

Taking stock

The above summary of key findings and trends on progress being made on SDG 16+ reveals a set of challenges to, and opportunities for, building peaceful, just and inclusive societies. But from securing political will and sufficient financial resources, to marshalling the whole of government and the whole of society behind Agenda 2030, to ensuring that no one is left behind in development outcomes, **governments require support and guidance.**

This section **identifies the key factors and conditions that actors at country level consider necessary to make progress on SDG 16+ — highlighting both opportunities and challenges.** It is based on the key messages of the SDG 16+ Technical Consultations, the experiences recounted in the case studies, UNDESA and Global Alliance e-consultations on SDG 16, analyzes of VNRs and other relevant literature.

To motivate this discussion, two questions for stakeholders are posed here. The response is summarized both here and further elaborated in the following sub-sections:

Question 1: What do countries require to make progress on peace, justice and inclusion (SDG 16+)?

- Political leadership and financing to implement SDG 16+
- Effective links between justice, peace and inclusion policies and programmes
- Implementation and monitoring mechanisms for SDG 16+
- Political and financial investments in SDG 16+ data and statistics

Question 2: How can SDG 16+ advance the 2030 Agenda as a whole?

- Policy coherence in SDG implementation
- Utilizing human rights mechanisms
- Involving sub-national stakeholders
- Civic space and enabling conditions for a broad range of stakeholders to engage in consultations and partnerships
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Involving a broad range of data producers to address data gaps
- Inclusive data and data disaggregation to ensure no one is left behind



Political leadership and financing to implement SDG 16+

Stakeholders that have contributed to this report stress that **strong political commitment and leadership for building peaceful, just and inclusive societies is often lacking**. This may be because advancing peace, justice and inclusion involves inherently political processes. Governments and other actors must deal with the foundations of power in societies, especially those that are emerging from crisis and face major questions of legitimacy and accountability. As a result, many believe that **consensus on a national development vision within society is a key building block for accelerated progress on SDG 16+**.

Political support often needs to be combined with both technical expertise and financing. With the advent of the 2030 Agenda, the use of technical assistance (policy support, capacity development and country accompaniment) is being prioritized by the UN and other donors, including for SDG 16+ implementation. Especially challenging areas where technical assistance is sought include conflict-sensitive policies and programmes, human rights-based approaches, participatory planning and accountability mechanisms and the measurement and monitoring of peace, justice and inclusion. Much of this assistance is being provided from multilateral (international and regional) and bilateral institutions and from global and regional civil society. UN agencies, in particular, and especially in Africa and Asia, are the leading organizations in this regard. UN agency country programmes are particularly geared toward 2030 Agenda outcomes, with many of them focused on SDG 16+ targets.

“Meeting the “capacity challenge” will be instrumental to meet the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda and for the effective implementation of SDG 16+; and capacities should not only be built on policy coherence and integration, but also on inclusive and participatory SDG implementation and effective stakeholder engagement.”

(SDG 16+ Consultation/Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum, March 2019)

Increasing awareness and ensuring dialogue with people on progress on SDG 16+ is also critical to localizing the SDGs so that these improve people’s lives. The **media and civil society have a key role** to play in simplifying the language around SDG 16+ issues and ensuring that information on implementation and progress is accessible to all.

The UN is also helping countries to integrate the SDGs into national development processes through its “MAPS” (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) engagements. An especially important partnership relevant to SDG 16+ is the “New Deal” between the g7+ countries together with OECD-DAC donors that was endorsed, including by civil society, in 2011. The New Deal recognizes the nexus between peace and development and guides the effective engagement of actors in conflict-affected countries. Its principles include peacebuilding and Statebuilding goals (e.g., Inclusive and Legitimate Politics, Security and Justice, Economic Foundation and Revenue and Services).

There is a multitude of cross-country initiatives and programmes providing technical support to countries (both governments and civil society) across peace, justice and inclusion. These include the Global Alliance, the Tap Network, Pathfinders, 16 Plus Forum, SDG 16 Data Initiative and the Open Government Partnership, among others.

Although external financial resources may be required for some countries to implement SDG 16+, countries also need to take active responsibility for its development. Measures must be vigorously taken to enhance domestic resource mobilization and to curb illicit financial flows (16.4). Countries must also attract foreign direct investment and create effective financing structures, including through natural resources management and climate governance (SDG 13).

BOX 12. Sierra Leone: Strengthening access to justice

The government of Sierra Leone is committed to strengthening access to justice in collaboration with justice sector institutions, civil society and the private sector. Along with the governments of Argentina and the Netherlands, Sierra Leone is co-chair of the Task Force on Justice. This is an initiative of the “Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies” which aims to accelerate the provision of justice to people and communities outside the protection of the law, in line with SDG 16.3 and related targets on justice.

Correctional reforms

During the Ebola crisis of 2014-2015, courts closed and prosecutions dwindled. As a result, prisons became severely overcrowded. In February 2015, the unsentenced prison population was at 57%. A host of legal and civil society organizations come together to review the legislative framework and improve sentencing regulations. Their goal was to ensure the protection of those most vulnerable in the criminal justice process. They also sought to understand the challenges in the prison system, including the dire conditions endured by detainees. At the same time, and in partnership with the Correctional Service, these groups participated in pilot prison courts to handle a backlog of criminal cases. More than 1,200 criminal cases were reviewed and legal assistance was provided to 650 defendants in these specialized courts. 25 urgent cases, where pre-trial detention had lasted three years or more, were expedited to the Court of Appeals, resulting in the immediate acquittal and release of 24 defendants. In August 2018, these concerted

efforts brought the unsentenced population to 44%, although in December 2018 the percentage rose again to 47%.

Case management and data collection in the justice sector

Justice and oversight institutions have piloted innovative case management systems to enhance case progress and tracking. In 2016, the judiciary commenced the quest to identify a suitable digital criminal case management system. This followed three attempts to clean up existing paper systems, none of which had been successful. Among others, the judiciary chose Justice App5. Justice App5 was selected due to its user-friendly interface, low-cost and its ability to work off-line in remote areas suffering power shortages. This App can be charged with solar panels. Although this is the country's first-ever, electronic case-management system, the Chief Justice and Senior Justices recognize its potential for improving oversight, tracking and accountability. In 2018, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Correctional Service was formally linked to the Justice App. At the time of writing, process flows were being developed and tested. Crime sync is a pilot system being tested by the Police in Freetown to register all arrests and detainees electronically within the Criminal Investigations Department.

The Family Support Unit (FSU) in the police force has enhanced its crime data system to ensure it gathers disaggregated data to record SGBV against women and children. Such data can be used to strengthen evidence for effective prosecution and when referring victims to other services.

Source: UNCT Sierra Leone



Making effective links between justice, peace and inclusion policies and programmes

The various inputs to this report show that peace, justice, and inclusion are not only desirable in and of themselves, they also **depend on each other**. This is particularly true in fragile contexts, where justice is not only critical for sustaining peace, but also for furthering the 2030 Agenda.

Robust justice institutions can prevent conflict. The Freetown and Sarajevo SDG 16+ Technical Consultations recognized that the lack of access to justice, including transitional justice processes, can fuel violence and conflict, reversing gains made through development processes. Resolving legal disputes before they escalate into open conflict and — in the aftermath of conflict and human rights violations, promoting prosecution, facilitating truth, and providing compensation through transitional justice mechanisms — can enhance guarantees of no-recurrence.

Goal 16+ encourages governments to strengthen institutions, including multilateral institutions, **to tackle root causes and drivers** of phenomena such as poverty, gender inequality, forced displacement and the marginalization of people. Root causes include persecution, conflicts, violence, human rights violations, statelessness, gender bias, corruption, climate and environmental degradation and natural disasters. By looking at underlying issues, SDG 16+ supports a **preventative approach** that understands that **protecting and promoting human rights contributes to reducing the risk factors that drive conflict**. Indeed, the international legal framework of human rights protection provides a framework for a politically acceptable and legally protected space in which to address many of the issues that require attention in order for countries to be effective in conflict and violence prevention. In this context, transitional justice and advancing the State's ability to secure human rights are important parts of sustaining peace.

Efforts to increase access to justice noted in the Freetown SDG 16+ Technical Consultation included reducing court fees, decentralising courts and establishing small claims courts. Other measures include providing human rights training for police and prison personnel, instituting community service to decongest prisons, providing braille/sign language services and simplifying court processes. Ensuring access to legal aid services for sexual and gender-based violence survivors, particularly in conflict/post conflict situations, was also identified as a priority, as well increasing opportunities for female judges and legal professionals.

