public administration, etc.)

34. Please cite one or two major areas related to SDGs institutionalization/coordination/ implementation where your country/organization has been successful and is willing to share its experiences with others.

35. What are the expectations and needs of your government regarding the role of the United Nations in capacity development in the area of governance and public administration in support of the SDGs implementation? Please provide details concerned.

Possible areas of support include:

- Institutional development
- Reinforcing transparency and accountability
- Engaging people in decision making and implementation
- Supporting innovative public service delivery and ICTs for development
- Developing partnerships
- Other (please specify)

36. What country specific documentation can you provide in relation to the SDGs implementation arrangements and processes? Please attach these documents when returning your responses to the survey or provide details on web link(s) concerned.

Details on who participated in responses provided

Please provide details on the Ministries, Government agencies, other agencies and designations of the

Details of contact person

Please provide details of your contact person who could be reached if any follow up to the responses in the questionnaire would be requested.

- Name :
- Title :
- Organization :
- Country :
- Telephone :
- E-mail:

Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this survey.
Your support is very much appreciated.

Annex 2: Questionnaire for the Capacity Needs Assessment of Subnational-Level Government Institutions

UNITED NATIONS SURVEY

Capacity needs assessment of government institutions at sub-national level to
implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of the
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)
&

UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the
Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG)

May 2018

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all Heads of State and Government at the United Nations in September 2015 (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>), with 17 ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core.

The purpose of conducting this Survey is to analyze the progress in the implementation of the SDGs at sub-national level, as well as for developing the training and capacity development work of DPIDG/UNPOG and DSDG/UNOSD of UNDESA, in cooperation with other international and regional organizations and UN Country Teams. The questionnaire targets government institutions at sub-national level, and aims to assess local government approaches, priorities and needs in implementing the SDGs. It will help gather information on steps taken by local governments in countries to adapt the SDGs to sub-national contexts, develop local level policies and action plans, mobilize and adapt their institutions, engage civil society, private sector, scientific community and people, as well as review, monitor and track the progress in the implementation of the SDGs.

The questionnaire was prepared with guidance from the DPIDG, in consultation with the UNOSD of DSDG of UNDESA. The mission of UNDESA/DPIDG is to assist the Member States in fostering effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, innovative and people-centred public governance, administration and services for sustainable development. UNPOG, as a subsidiary project office of DPIDG since 2006, is mandated to support the strengthening of the capacities of public administration to translate the SDGs into institutional arrangements, strategies and programmes at country-level. The mission of UNDESA/DSDG is to act as the Secretariat for SDGs, focusing on providing substantive support and capacity building to the 17 SDGs and their related thematic issues, including water, energy, climate, ocean, urbanization, transport, science and technology, the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), partnerships and SIDS. UNOSD, as a subsidiary project office of DSDG since 2011, is to support Member States in planning and implementing sustainable development strategies, notably through knowledge sharing, research, training and partnership building.

The outcome of the assessment will provide an overview of progress thus far in the SDG integration in sub-national development planning and institutional arrangements as well as of capacity needs and priorities of local governments in developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Please feel free to provide answers from multiple sources and provide answers only to the questions you feel you know about. For any questions, please contact Ms. Mi Kyoung Park (mikyoung.park@un.org), Associate Research and Policy Analysis Expert, DPIDG/UNPOG.

1. Has your city/district taken any steps or made any preparations to integrate the SDGs into local level economic, social and environmental development plans, policies and strategies? If yes, please specify such strategies and policies.

2. Has your city/district taken any specific policies and measures to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? If yes, please provide details on the policies and measures concerned.

3. What key challenges has your city/district identified so far for implementing the SDGs? Please, if possible, rank the challenges, starting with the greatest challenge.

4. Please list your city's/district's priorities in implementing the SDGs as well as cross-cutting issues concerned, indicating any expected time frames.

5. **Leaving no one behind** is the overarching principle for implementing the SDGs. Has your city/district adopted any new policies, programmes and initiatives including budget allocation to improve the well-being of the poorest and most vulnerable (people living in extreme poverty, older persons, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, migrants and refugees, among others)? Please provide details on such policies, programmes and initiatives concerned.

6. What are the main challenges in cooperation and policy coordination between national and sub-national governments in pursuit of SDG implementation? Has the central government in your country taken any steps to engage sub-national level authorities in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes related to the SDGs implementation? How do you rate the engagement with sub-national level authorities – sufficient or insufficient? And, how the engagement with sub-national level authorities could be further improved?