As with justice, inclusion can also contribute to positive and sustained peace. Efforts to reduce violence and promote peace must necessarily address inequality and exclusion. There are countries that are going through active and protracted conflicts and wars which have resulted in chronic fragility and social and economic trauma. In these contexts, dialogue, trust- and consensus-building, political settlements and reconciliation are sorely needed to strengthen social cohesion. In view of their eventual return, those who have left countries in conflict as refugees should participate in processes to strengthen social cohesion. Without ensuring peace in these countries, progress across SDGs will be lacking or unsustainable. In order to live up to the commitment of leaving “no one behind,” promoting peace in conflict-affected countries needs to be recognized as a priority. A

good example of this is the G7+ Council of Eminent Persons which was established to institutionalize different tracks of diplomacy so as to promote dialogue and reconciliation.

BOX 13. Argentina: Innovative responses to gender-based violence and expanding access to justice

Argentina has developed judicial teams who specialize in intra-family, sexual and institutional violence across judicial sector agencies. The aim is to ensure access to justice for a host of marginalized groups, including women, girls, boys, adolescents, LGBTI+ people and older adults. The law also targets people with disabilities, indigenous people and Afro-descendants.

In Argentina, 90 CAJs (Centres for Access to Justice) have been established to provide pro bono legal advice on civil and criminal justice matters. Over a two-year period between 2016 and 2018, there was a 149% increase in the number of queries received by the CAJ. 65% of all consultations were held with women, and the main issues addressed concerned access to personal documentation and certification (28%), social security (22%), and family matters (13.5%).

The Federal Network for Pro Bono Counsel has handled some 1600 cases. In addition, the Body of Lawyers for Victims of Gender Violence has registered 1672 lawyers to provide legal counsel specialising in the eradication of violence against women. Lawyers should undergo a Training on Attitudinal Transformation in Gender (TAG).

The first 'Hospital of Rights' was strategically located in Buenos Aires near a transport hub that is highly utilized by workers. There, people can access information, guidance, mediation and legal counsel on the diverse range of legal issues they may face.

Victims of crime have also been given legal standing in criminal proceedings and two new institutional structures for victims have been created. National Centre for the Assistance of Victims of crimes (CENAVID) operates in coordination with the CAJs and provides a toll-free number where victims can access specialized counsel 24/7.

The Observatory on Victims of Crimes analyzes the enforcement of victims' rights and maintains an inventory of good practices.

Argentina is also experimenting with novel techniques to prevent violence against women. The country has operated a successful pilot scheme which provides victims and aggressors of gender-based violence with electronic armbands. A monitoring centre checks the location of the armband wearers and alerts both the victim and the aggressor if they are in proximity of one another. The centre can arrange for police or other support to be sent to the scene if required.

Argentina is also improving the information it collects on justice matters. In 2016, the Ministry of Security and the National Statistics and Censuses Institute (INDEC) launched the first National Victimization Survey to collect information on citizen perceptions of violence. A Survey of Unmet Legal Needs was also carried out to understand the prevalence of legal problems as well as people's experiences in handling legal matters. An online case management software was designed for the CAJs — the Information Systems of the Centres for Access to Justice (SICAJ). This data base produces socio-demographic data on people requesting services, including information on the nature of the cases, the types of interventions that result and relevant outcomes. The Ministry for Justice and Human Rights also operates an online platform — Justice 2020 — where people can analyze proposals for legal and institutional reforms and make recommendations for how to improve the justice sector. As of the writing of this report, 56,764 people were registered on the platform and 7,000 online contributions had been made. In addition, 220 face-to-face meetings were held with 6,000 attendees.

Source: UNCT Argentina

BOX 14. Burkina Faso: Extending citizenship through inclusive policymaking

In October 2018, the country ratified the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and adopted a National Action Plan against Statelessness focusing on identification, prevention, reduction, and protection. As part of the implementation of the action

plan, the government organized hearings in several regions in collaboration with religious institutions. It allocated citizenship to almost 40,000 people.

Source: UNCT Burkina Faso

BOX 15. Benin: Preventing conflict

Through the establishment of the National Coalition for Peace and the Civil Society Organization Platform for Transparent and Peaceful Elections, community mediators are trained and available

throughout the country for the prevention and management of conflicts of all kinds.

Source: UNCT Benin

BOX 16. UNESCO: Creative Cities

Over the past few decades, the city of Bogotá experienced a noticeable rise in urban violence. With the aim of restoring social well-being and enhancing public safety, restrictions were placed on night-time entertainment, leading to a decline in live music. In order to **revitalize this once thriving music sector**, the municipality of Bogotá, through the Bogotá Arts Institute, created the DC Live Initiative. Since 2013, this programme has **fostered strategic**

alliances between public, private and CSO stakeholders so as to increase access to musical training, promote the mobility of artists and distribute local music. In addition to restoring and promoting live music venues, DC Live uses other cultural facilities, such as libraries and cultural centres, to **expand audiences** throughout the city, including in deprived neighbourhoods.

Source: https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/creative-cities/files/16_pages_villes_creatives_uk_bd.pdf



Implementation and monitoring mechanisms for SDG 16+

Goal 16 requires countries to strengthen context-specific institutional mechanisms to gather data, plan and monitor policy efforts and deliver outcomes. Some countries have established such mechanisms within existing institutions; others have created new ones. A review of the 46 VNRs produced in 2018 shows that 31 VNRs mention new or existing councils or committees to govern SDG implementation.⁶

“The implementation and achievement of SDG 16+ will greatly depend on local action and leadership, in coordination with all other levels of governance. While the 2030 Agenda offers the “what” — i.e., the goals to be achieved — open and transparent government has been highlighted as the “how,” as it supports the transformation of the objectives into local reality.”

(SDG 16+ Tunis Technical Consultation, March 2019)

Ensuring that there is coordination across different ministries in developing sectoral strategies, collecting data and reporting on progress is essential for fostering peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. However, monitoring progress on SDG 16+ at the national level also poses some challenges, as noted during the SDG 16+ Technical Consultations.

The “inter-operability” within national systems of data collection was raised as one such challenge. Even if a bureau is mandated to produce national statistics, the absence of institutional alignment within a country can lead to overlapping and contradictory data. Another common obstacle is a

lack of both staff and technological capacity for accurate data collection. In cases where data is available, it is often unreliable due to haphazard reporting processes and the inability to triangulate across different types of data. At the same time, the data is often not disaggregated with a sufficient level of granularity as to be useful in formulating policy or informing decision-making. There can also be a cost barrier associated with accessing data: some countries have limited quantities of public data, obliging the government to pay private sector companies to access their information. It can also be challenging for countries to match SDG indicators to national data targets.

“Reporting on government progress on the international stage is a powerful impetus for concrete change. But a ‘whole of government’ approach is needed to implement SDG 16 — this includes ensuring that there is coordination across different ministries in collecting data, developing sectoral strategies, and reporting on progress.”

(SDG 16+ Freetown Technical Consultation, October 2018)

Countries have approached these challenges in a variety of ways. The government of the Dominican Republic has undertaken a multi-year reorganization of its governance institutions to prepare a social and economic policy that focuses on social protection issues of Goal 16+. This involves designating a responsible official for each policy in the agenda and tracking updated information on social and economic development programmes across government institutions. The reorganization involves civil society monitoring of the programme and agreements with the private sector to provide technical training.

Costa Rica’s efforts to develop a national plan for the development of human security includes a coordination office that works across government institutions to collect data and decide on which topics to focus. In mapping its efforts to date, this body found around 170 programmes concerning violence prevention and protection. It then used that information to assess where resources should be focused.

Harmonizing the actions of a range of agencies across a national political system can be daunting. Reducing criminal violence offers a useful case in point. Governments need to address the needs of both the victim and the perpetrator across many agencies in the criminal justice system, as well as their needs within the health and social services systems. It is important to ensure that different agencies dealing with an individual are not just duplicating data or collecting new information without purpose.

To motivate institutions to collect and analyze relevant data, officials need to understand the benefits of collecting data and how it will improve the efficiency of their agency’s work. The Carisecure programme provides one potential solution. This organization works across ten countries in the Caribbean to design policies that can reduce youth involvement in crime and violence and strengthen youth as agents of change. The programme seeks to help institutions to capture and analyze data — as well as coordinate their data collection and analysis — to make targeted policies and interventions.

BOX 17. occupied Palestinian Territory: Approach to implementing the SDGs

The Palestinian government is committed to implementing the SDGs. Its National Policy Agenda, which emphasises putting “citizens first” and integrating human rights treaty obligations into the Agenda’s priorities, is a step towards SDG implementation.

The Council of Ministers formed a national team to identify sustainable development priorities and key, mainstream targets within the National Policy Agenda (2017-2022), as well as within related sectoral strategies. This team was placed under the auspices of the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), working closely with the National Statistics Team (led by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)) and the National Sustainable Development Forum. The PCBS developed baselines for indicators and adapted its data management structure to make more strategic use of institutionally produced data. To this end, a general directorate of “Records and Statistical Monitoring” was established to collect and format statistics extracted from administrative records of public institutions, and to combine these with survey-related data. Through this approach, the national team has been able to evaluate progress against key SDG targets, as evidenced by its 2018 VNR.

The Ministry of Justice leads the SDG 16 working group (SDG 16 WG), which is composed of a variety of governmental bodies (including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs), international government partners including UN agencies and key civil society actors that work in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (e.g., the Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council (PHROC), the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN), the Palestinian Centre for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA), and more). The working group has three sub-groups (“access to justice and rule of Law,” “anti-corruption and transparency;” and “public administration and institution building.”)

The working group has localized SDG 16 indicators. It supports CSOs to better contribute to SDG 16 in a timely manner by identifying and providing support for their organizational and technical needs. This body has also been instrumental in raising awareness amongst civil society and governmental institutions on the 2030 Agenda more broadly, and SDG 16 within it, including on the gender dimension of indicators. All of this activity informs the oPt’s VNR.

Source: UNCT in the occupied Palestinian Territory

BOX 18. El Salvador: Infosegura project to generate data

The Government of El Salvador is one of six countries participating in a pilot initiative to generate national statistics to help monitor SDG 16: the UNDP/USAID InfoSegura project. This initiative is coordinated by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the Community of Democracies (CD), with financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Together with a range of civil society organizations and the private sector, Infosegura helps identify the combination of surveys and institutional administrative records that can be used to monitor SDG indicators. At the outset of the initiative, El Salvador had data on only three Goal 16 indicators: 16.3.2.; 16.6.1. and 16.9.1. Information for a further two indicators (16.1.4. and 16.3.1) was achieved through the design and implementation of national surveys conducted with technical and financial support from the UNDP/USAID InfoSegura project, the General Directorate of Statistics and Census (DIGESTYC) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA).

Between 2017 and 2019, the Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) was implemented by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in order to collect information on indicators 16.1 and 16.2. This

survey was conducted by DIGESTYC, with support from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and financed by USAID. Information was gathered on the prevalence and impact of emotional, physical and sexual violence against girls, boys and young people from the ages 13 to 24 in El Salvador. The survey helps identify factors that contribute to risk of, and protection from, violence, as well as the health consequences of violence.

Further national surveys were implemented that serve as a proxy for global indicators, including two Culture of Peace Surveys for 2017 and 2018. The Culture of Peace Survey is based on the Latin American and the Caribbean Crime Victimization Survey Initiative.

The total number of Goal 16 global indicators on which El Salvador can now measure progress is 15. All data collected on the population of El Salvador is available through an interactive online platform: http://190.5.135.86/KPI_FORM_QUA/en/0/BSS.

State institutions involved in collecting data for the global indicators also examined how SDG 16 indicators aligned with the Five-Year Country Development Plan 2014-2019 (PQD, for its acronym in Spanish) and the El Salvador Security Plan (PESS, as it is known by its Spanish acronym).

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The efforts to implement the 2030 agenda, and in particular SDG 16, have involved multiple State institutions in El Salvador, which has fostered cooperation and dialogue between them. It has also revealed where institutions require further support to produce

adequate and timely statistical information. This experience has also made clear that political will is essential to align SDG 16 with national and sectoral plans.

Source: UNCT El Salvador



Political and financial investments in SDG 16+ data and statistics

The review of country case studies included in this report and the recent SDG 16+ Progress Report produced by Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)/Vision for Humanity demonstrates measuring Goal 16+ is politically, technically and financially possible. Moreover, progress is already taking place across a range of indicators.⁷ A review of the 46 VNRs submitted in 2018 showed that most countries provided statistics for at least some of the SDG 16+ indicators. Member States frequently reported that they had obtained data from a variety of different sources, hence strengthening the validity of that data.⁸ Of the 46 VNRs submitted, 42 reported collaboration or assistance from the private sector, as compared with only roughly 50% reporting such collaboration in 2017.⁹

In its report, the IEP reviewed the progress made by ten countries in measuring 44 out of the 56 Goal 16+ Indicators. To date, they found that only two of those countries had data for more than 75% of the 44 indicators. However, the IEP also states that:

'Most countries could collect the majority of extra data using extensions to existing surveys. In particular, Demographic Health Surveys (DHS) could be extended to cover a high percentage of outstanding SDG 16+ indicators.'

Political will is necessary to collect additional data. The IEP elaborates:

'Alterations to existing survey questionnaires, combined with better communication between departments who are monitoring and evaluating the SDGs and the continued implementation of [the NSDS framework], will enable a more complete measurement of the SDG 16+ indicators.'

Decades of conflicts leave behind chronically fragile institutions. The existing capacity of these institutions has been under strain due to the fragmentation due to lack of coordination and harmonization. Experience in gathering data against jointly-agreed priority indicators has provided challenging in many countries due to a lack of data. Lack of statistical capacity has further made it difficult to produce timely data that can support evidence-based policy. Going forward, nationally produced data is needed in order to identify gaps in statistical capacity.

The Praia City Group on Governance Statistics, which includes 85 members — member States, UN agencies, international organizations, civil society organizations and academia — is working to develop standards for measuring the often complex concepts and phenomenon at the heart of peace, justice and inclusion.

Official statistics are being produced within countries and across countries that can support the measurement and monitoring of SDG 16, including through survey programmes. The UN regional commissions have made significant efforts in supporting countries to generate statistics on global indicators. ECLAC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, has helped countries in Latin American and the Caribbean to establish a prioritized set of regionally-specific indicators for monitoring the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰

Of the 23 global indicators in SDG 16, 10 are survey-based measures. This is not a surprise, since many issues related to governance, peace, security and human rights require asking people what they think or what they have experienced. African countries have demonstrated that adding additional questions to, for example, National Household Surveys, can be a cost-effective and efficient method for gathering data on a range of Goal 16+ indicators.¹¹

Surveys are also useful for highlighting disparities across population groups. However, it can be a challenge to sustain the generation of data from surveys over time. UN agencies, supported by UNODC,¹² use established survey programmes to collect additional data, such as crime victimization surveys, to monitor victims' experience of physical, psychological and sexual violence over time.¹³ Additionally, demographic and health surveys can reveal relevant longitudinal information.¹⁴

In collecting data from a range of sources to monitor their progress in achieving Goal 16+, some countries are making efforts to be respectful of the human rights of those who have shared their information with data-collection organizations. In many cases, this means considering an individual's right to privacy and the ethics and legality of sharing information between data-collection agencies for different purposes, including social media. Indeed, there is a growing understanding that governments are accountable for the ways in which they generate and use data in light of human rights concerns.

BOX 19. Central African Republic (CAR): Collecting data in a fragile context

How does the government of the Central African Republic track progress on its National Development and Peace Building Plan (RCPCA)? Gathering data on the progress of the RCPCA is vital to understanding what works, as well as what needs to be improved, on assorted governance reforms. However, in a context of fragility, uneven State authority, frequent power shortages and limited financial and human resources, it is a challenge for the Government and sectoral ministries to identify data related to peace, justice and security.

Goal 16+ has helped concentrate data-collection efforts. The need for data and measurement in order to prepare the CAR's 2019 VNR on progress made towards achieving the SDGs has created a sense of urgency and awareness. The government understands that it needs to establish sector-wide data and statistics mechanisms for

the justice and security sectors and to connect these efforts to the governments' planning branch.

The Ministry of Planning is leading this effort and is working with government, civil society and UN family stakeholders from the rule of law community in the CAR to collect data on SDG 16+ indicators. A rule of law stakeholders' consultation in February 2019 acknowledged the gaps in relevant data due to a lack of reliable data collection and analysis mechanisms. This consultation also acknowledged the lack of coordination across sectors and the existence of different figures to measure similar indicators.