7. What measures has your city/district taken to raise the awareness of and engage civil society organizations, private sector, scientific community and citizens in the design, implementation and monitoring of the policies and measures related to the SDG achievement? How many organizations (by type) are engaged in this process? If possible, please specify the names/categories of organizations.

8. What changes (if any) have been made in the budgeting process and in resource allocations to reflect the implementation of the SDGs at sub-national/local level? Has your city/district been mobilizing new financial resources for the SDG implementation and if so, how? Please elaborate on whether the level/adequacy of such new financial resources could effectively contribute to SDG implementation.

9. Please list the main challenges your city/district is confronted with in applying information and communication technologies (ICT) to deliver public services and engage citizens for SDG implementation? Is your city/district applying new technologies such as big data & data analytics, blockchain, artificial intelligence and IoT to better deliver public services and engage citizens?

10. Does your city/district review, monitor and follow up with the progress of implementing the SDGs? What are the major means of dissemination of the progress of SDG implementation including newspapers, bulletin boards, citizen satisfaction survey and etc.? Does your city/district have a designated website for data/information sharing so that all stakeholders could be informed of the SDG implementation? Please provide any details if available.

11. What are the areas that your city/district would need capacity support in order to effectively implement the SDGs? What are the specific needs of your city/district for capacity development in: a) implementing particular SDGs; b) delivering basic services such as health, education, water and sanitation, and energy; and c) the area of governance and public administration in support of the SDG implementation?

Details of Respondent

- Name :
- Title :
- Organization and Country:
- Telephone :
- E-mail:

Details of contact person (If different from the Respondent)

Please provide details of your contact person who could be reached if any follow up to the responses in the questionnaire would be requested.

- Name :
- Title :
- Organization and Country :
- Telephone :
- E-mail:

**Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this survey.
Your support is very much appreciated.**

Annex 3: Details on Countries

Group A: Small Island States in the Pacific and Indian Oceans

country	region	sub-region(WB)	Specific Character: Landlocked Developing Contry	General Information(2015)							Economic Development (2015)			Social Development (2015)			Governance (2015)			Disaster Risk (2016)		Environmental Development	
				Population (million)	Income Level (WB)	Density (ppl/km ²)	Urban Population (%)	Fertility rate	Life Expectancy Female (years)	Life Expectancy Male (years)	GDP (Billion USD)	GDP per capita (current USD)	GDP Growth (annual %)	Human Development Index (HDI)	Gender Inequality Index	Under 5 Mortality rate (per 1,000)	Voice and Accountability	Rule of Law	Control of Corruption	World Risk Rank	World Risk Index (%)	Environmental Performance Index	10-year percent change
Fiji	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.89	Upper middle Income	48.8	53.7	2.5	73.4	67.3	4.4	4960.5	5.6	0.736	0.358	22.0	0.06	-0.43	-0.06	16	13.15	75.29	23.22
Kiribati	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.11	Lower middle income	138.8	44.3	3.7	69.5	63.0	0.2	1424.3	3.5	0.588	-	56.0	1.02	-0.16	0.25	164	1.78	60.48	14.52
Maldives	Asia	Southern Asia	-	0.41	Upper middle Income	1,363.9	45.5	2.1	78.0	76.0	3.4	8395.8	2.8	0.701	0.312	9.0	-0.50	-0.52	-0.27	-	-	57.1	22.17
Marshall Islands	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.05	Upper middle Income	294.4	72.7	-	-	-	0.2	3386.0	0.6	-	-	36.0	1.21	-0.20	-0.10	-	-	-	-
Micronesia	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.10	Lower middle income	149.2	22.4	3.2	70.3	68.2	0.3	3015.2	3.8	0.638	-	35.0	1.16	-0.31	0.72	-	-	-	-
Nauru	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.01	High income	623.8	100.0	-	-	-	0.1	8052.9	2.8	-	-	35.0	0.58	-1.16	-0.48	-	-	-	-
Palau	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.02	Upper middle Income	46.3	87.1	2.2	-	-	0.3	13498.7	9.4	0.788	-	16.0	1.23	0.22	-0.48	-	-	-	-
Papua New Guinea	Oceania	Oceania	-	7.62	Lower middle income	16.8	13.0	3.7	65.0	60.7	16.9	2268.2	8.5	0.516	0.595	57.0	0.06	-0.89	-0.99	10	16.43	48.02	15.93
Samoa	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.19	Lower middle income	68.3	19.1	4.0	77.0	70.7	0.8	3938.5	1.6	0.704	0.439	18.0	0.74	0.67	0.31	-	-	70.2	27.04
Solomon Islands	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.58	Lower middle income	20.8	22.3	3.9	69.6	66.7	1.1	1934.9	3.7	0.515	-	28.0	0.31	-0.54	-0.35	6	19.14	46.92	8.41
Timor-Leste	Asia	Southeast Asia	-	1.18	Lower middle income	79.7	32.8	5.6	70.4	66.8	1.4	1216.9	4.3	-	-	53.0	0.15	-1.18	-0.69	12	15.69	55.79	33.66
Tonga	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.11	Lower middle income	147.5	23.7	3.7	76.0	70.1	0.4	4098.5	3.7	0.721	0.659	17.0	0.68	-0.20	-0.45	2	29.33	66.86	7.94
Tuvalu	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.01	Upper middle Income	330.5	59.7	-	-	-	-	3295.0	2.6	-	-	27.0	1.10	0.34	-0.01	-	-	-	-
Vanuatu	Oceania	Oceania	-	0.26	Lower middle income	21.7	26.1	3.3	74.3	70.2	0.7	2805.3	(0.8)	0.597	-	28.0	0.72	0.03	-0.18	1	36.28	57.74	14.5
Comoros	Africa	Southern east Africa	-	0.79	Low income	423.7	28.3	4.4	65.3	61.9	0.6	717.4	1.0	0.497	-	32.1	-0.30	-0.84	-0.64	64	7.29	49.2	48.78
Madagascar	Africa	Southern Africa	-	24.24	Low income	41.7	35.1	4.4	67.0	64.0	9.7	401.8	3.1	0.512	-	50.0	-0.42	-0.69	-0.76	26	11.15	37.1	11.21

Governance Indicators: Percentile Rank 0-100; with 0=lowest and 100=highest

Sources:

General Information: World Bank, World Development Indicators at <http://data.worldbank.org/products/wdi>

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Social Development: Human Development Index, *UNDP Human development Report 2016, Human Development for Everyone* available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report>

Governance: World Governance Indicators available at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>

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Group B: LDCs in Asia and East Africa

No	Country	General Information										Economic Development			Social Development			Governance			Disaster Risk (%)		Environment	
		Region	Sub-region (WB)	Specific Character: Landlocked Developing Country	Population (million)	Income Level (WB)	Density (ppl/km ²)	% Urban Population	Fertility Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth Female	Life Expectancy at Birth Male	GDP (billion current USD)	GDP per capita (current USD)	GDP Growth (annual %)	Human Development Index (Highest development at 0.949)	Gender Inequality Index (Least inequality at 0.040)	Under 5 Mortality (per 1,000 births)	WGI: Voice and Accountability	WGI: Rule of Law	WGI: Control of Corruption	World Risk Index Rank (1-171) (1=highest risk)	World Risk Index	Environmental Performance Index Rank	10-year percent change
1	Afghanistan	Asia	South Asia	Landlocked	32.50	Low	49.80	26.7	4.7	62.0	59.5	19.331	594.30	0.8	0.479	0.667	91.1	16.26	2.40	4.81	41	9.50 %	37.50	21.24
2	Bangladesh	Asia	South Asia	-	161.00	Lower Middle	1,236.80	34.3	2.1	73.3	70.7	195.079	1,211.70	6.6	0.579	0.520	37.6	30.54	27.40	18.27	5	19.17 %	41.77	3.21
3	Bhutan	Asia	South Asia	Landlocked	0.80	Lower Middle	20.30	38.6	2.0	70.1	69.6	2.058	2,656.00	6.5	0.607	0.477	32.9	46.31	70.19	80.77	60	7.51 %	64.99	8.06
4	Cambodia	Asia	East Asia & Pacific	-	15.60	Lower Middle	88.30	20.7	2.6	70.8	66.7	18.050	1,158.70	7.0	0.563	0.479	28.7	18.72	17.31	12.50	9	16.58 %	51.24	17.52
5	Lao PDR	Asia	East Asia & Pacific	Landlocked	6.80	Lower Middle	29.50	38.6	2.9	68.0	65.2	12.369	1,818.40	7.4	0.586	0.468	66.7	4.43	25.48	19.71	100	5.59 %	50.29	8.52
6	Myanmar	Asia	East Asia & Pacific	-	53.90	Lower Middle	82.50	34.1	2.2	68.2	64.0	62.601	1,161.50	7.3	0.556	0.374	50.0	13.30	7.69	16.83	42	8.90 %	48.98	1.30
7	Nepal	Asia	South Asia	Landlocked	28.50	Low Income	198.90	18.6	2.2	71.5	68.6	21.195	743.30	2.7	0.558	0.497	35.8	33.50	26.92	35.58	108	5.12 %	50.21	14.53
8	Burundi	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	11.20	Low Income	435.30	12.1	5.9	59.2	55.1	3.097	277.10	-3.9	0.404	0.474	81.7	13.79	11.54	10.10	35	10.28 %	43.37	11.12