Stakeholders recommended using third party data to assess and report on progress on SDG 16+, including the UNDP/United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) perception surveys of almost 27,000



Photo: UNCT, CAR.

Central Africans on peace, justice and security, led by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI). Four perception surveys have been undertaken since 2017 in the CAR, as well as one in a refugee camp in Cameroon.

The challenge now for national authorities and other partners is to keep the system of data collection simple. They also need to ensure that no one is left behind because they have been excluded from data collected on progress towards achieving Goal 16. Data collection systems must be extended to the parts of the country that, in light of the recent peace agreement, will again come under control of State authorities.

The CAR national authorities and partners will also need to seize opportunities to adapt Goal 16+ targets to the national context. For example, in reporting on access to justice, Goal 16.3 commits countries to reporting on the numbers of victims of violence as well as the number of detainees languishing in prison for lengthy periods of time before going to court. A major focus of the CAR government is to fight impunity by prosecuting those accused of grave crimes with the Special Criminal Court. National stakeholders could thus develop localized indicators to collect data that reflect this sort of national priority and set their own targets concerning achieving justice.

Source: UNCT Central African Republic

2 How can SDG 16+ progress advance the 2030 Agenda as a whole? (SDG 16+ Interlinkages)

Achieving progress on Agenda 2030 requires governments to coordinate, consult, partner, and work across policy areas in an unprecedented way. It requires strengthened coordination between institutions at all levels (“whole of government”) and broader consultation with and participation by stakeholders in society (“whole of society”). Governments together with stakeholders need to design and implement innovative, forward-looking policies and programmes to reach the SDG targets to which governments have committed. SDG 16+ provides an important framework to govern the 2030 Agenda as a whole. **SDG 16 is thus not only a goal in itself, but also an essential enabler for the achievement of all other goals.**

SDG 16+ targets therefore need to guide overall processes to implement the 2030 Agenda. In fact, SDG 16+ targets can be used as a checklist when developing these processes (see guiding questions checklist in Annex 4).

The SDG 16+ Interlinkages approach not only guides countries on how to shape their institutions to achieve the SDGs. This approach also **shapes countries’ approach to humanitarian, development and peace actions, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected situations.** Finally, this approach **contributes to and complements** the people-centered, gender-sensitive commitments of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.¹⁵



Ensuring policy coherence in SDG implementation

The 2030 Agenda’s call for transformation requires that goals are not implemented in isolation, but in synergy with each other. In other words, progress on one goal should reinforce (positive externality), not undermine (negative externality), other goals. The SDGs therefore require coordinated work across policy areas. This requirement is explicitly articulated in SDG 17, which focuses

on strengthening the means of implementation for sustainable development, with a target (17.14) devoted to enhancing policy and institutional coherence.

SDG 16+ encourages a rethink of the institutional frameworks needed at all levels of government to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2030. The idea is to adopt a territorial approach to strategic planning, budgeting and monitoring. With its target on effective institutions (16.6), SDG 16 encourages and supports efforts towards policy coherence. More and more countries are implementing the SDGs with tools and approaches that contribute to bringing policy coherence to development planning. This is to ensure that the SDGs including SDG 16+ is not implemented in a silo, but is done with a good understanding of how SDG 16+ targets interact and impact on targets across the Goals. Nonetheless, several countries still emphasize that ensuring policy coherence presents a key challenge for them.

Examples of countries engaging policy coherence for sustainable development include Cabo Verde, featured below in Box 20. Cabo Verde has been implementing the SDG 16+ approach to rights-based inclusion and accountable institutions, which in turn impacts the achievement of SDGs 1 (ending poverty) and 5 (achieving gender equality) in the country. Cabo Verde's full case focusing on two areas of intervention: (1) the implementation of the national care system; and (2) the enhancement of transparency in public administration, can be accessed on the SDG 16 Hub).

In December 2018, the Mongolian government adopted a methodology for assessing policy coherence. Their case study is featured in Box 3 and the full case study may be found on the SDG 16 Hub. Their initiative requires each ministry to conduct reviews of all policies and programmes so as to align medium and long-term development plans to achieve SDG 16 interlinkages with the other SDGs by 2030.

Liechtenstein has also engaged in policy coherence efforts to achieve SDG 16 interlinkages. Through the Financial Sector Commission (FSC), the country contributes to the implementation of SDG 16+, with a particular focus on Target 16.2 and Target 16.4 (with interlinkages to Target 5.2.) Côte d'Ivoire has employed the Integrated model for Sustainable Development Goals Strategies (iSDG) to assess the potential achievement of the SDGs under different policy scenarios. In addition, some OECD member States have also put in place institutional mechanisms for policy coherence for sustainable development.

BOX 20. Cabo Verde: Improving oversight of public administration

A white paper for public administration reform was elaborated in 2018 drawing on the SDG 16 framework. Several measures were introduced to increase transparency and strengthen mechanisms of both internal external oversight of the public sector. The Court of Account, the General Inspection of Finance and the Regulatory Agency for Public Procurement are all being equipped with more

modern tools, legal instruments and training to yield better quality audits. However, the Court of Auditors' opinions have not yet been published and citizens still face obstacles in finding information on how to improve doing business and gain access to credit.

Efforts have also taken place to consolidate the national statistic system. Statistics are regularly published in the areas of demography, ...

health and poverty. However, the use of data in the formulation of public policy and the alignment of that data with the planning cycle and programme evaluation, particularly at sub-national level, is still weak.

At the national level, the budget is discussed in the National Dialogue Council and approved by the Parliament. At the municipal

level, budgets are approved by Municipal Assemblies. The Government consults civil society and the private sector in the preparation of the State budget and publishes the final budget on the Ministry of Finance website once it has been approved by Parliament. The Ministry of Finance also publishes its procurement processes.

Source UNCT Cabo Verde



Utilizing human rights mechanisms

It is important to translate the global aspirations of SDG 16+ into concrete steps for implementation at the national level. The principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ needs to ensure that human rights issues and inclusiveness are actively championed at the country level and that access to justice is delivered in all parts of the country. This also requires substantial investment in disaggregated data and generating a more active link to other human rights mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review.

Many of the SDG targets are already aligned with human rights standards. Where there are gaps, national development plans and SDG implementation policies should be aligned with a country’s human rights commitments. The importance of strong NHRIs is explicitly recognized in SDG 16 (indicators 16.a.1), which requires countries to take steps towards full compliance with the standards for NHRIs as set out in the *Paris Principles*:

“Aligning national development plans with the SDGs and human rights is not enough to ensure action; governments need to develop action plans with clear identification of those responsible, proper budget allocations, as well as key benchmarks and timelines.”

(SDG 16+ Technical Consultation, Cabo Verde, November 2018)

NHRIs are also critical to monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDG 16. This means handling and monitoring complaints regarding exclusion, discrimination and violation of human rights, including in the implementation of the national development or SDG priorities. NHRIs can promote responsible business conduct in line with human rights and SDG standards. These bodies have a key role to play in conflict prevention and peacebuilding by monitoring and reporting on human rights abuses, embedding human rights within conflict prevention/resolution/reconstruction initiatives and providing a platform for dialogue in polarized societies that are transitioning towards peace and justice.¹⁶ NHRIs also can develop strong relationships with National Statistics Offices to operationalise their commitment to leaving no one behind in the collection of disaggregated data on SDG 16.

NHRIs can contribute and support SDG (16+) implementation in multiple ways:

- They can advise governments on human rights-based SDG implementation to ensure that the most vulnerable in society share in development outcomes.
- They can support civil society and marginalized groups to engage in the process of SDG planning, implementation and monitoring.
- They can hold governments accountable for their human rights obligations.
- They have a role in strengthening, sustaining and complementing national protection mechanisms and systems that exert disproportionate power over the most vulnerable groups.
- They can provide data and help with data disaggregation efforts on SDG 16+ targets, such as non-discriminatory laws and policies (16.b, 10.3 and 5.1) and on cases of lethal violence, attacks and arbitrary detention against journalists, trade unionists and other human rights advocates (16.10).¹⁷ They can additionally help in ensuring that development policies target the most marginalized populations, including through analysis of “who is being left behind” and why.
- They play a key role in protecting human rights defenders.¹⁸

Human rights monitoring and documentation methodologies, which include qualitative indicators as well as context-specific analysis, are critical resources and complementary tools to enable a fuller understanding of whether States are meeting their human rights obligations. In this regard, it is crucial that analysis of progress on SDG indicators, including under Goal 16, is considered together with wider human rights reporting. The recommendations of United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as United Nations treaty bodies or the Universal Periodic Review, provide a valuable set of country-specific information that can be used for SDG implementation, monitoring and reporting. **National coordination bodies for Universal Periodic Review (UPR)/Human Rights reporting and SDGs/VNR reporting should collaborate to reduce the reporting burden. They should also avoid duplication in collecting, adapting and monitoring data on overlapping SDG and international human rights commitments.** Attention is also required to ensure that indicators do not incentivize action that would undermine enjoyment of human rights or limit the holistic and comprehensive approaches that are required to address development issues.