9	Djibouti	Africa	Middle East & N Africa	-	0.90	Lower Middle	38.30	77.3	3.1	64.0	60.7	1.727	1,945.10	6.5	0.473	-	65.3	9.36	18.27	33.65	34	10.30 %	45.29	36.17
10	Eritrea	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	-	-	Low Income	-	-	4.2	66.3	62.0	-	-	-	0.420	-	46.5	0.99	4.81	5.29	87	6.35 %	36.73	12.32
11	Ethiopia	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	99.40	Low Income	99.40	19.5	4.3	66.6	62.7	61.540	619.20	9.6	0.448	0.499	59.2	14.29	38.46	42.79	70	7.04 %	45.83	14.75
12	Malawi	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	-	17.20	Low Income	182.60	16.3	5.0	64.8	62.9	6.404	372.00	2.8	0.476	0.614	64.0	48.28	44.23	23.08	53	7.98 %	49.69	19.97
13	Mozambique	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	-	28.00	Low Income	35.60	32.2	5.3	56.8	54.0	14.807	529.20	6.6	0.418	0.574	78.5	37.93	19.71	20.67	44	8.69 %	41.82	11.79
14	Rwanda	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	11.60	Low Income	470.60	28.8	3.8	67.4	61.8	8.096	697.30	6.9	0.498	0.383	41.7	17.24	60.10	75.00	69	7.09 %	50.34	6.09
15	Somalia	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	-	10.80	Low Income	17.20	39.6	6.4	57.4	54.1	5.925	549.30	-	-	-	136.8	1.48	0.00	1.44	-	-	27.66	12.32
16	South Sudan	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	12.34	Low Income	-	-	4.9	57.1	55.2	9.015	730.60	-6.3	0.418	-	92.6	6.40	0.96	0.48	-	-	-	-
17	Tanzania	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	-	53.50	Low Income	60.40	31.6	5.1	66.9	64.1	45.628	879.00	7.0	0.531	0.544	48.7	40.39	39.42	25.48	57	7.65 %	58.34	31.19
18	Uganda	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	39.00	Low Income	194.70	16.1	5.7	61.1	57.3	27.529	705.30	5.1	0.493	0.522	54.6	29.06	43.27	12.02	80	6.52 %	57.56	22.13
19	Zambia	Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Landlocked	16.20	Lower Middle	21.80	40.9	5.3	62.9	58.8	21.154	1,304.90	2.9	0.579	0.526	64.0	44.83	47.12	43.27	66	7.25 %	66.06	30.76

Governance Indicators: per centile Rank 0-100; with 0=lowest and 100=highest

Sources:

- General Information: World Bank, World Development Indicators at <http://data.worldbank.org/products/wdi>
- Economic Development: World Bank, World Development Indicators at <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=world-development-indicators#>
- Social Development: Human Development Index, *UNDP Human Development Report 2016, Human Development for Everyone* available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report>
- Governance: World Governance Indicators available at <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>
- Disaster Risk: World risk rank and index, UNU-EHS, *World Risk Report 2016* available at <http://weltrisikobericht.de/english/>
- Environment: Environmental Performance Index available at: <http://epi.yale.edu/>