BOX 21. Uruguay: Institutional responses to combatting crime

The Ministry of Interior has strengthened the National Observatory on Violence and Crime. For the first time, it conducted a National Survey of Victimization and Perception of Public Safety. A National Institute for the Social Inclusion of Adolescents (INISA) and a National Institute of Rehabilitation (INR) have also been established. There have been reforms to the police law, the criminal legal system has moved to an accusatory model, and a new Code of Criminal Procedure has been developed to speed up the criminal process, limit preventive detention and provide legal guarantees for victims.

In light of the increase in allegations of domestic violence and female homicides in recent years, the government has developed an Action Plan to Combat Gender Violence 2016-2019.

The National Human Rights Institution (INDDHH) began to operate in 2012 and in 2016 it achieved level A accreditation. This is the designated National Prevention Mechanism against Torture in accordance with article 83 of the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture.

Source: UNCT Uruguay



Involving sub-national stakeholders

“To unlock the full potential of all local actors, strategies to strengthen their capacities need to be tailored to local contexts and priorities.”

(SDG 16+ Tunis Technical Consultation, March 2019)

National governments stress that they cannot tackle the whole 2030 Agenda alone and indeed a ‘whole of government’ approach to achieving the SDGs is required. Indeed as stressed by the UN Secretary General in his Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Agenda, *“many of the investments to achieve the sustainable development goals will take place at the sub-national level and be led by local authorities.”*¹⁹

Local and regional governments have been part of the dialogues and consultations for the SDGs and have advocated for the role of local and regional governments to be recognized in the goals. Not only are these actors reflected in SDG 11, but 65% of all SDG targets require local and regional government action.

Local and regional governments have the responsibility for delivering basic services and public goods, including peacebuilding initiatives and sustainable and inclusive economic development. Institutions at the local and regional level can gain increased importance in situations of insecurity, conflict or lack of trust in national governments (or where there is no functioning central government). In this way, SDG 16+ is seen as an important accelerator of the SDGs at the local level.

Local efforts towards open government are further seen as an opportunity to support inclusive SDG implementation through initiatives focused on increasing transparency in budget information. Access to public information is essential for the work carried out by local authorities. In implementing and monitoring SDG 16+ policy efforts, local authorities need to maintain their own statistical information. Mechanisms are required to harmonize and share data between the local and national levels. The Technical Consultation in Tunis provided examples of local authorities’ experiments with collecting data to inform and monitor policy efforts.

Increasing the role of local government in implementing SDG 16 also provides platforms for dialogue amongst local stakeholders. This includes civil society, the private sector, media, academia and ordinary people —especially youth, women and vulnerable groups — who can collaboratively engage in participatory consultations. These consultations can reflect these diverse voices and meet their needs so as to build trust at the local level, foster social cohesion and deliver necessary services.

There are challenges and opportunities for local authorities in adapting, implementing, monitoring and reporting on Goal 16+. Depending on the country and its constitutional structure, local authorities will have varying levels of legal authority. At the Technical Consultation in Tunisia, some countries raised the issue of local authorities requiring formal legal authority to work on some of the targets of SDG 16+. They may also require financial incentives to fund policy efforts on SDG 16+ targets within their communities.

BOX 22. Benin: Strengthening local governance

Benin is reorganizing its governance structures to make sure decisions are taken, and authorities accountable, at the local level. Eight Ministries (out of 22) have developed decentralization and deconcentration plans to transfer competences to the communities.

A Local Governance Index has been designed to assess annually the quality of governance in Benin's 77 municipalities. Local and regional authorities are obliged to organize 'accountability sessions' in every community.

Source: UNCT Benin

Without localized data, ensuring that no one is left behind will also become increasingly difficult. The report on VNRs by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in 2018 found that few countries have made real progress in involving local and regional governments (LRGs) in improving the availability of reliable, disaggregated and place-based data. In some areas, LRGs are launching initiatives to collect data on the ground that is aligned to the agenda. However, there is a need for stronger support to fully disaggregate and localize this data as well as to set up long-term monitoring systems. Co-production of data and collaboration with NGOs and CSOs should be supported and efforts made to advocate for the official recognition of different data sources that can contribute to the overall monitoring of the SDGs.

In 2018, the first Local and regional Government Forum at the HLPF brought mayors and governors concerns to the HLPF stage. They emphasised that accelerating and scaling-up the implementation of the SDGs meant providing access to data and financing. It also meant access to capacity-building to continue localizing sustainable strategies where these are most needed, particularly on climate action. The first VLR was also presented by New York City during the HLPF and increasing numbers of local and regional governments are putting together their own reports.

The Local Government Performance Index (LGPI) has been piloted in Tunisia. It maps the institutional strengths and weaknesses of several public services from the citizen's perspective, with a focus on issue areas such as Education, Health, Physical Security and Dispute Resolution, Social Assistance and Welfare, Citizen-State Linkages and Corruption, and Social Composition and Culture. Such information helps governments identify what needs to be fixed and how to design as well as implement policy change.²⁰

The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Administration Performance Index (PAPI) also measures citizens views of public administration performance.²¹ From 2012 to 2017, the majority of provinces saw a positive change in public service delivery.

Local authorities are challenged to design and facilitate the kind of inclusive and participatory decision-making processes encouraged by Goal 16+. The participation of all local people, including those living in the locality without residence or citizenship status, requires systematic organization and resources. However, good examples exist of local, inclusive and participatory budgeting initiatives and decision-making processes.

BOX 23. Scotland: Community empowerment

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act was passed in 2015. It created new rights for community bodies and new duties for public authorities, with the aim of strengthening the voices of communities in the decisions that matter to them. This includes formal Participation Requests — a formal mechanism that enable community bodies to request dialogue with public service providers when they feel these can help, and gives the community bodies a right to be heard. Participation Requests also provide a mechanism to support the ownership and control of under-used public buildings and land by local communities, to furnish activities and services to meet local needs, and to boost community cohesion and identity.

To support engagement, a set of National Standards for Community Engagement have been developed with civil society. Additionally, as part of Scotland's Open Government Action Plan 2018-20, a Participation Framework enables public servants to find the right tools and techniques, and to build the confidence and competence, to work for all sectors of society effectively. A summary of the action plan is published here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-open-government-action-plan-2018-20/>. The full detail of all commitments is published here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-open-government-action-plan-2018-20-detailed-commitments/pages/6/>.

Understanding your Place

Following recent legislation on health and social care, community empowerment and land planning, the Scottish Government has encouraged the development of locality and community plans. To support that work, a Place Standard Tool has been designed so that people can assess the quality of a place in order to help to support health, well-being and a high quality of life. This tool was created through a collaboration between Scottish Government, National Health Scotland (NHS), and Architecture and Design Scotland. Its focus is on tackling inequalities, particularly health inequalities. The tool can be found at Place Standard, and it provides a framework for conversations about place which allows individuals and groups to start setting priorities for future action. The tool consists of 14 easy-to-understand questions that cover both the physical and social elements of a place. It has been used widely by communities across Scotland, as well as by local authorities, third sector organizations and business. Every Scottish local authority now has a nominated Place Standard Lead.

Data to support localized decision-making

Finally, for local decision-making to be meaningful, the Scottish Government recognizes the importance of sharing information and data. To better support localized decision-making, an open data portal, statistics.gov.scot, provides information on communities in geographic units (called data zones).

Source: www.gov.scot

Civil society groups from across the Asia-Pacific and beyond met at the Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum in early 2019. They issued 'The Ulaanbaatar Declaration on peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies.'²² This document calls for mechanisms to strengthen civil society involvement in realizing the SDGs, which is often most active at the grassroots and at local level. The Declaration proposes that the participation of sub-national and local governments — and thereby civil society organizations — is strengthened by creating a mechanism for 'Voluntary Local Review' (VLR) alongside the current Voluntary National Review (VNR), which is designed mainly for national governments. The UCLG Report to the 2018 HLPF, 'Towards the Localization of the SDGs,'²³ notes that in many countries, mobilization of local and regional governments has been fostered through strategic alliances with civil society organizations, the private sector and academia. Cities are bringing together a multiplicity of stakeholders to address interlinked and cross-cutting issues, as well as to pilot innovative solutions that could later be scaled up both nationally and internationally.

BOX 24. United Cities and Local government (UCLG): Education, cultural policies and initiatives developed at the sub-national level for the promotion of peace

Association of Netherlands Municipalities International (VNGi) — Eastern Ukraine State Building and Accountability project (EUSTAB). Since 2016, VNG International has been working in East Ukraine with local authorities and civil society on social cohesion, strengthening a common national identity and increasing the trust of citizens in local and national governments. In the past few years, Eastern Ukraine has been struggling with an ongoing armed conflict, a large amount of internally displaced persons (IDPs), a weak economy and a deeply damaged social infrastructure. Local governments, civil society, IDPs and citizens in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions have worked closely with local and regional authorities to support the reintegration of IDPs and to rebuild the social infrastructure and connections between cities in the region. The programme supported selected local authorities and CSOs to implement local pilot initiatives which included supporting public libraries and public art, revitalising the dialogue between local residents and IDPs to help reduce tensions and capacity-building of CSOs and young leaders to support citizens to be socially engaged.

Barcelona has pioneered a fight against corruption in Spain by establishing an innovative mechanism to enable people to anonymously report corruption or illicit practices in local administration (*Bústia ètica i de Bon Govern* 26) (SDGs 16.5 & 16.6). The city

has also issued local identity cards to migrants and made it easier for migrants to register in order to access and enforce their economic, social and human rights. SDG 16.B stipulates the provision of legal and psycho-social support for victims of discrimination, as well as strategic litigation and supports rights awareness-raising initiatives. Barcelona has also a long-established, local human rights office which specializes in non-discrimination.

Seoul promotes access to justice (SDG 16.3) by partnering with the local bar association and the District Attorney's office to monitor human rights violations. The city has also put in place a "City Jury System" wherein citizens judge human rights violations outside of court (SDG 16.7.) It has also enacted a "Human Rights Protection Group at Demolition Sites" to protect residents and prevent violence in case of evictions on urban development processes (SDG 16.1).

Bogotá has a local ombudsperson (*Veeduría Distrital*) that is responsible for promoting open government, accountable government and transparency in the relations between citizens and the local administration (SDGs 16.3, 16.6, 16.7 & 16.10). The Veeduría Distrital works mainly on anti-corruption programmes (SDG 16.5), detecting risks of corruption that could prevent citizens from enjoying open and accountable local administration.

Source: UCLG



Civic space for consultations and partnerships

"One of the main principles of SDG 16 is inclusivity; working together — the peripheral reach and grassroot connections of civil society, the advanced technology and entrepreneurial spirit of business, and the political influence and technical expertise of governments — can be an unstoppable force for positive change."

(Freetown SDG 16+ Technical Consultation, October 2018)

Ultimately, the aim of stakeholder engagement in the 2030 Agenda is to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels of society. Ensuring participation and inclusiveness in decision-making is valuable from a human rights perspective. It also adds a procedural dimension to the principle of "leaving no one behind" by ensuring that those at risk of being overlooked have a voice in government decisions that affect them. Finally, people-centered service delivery is critical to all the SDGs: from accessing education and health, to reducing inequality, to ensuring security, justice and the rule of law. In all of these policy spheres, the role

of transparency and access to information are pre-conditions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs as a whole.²⁴

Stakeholder engagement revolves around governments engaging local authorities, parliaments, civil society and the private sector and ensuring that “no one is left behind.” Countries that have taken steps to foster ownership of the SDGs at the local level include Benin, Brazil, Colombia, Finland, Honduras, Indonesia, Mexico, Uruguay, for example. Parliaments also have an important role to play in the 2030 Agenda implementation, given their legislative, budgetary, and oversight functions. Moreover, given parliament’s place as the legislative branch of government, it also has a major influence on SDG 16. In some countries, parliamentarians have been involved in consultations, surveys, and workshops. In others, parliaments have also created special committees or working groups on the 2030 Agenda.

Sometimes multi-stakeholder consultations may be “inclusive but not very participatory.” Indeed, experience suggests that formal consultative processes may not be meaningful. Although these may guarantee a few seats at the table to civil society representatives, often those participants are not very critical of the government. Moreover, such consultations often fail to incorporate civil society recommendations into policy efforts.²⁵ It remains a challenge to ensure the participation of marginalized groups, especially when these embody overlapping marginalized attributes, such as women in indigenous populations.

The SDG 16+ technical consultations have noted that stakeholder engagement can be most effective and sustainable when interactions are institutionalized within formal government structures and at different levels of government. Such engagement can take many shapes and forms, including consultations, hearings, forums, policy dialogues, including through online channels using ICT- and social media-based tools. Yet, there are often issues of trust between governments, civil society, the private sector and the public at large. There is a need to provide incentives for government to create and/or maintain participatory processes and open channels for dialogue on SDG 16+ implementation. Identifying SDG champions at national, sub-national and local levels was deemed a key strategy to build trust and promote CSO evidence and best practices that complement government actions.

Many governments are working with civil society, universities and the private sector to adapt and implement SDG 16+ in their country contexts.²⁶ For example, in Tunisia, the government has worked with civil society stakeholders to develop their own targets and indicators: the “Tunisian Governance Goal.”

Civil society organizations are often at the forefront of ensuring access to justice (e.g., by advising SGBV survivors and women in conflict with the law or by training traditional authorities, paralegals, etc.). These organizations thus have a critical role to play in monitoring implementation of SDG 16+. The UNDP/SAIIA report on how Africa is measuring up to its SDG 16 commitments looks at how African governments have engaged with civil society on SDG 16 implementation. In Cameroon, the government officially invited CSOs to produce an independent assessment of progress in achieving

the SDGs: *“The idea is to translate the global SDG indicators into a local and understandable language and reality.”*²⁷

However, many civil society actors are prevented from meaningfully participating in development planning and policy making processes. They are faced with barriers to inclusion and participation, including the **shrinking of the civic space**. The SDG 16+ technical consultation in Ulaanbaatar, which focused on inclusive participation in the SDGs, noted that civic space is not just a means for implementation, but an aim of the SDGs. The deterioration and shrinking of civic space has had a pervasive impact on the realization of SDG 16+. This is primarily manifested through restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks for CSOs. According to the International Centre for Not-for-profit Law (ICNL), 81% of the proposed and enacted laws since 2013 in 18 countries in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific have been restrictive. Other associated challenges include decreasing and restricting the access for CSOs to financial and other resources and the criminalization of human rights defenders, democracy advocates, political opponents/opposition groups and the media. New trends identified by ICNL in Asia include digital restrictions on expression such as cyber-crime laws, extensive regulation of social media, and “fake news” laws which curtail freedom of expression.

BOX 25. UNDP Youth Global Programme: The ‘16 x 16’ Initiative

‘16 x 16’ is a recently launched global initiative, implemented by UNDP’s Youth Global Programme, and supported by the Government of Italy. In a context in which safe and inclusive spaces for young people need to be preserved and promoted, this initiative aims to recognize, value and support the positive role that 16 young women and men from a range of countries across the Global South and Central Europe play as leaders of youth organizations, movements and networks. The programme recognizes that young leaders can advance SDG 16 implementation, monitoring and accountability. They can also contribute meaningfully to building

peaceful, just and inclusive societies at all levels. But conducive environments which enable them to engage in global, regional, national and sub-national dialogues is vital. SDG 16, in particular, represents a critical opportunity to advance youth empowerment by guaranteeing fundamental freedoms, ensuring accountability and opening up decision-making processes to their participation. To read the Rome Youth Call-to-Action: <https://www.youth4peace.info/node/343> (presented on 29 May 2019 at the SDG 16 Rome Preparatory Conference).