Group C: Low- and Middle-Income Countries

No	Country	General Information								Economic Development					Social Development				
		Region	Sub-region	Specific Characteristic	Population	Density (ppl/km ²)	% Population Urban	Fertility Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth	Income (World Bank Class)	GDP (billion USD)	GDP Growth (annual %)	GDP per capita (current USD)	Gini Coefficient (2013)	Human Development Index	Change in HDI Index 2010-2015	Gender Inequality Index	Health Index (2013)	Infant Mortality
1	Brunei	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	423,188	80.301	77.202	1.856	79.041	high income	12.93	-0.6	30554.7	na	0.865	1	na	0.901	8.6
2	China	east asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	1,371,000,000	146.058	55.614	1.569	75.986	upper middle	11,064.66	6.9	8069.2	42.1	0.738	11	0.164	0.851	9.2
3	DPR Korea	east asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	25,155,317	208.914	60.875	1.968	70.338	low income	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	0.769	19.7
4	India	southern asia	south asia	Developing	1,311,000,000	440.958	32.747	2.395	68.349	lower middle	2,088.84	7.9	1593.3	33.9	0.624	4	0.530	0.714	37.9
5	Indonesia	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	257,563,815	142.177	53.742	2.437	69.072	lower middle	861.93	4.8	3346.5	38.1	0.689	3	0.467	0.782	22.8
6	Malaysia	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	30,331,007	92.318	74.705	1.931	74.875	upper middle	296.28	5.0	9768.3	46.2	0.789	1	0.291	0.846	6.0
7	Mongolia	east asia	east asia & pacific	Landlocked	2,959,134	1.905	72.040	2.638	69.821	lower middle	11.74	2.4	3967.8	36.5	0.735	8	0.278	0.731	19.0
8	Pakistan	southern asia	south asia	Developing	188,924,874	245.077	38.758	3.550	66.377	lower middle	271.05	4.7	1434.7	30.0	0.55	2	0.546	0.716	65.8
9	Philippines	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	100,699,395	337.725	44.373	2.944	68.407	lower middle	292.45	5.9	2904.2	43.0	0.682	-7	0.436	0.749	22.2
10	Sri Lanka	southern asia	south asia	Developing	20,966,000	334.333	18.356	2.062	74.953	lower middle	82.32	4.8	3926.2	36.4	0.766	-2	0.386	0.835	8.4
11	Thailand	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	67,959,359	133.022	50.374	1.497	74.601	upper middle	395.17	2.8	5814.8	39.4	0.74	4	0.366	0.837	10.5
12	Vietnam	southeast asia	east asia & pacific	Developing	91,713,300	295.783	33.593	1.960	75.778	lower middle	193.6	6.7	2110.9	35.6	0.683	2	0.337	0.861	17.3

No	Country	Governance						Disaster Risk								Environment	
		WGI: Voice and Accountability	WGI: Political Stability and Absence of Violence	WGI: Government Effectiveness	WGI: Regulatory Quality	WGI: Rule of Law	WGI: Control of Corruption	World Risk Index Rank	Risk 2016	World Risk Index: Exposure	World Risk Index: Vulnerability	World Risk Index: Susceptibility	World Risk Index: Lack of Coping Capacities	World Risk Index: Lack of Adaptive Capacities	Environmental Performance Index Rank	Ten-Year % Change	
1	Brunei	26.11	92.38	82.21	76.92	67.31	73.08	7	17.0	41.10	41.36	17.40	63.17	43.53	98	3.58	
2	China	4.93	27.14	68.27	44.23	43.75	50	85	6.39	14.43	43.29	22.81	69.86	40.18	109	1.32	
3	DPR Korea	0.49	10	3.37	0	2.88	7.69	X	na	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4	India	60.59	16.67	56.25	39.9	55.77	44.23	77	6.64	11.94	55.60	35.79	80.22	50.78	141	-0.52	
5	Indonesia	52.22	24.76	46.15	47.12	39.9	38.46	36	10.24	19.36	52.87	30.09	79.49	49.04	107	4.97	
6	Malaysia	36.45	54.29	76.92	74.52	71.63	65.87	86	6.39	14.60	43.76	19.02	67.52	44.73	63	-4.01	
7	Mongolia	56.65	67.14	40.38	42.31	40.87	37.98	142	3.08	6.52	47.22	32.43	64.30	44.92	114	2.97	
8	Pakistan	27.09	0.95	27.4	29.33	23.56	23.56	72	6.96	11.36	61.26	35.04	86.26	62.48	144	2.35	
9	Philippines	51.72	20.95	57.69	52.88	42.31	41.83	3	26.70	52.46	50.90	31.83	80.92	39.96	66	2.50	
10	Sri Lanka	35.96	46.67	53.37	51.92	59.62	45.19	63	7.32	14.79	49.52	24.15	78.08	46.32	108	1.17	
11	Thailand	23.65	15.71	65.87	63.46	53.85	43.75	89	6.19	13.70	45.22	19.34	75.53	40.79	91	-0.35	
12	Vietnam	10.84	48.57	55.29	33.65	46.15	39.42	18	12.53	25.35	49.43	24.95	76.67	46.67	131	7.13	

Governance Indicators: Percentile Rank 0-100; with 0=lowest and 100=highest

Sources:

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Environment: Environmental Performance Index available at: <http://epi.yale.edu/>

 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



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