Source: UNDP

BOX 26. Georgia Institute for Development of Freedom of Information: Inclusive policymaking

Georgia: inclusive policymaking

The SDGs have the potential to become a unifying framework for inclusive policymaking. In Georgia, there are limited legal guarantees for non-state actors to engage in policymaking processes. However, the process of nationalising the SDGs has involved cooperation between the local non-governmental organisation, the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) and the Administration of the Government of Georgia (GoG).

Georgia was one of the first countries to endorse the SDGs. IDFI started to support GoG in the SDGs nationalization process in

December 2016 by implementing projects to support the integration, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. The projects (project 1, project 2) were supported by the UNDP in Georgia and financed by SIDA and USAID.

Progress made so far includes:

Institutionalizing SDGs – the establishment of an SDG Council and multi-stakeholder working groups that enable dialogue between all relevant stakeholders in the process of SDGs nationalization and data collection. A Working group on Democratic Governance specializes on SDG 16;

...

Elaboration of a national planning ‘Matrix’ – National SDG planning document including nationalized goals and targets, as well as indicators and methods of data collection;

Electronic Management System (EMS) SDGs Tracker – the development of an online database that is designed to enable both internal management of the SDGs nationalization process as well as wider public monitoring of the process;

Raising awareness on SDGs – a local lecture circuit for communities, an essay and art contest for students, workshops for civil

servants, CSOs and the media, meetings with private sector representatives, and participation in the international SDG 16 Plus Forum. The nationalization and achievement of the SDGs cannot be ensured by the government alone. In addition, the soon-to-be launched SDGs tracker will be a positive step towards ensuring better CSO involvement in the SDG process. It will simplify the process for CSOs to collect non-state data to measure progress, as well as simplifying the process for government entities to collect and record official State data on the same.

Source: Institute for Development of Freedom of Information, Georgia

NHRI's are also critical stakeholders. They can serve as a bridge between the government and civil society to help improve collaboration in the identification of SDG 16+ policy priorities, establish baselines and measure progress on SDG 16+. NHRI's can also assist in better understanding and supporting the collection of disaggregated data. For example, as the national preventative mechanism for the Convention Against Torture, NHRI's have unlimited access to prisons and other places of detention and can help provide a more complete picture of the situation faced by detainees.

The private sector is another key stakeholder. The private sector has seen SDG 16 mainly as the government's domain, with activities focusing on anti-corruption and eliminating bad corporate behaviours. But this is a narrow view that misses the role of the private sector in promoting areas such as diversity and gender equality, the free flow of information and assorted justice initiatives. A Sustainable Development Fund report "Business and SDG 16" (2017) illustrates how the private sector has a catalytic role to play in SDG 16 at local and global levels. By being responsible partners throughout the chain of production, businesses can help countries where they operate to meet the SDG 16 targets related to anti-corruption, labour rights, inclusive decision-making and community engagement.

Nigeria was the first country to launch a country-level Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) on SDGs, in 2017. The PSAG is structured into clusters of companies contributing to specific priority targets. The global auditing firm PriceWaterhouseCoopers recently developed an online toolkit for private sector SDG reporting called 'SDGLive'.²⁸ Law firms lead and promote rule of law initiatives around the globe and provide technical training on issues related to SDG 16+. This includes offering pro bono assistance in criminal and civil matters to disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized groups.

BOX 27. Hogan Lovells: Rule of Law 2030

Rule of Law 2030 (ROL2030) is an evidence-based initiative to align existing Rule of Law Projects with the SDGs. It seeks to maximize future impact by collaborating with clients and host governments to implement projects that strengthen the Rule of Law, particularly

in countries where it is weak. With over 2500 lawyers working with clients operating in some of the most challenging jurisdictions, the potential impact of this initiative is huge.

...

In 2015, Hogan Lovells, an international law firm, alongside a host of legal policy and research centres published *Risk and Return: Foreign Direct Investment and the Rule of Law*. Risk and Return was based on a survey of over 300 senior decision makers at Forbes 2000 companies, with global annual revenues of at least US\$1 billion. The report revealed that the strength of the rule of law ranks among the top three considerations when multinationals make decisions about where to locate foreign direct investment — above considerations such as the cost of doing business and/or access to national and regional markets. The report found that where investors experienced rule of law challenges (particularly political instability, arbitrary or discriminatory treatment and intellectual property violations), they were liable to reduce or even withdraw investment.

Later in 2015, the UN Global Compact published the Business for the Rule of Law Framework, which seeks to engage businesses to support the building and strengthening of legal frameworks and accountable institutions. The Framework quotes the Risk and Return report in support of its conclusion that: *“For businesses, an operating environment which is governed by the rule of law provides the basis for commercial certainty and creates the foundation for long term investment and growth, and sustainable development for all.”* The Framework also highlights the role of lawyers in helping businesses achieve an optimal operating environment through

strengthening the rule of law: *“Lawyers who advise businesses [...] are also key in realising the significance of the rule of law in helping businesses to become more responsible and sustainable.”*

ROL2030 builds on the empirical research presented in *Risk and Return* and takes on the challenge set out in Rule of Law Framework by forming strategic, sustainable partnerships with business and government to strengthen the Rule of Law.

By way of example, as part of their global shared value partnership with the Indian social enterprise Barefoot College, Hogan Lovells is helping increase human rights-related awareness of women from rural India. The project, ‘Drawing on Rights’, uses the power of visual images to encourage women to uphold the rule of law as human rights defenders in their local communities. Hogan Lovells works with Barefoot’s Enriche team and the social enterprise client PositiveNegatives to transform human rights legal research into comics and animations. The idea is that Barefoot’s semi-literate and illiterate beneficiaries can use these visual resources to learn about specific rights and about the steps they can take to prevent abuse in their communities. The Enriche programmes also include means to address underlying structural and social barriers to women empowerment. This is one such innovative way to uphold the rule of law and to promote access to justice for rural women and their communities.

Source: Hogan Lovells <https://www.hoganlovells.com/en/knowledge/topic-centers/rule-of-law-2030/rule-of-law-2030>

BOX 28. White & Case: Pro Bono work

In 2019, White & Case, an international law firm, collectively contributed nearly 120,000 pro bono hours in providing access to justice to the poor, advancing the rule of law and good governance globally and assisting NGOs with a social or environmental mission.

In the US, the firm has a robust, pro-bono criminal appeals practice. In the last six years, White & Case has worked on six death penalty cases in the United States (US): three as habeas corpus or post-conviction counsel and three as amicus counsel. The work has resulted in, or materially contributed to, three men being removed from death row.

The firm also provides extensive civil legal services to the indigent across the globe on matters that advance equal educational opportunity, women’s and children’s rights, LGBTQ rights, asylum applications, veterans’ legal rights and environmental matters. Standout cases include successfully challenging Romania’s law discriminating against same-sex marriage using freedom-of-movement principles under EU law; securing the the “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” litigation which resulted in the elimination of the US Military’s discriminatory policy against gays; assisting asylum seekers in Japan; championing the litigation in Flint, Michigan to redress the harm done to that city’s poor via lead in the water; and challenging unconstitutional solitary-confinement practices in Virginia prisons.

Source: White & Case <https://www.whitecase.com>

BOX 29. Hogan Lovells: Pro bono work

Hogan Lovells have assisted witnesses in making submissions to the Irish Mother and Baby Home Commission of Investigation which looked into the forced adoption and death of babies born in these homes in the 19th and 20th century. See <https://www.hogan-lovell.com/en/news/hogan-lovell-publishes-findings-of-clann-project-on-adoption-and-irish-mother-and-baby-homes>. The firm are also representing Yazidi women in Iraq who were the victims of gross violations of human rights perpetrated by foreign fighters of ISIL. For more on this see: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/yazidis-claim-damages-for-isis-fighter-s-persecution-xtxl8fhj3>

They are representing families at the UK Coroner's inquest into the London Bridge terror attack on 3 June 2017, attack which killed eight innocent victims and injured a further 48 people. The team is pulling together years of knowledge of terrorism investigations to examine the complex intelligence picture surrounding the attack and challenging the police and MI5 about their known links to extremists and convicted terrorists. For more on this topic, see: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-48511358>

Source: Hogan Lovells



Public-Private Partnerships

A number of institutions and entities are engaging in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in support of SDG 16+. Some key examples (details of which can be found on the website of each entity) include: (1) the 16+ Forum; (2) the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies; (3) the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (GARPPJIS); (4) the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP); (5) the Partnership Against Corruption Initiative (PACI); (6) the Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SDGF); (7) the Open Government Partnership (OGP); and (8) the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD).

Not specific to SDG 16+, UN Global Compact also bills itself as the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. It aims to mobilize a global movement of sustainable companies, supporting them to: (1) Do business responsibly by aligning their strategies and operations with UN Global Compact's ten principles covering human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption; and (2) Take strategic actions to advance broader societal goals, such as the SDGs, with an emphasis on collaboration and innovation.

In many countries, there are also strategic and long-term plans being adopted by businesses seeking to use their skills in problem-solving and innovation to build long-lasting peace in the countries in which they operate. Stakeholders in countries stress that PPPs, especially at country level, need to be more transparent and effective. They also need to uphold the rule of law and fundamental freedoms and reduce, rather than reinforce or be facilitated by, corruption.

However, for PPPs to contribute to sustainable development effectively, they need to be governed by some fundamental governance principles that include: (1) Inclusivity so as to allow for the active engagement of communities and a zero tolerance for corruption; (2) Strong enabling institutions; (3) A legal framework, "fewer, better, simpler;" (4) Cooperative risk-sharing and mutual support; (5)

Transparency in partner and project selection; (6) A secure funding base; (7) Added value which complements rather than substitutes commitments made by governments; and (8) Leave no one behind so as to “reach the furthest behind first.”

BOX 30. Dentons: Strengthening rule of law around the world

The private sector has a catalytic role to play in SDG 16 at local and global levels. By being accountable and responsible partners in the process of innovation and production, businesses can and should help their countries to meet the SDG 16 targets related to anti-corruption, labour rights, inclusive decision-making and community participation. That said, the private sector is a very diverse group of organizations with widely differing behaviors and political and ethical viewpoints. This diversity can work for or against the rule of law. For example, some private sector organizations are willing to undermine social structures and legal systems for the sake of short-term profit. This, in turn, creates broad-based mistrust of the private sector that can undermine the democratic process.

The US Chamber of Commerce Coalition for the Rule of Law in Global Markets promotes and defends the rule of law in global markets, with the goal of fostering a global investment climate that supports equality, economic growth, and shared prosperity for everyone.

Starting in 2013, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce brought more attention to the rule of law environment as it relates to business by launching the Global Business Rule of Law Dashboard. The 2017 Dashboard included 72 countries and provided an easy-to-understand, yet statistically credible meta-measure of the rule of law environment. The Dashboard relies on and uses information and research contained in seven internationally accepted and established indices and surveys of the rule of law.

Along similar lines to the Global Business Rule of Law Dashboard, a Guatemalan private company and its business associates is funding an initiative to measure the rule of law and its compliance. Launched initially in Guatemala, this project gauges the effectiveness of the Guatemalan criminal justice system and its procedures all the way from filing a complaint to final adjudication. Rule of law best practices from the project will be shared with public and the private sector with the goal of improving the service to corporations and citizens in Guatemala and beyond.

In 2014, the law firm Dentons Muñoz kickstarted a project to spotlight judicial independence as a critical element in guaranteeing access to justice. In 2015, they were joined by three additional private sector companies and the British Embassy. These

organizations collaborated with the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law, a UK research and policy organization, to produce the *Judicial Independence in Latin America* report. The publication includes cases from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras. It highlights the value of tenure of office and independence in appointment processes for judges in Latin America.

This project in turn spawned the creation of the Rule of Law Alliance in Costa Rica. The Rule of Law Alliance is a non-profit organization, with no political affiliations set up to promote a fuller understanding and adherence to the rule of law. Its purpose is to improve social and economic development in the region. Since 2016, the Alliance has led several projects.

In 2016, the Rule of Law Alliance partnered with Aliarse, the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law, Lexis Nexis, the Inter-American Human Rights Institute (IIDH), and the World Justice Project. The goal was to organise a series of workshops for media and journalists to promote the importance of rule of law as a key driver for investment, ensuring social and economic development in the region. The second project in 2016 focused on creating a baseline from which to annually measure awareness and compliance with the rule of law. The first phase included a perception survey in Costa Rica and Nicaragua which mapped the rule of law needs of each of the countries and identified future, priority projects.

Another project leveraged the UK's Judge Over Your Shoulder (JOYS) guide to administrative law. Written in accessible language, this guide addresses practical matters such as how to run a public consultation exercise, how to provide reasons for a decision, and how to prepare a legal defense if a decision is challenged in the courts. In 2017, The Rule of Law Alliance and the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law began adapting the JOYS model to the reality of Central America, beginning in Costa Rica. This collaboration resulted in the development of a rule of law compliance tool for Government departments and municipalities in the country.

Dentons Global Rule of Law Affinity Group was launched in 2019 to compile, study and create a digest of actual cases in which rule of law principles have been or are currently being argued. Cases being discussed include jurisdictions like Guatemala, Mauritius, Slovakia and South Africa.

Source: Dentons Muñoz <https://www.dentonsmunoz.com>



Involving a broad range of data producers to address data gaps

A ‘whole of government’ approach is needed to implement SDG 16. This includes ensuring that there is coordination across different ministries in collecting data, developing sectoral strategies, and reporting on progress. Addressing key issues such as ‘inter-operability’ between national systems of data collection is also critical. Even if a bureau is mandated to produce national statistics, the absence of institutional alignment can lead to overlapping and contradictory data.

Involving civil society can help to generate both hard data to assess broad trends as well as qualitative data that can deepen understanding. This is particularly important in conflict and post-conflict States where data availability is poor (e.g., Iraq, the Central African Republic). Countries may also rely on third-party data-analysis, such as that coming from the UN, civil society or the private sector in order to better understand sensitive topics about which respondents may not be willing to talk or where quantification is difficult. Respondents may be reluctant to share personal experiences of abuse and violence with authorities, for example.

NHRIs can also collect data on SDG implementation. They can, for example, gather information regarding non-discriminatory laws and policies. They can also help with data disaggregation to understand the impact of laws and policies on the most marginalized in society. Above all, they can monitor government’s performance in upholding human rights.

The potential for partnerships with non-governmental actors on data collection and analysis does not reduce the need to allocate public funds for data collection and to National Statistics Offices (see next section). The private sector has extensive experience in collecting, protecting, and making data-informed decisions and can also work with governments to improve data collection, coordination and analysis.

The country case studies in this report show that some countries are starting to invite the private sector to join multi-stakeholder platforms and engage with corporations on what they can do to achieve Goal 16+ (Liechtenstein, Netherlands). This can include the use of new technology. The OECD has gathered examples of technology-driven innovations that shape how governments both devise and deliver public services.²⁹

BOX 31. Iraq: Using social media to gather SDG 16+ data

The SDGs have been put at the centre of Iraq’s National Development Plan (2018-2022). A ‘National Committee on Sustainable Development’ (NCSD), chaired by the Minister of Planning, monitors and reports on progress on the SDGs to a high-level follow-up group. However, Iraq lacks data on many SDG indicators.

Gathering data to help the government understand the problems it needs to tackle in order to achieve SDG targets is a challenge in the

Iraqi environment. The country’s various conflicts have left more than 4 million Iraqis internally displaced and there has been an influx of refugees from the Syrian conflict (over 241,000, according to the IMF in 2017). Millions of people live in poverty, and infrastructure and State assets have been destroyed. Government institutions are mired in corruption and productivity in the civil service is low. Religious and ethnic minority groups have been cleansed in several provinces, and many groups are excluded from politics. ...

Against this background, and with backing from the Iraqi Government and sponsorship from UN agencies, an NGO Network called the 'Sustainable Development Network 2030' was formed. Focusing in on goals 16 and 5, the group sought to better understand the Iraqi peoples' daily lives and to include different social groups' experiences and views in government policymaking in Iraq.

Inspired by experiences in Botswana, the NGO Network developed, together with academics, a questionnaire on some Goal 16 indicators to share on NGO, youth and academic pages on Facebook. Within the first three weeks of January 2019, more than 1000 people had responded to the questionnaire. The data collected was shared with the Iraqi Central Statistics Bureau and is now being used to help prepare Iraq's first VNR.

What did the teams in Iraq learn about adapting and implementing Goal 16?

The experience of developing and executing the questionnaire demonstrated to all concerned that working together in partnership

could enable data to be gathered quickly on people from all across Iraq. Moreover, this data collection did not require unlimited resources, despite the challenging environment in which it was carried out. What is more, the network learned that it could forge ahead with collecting information on Goal 16 Indicators even where there was no internationally-agreed methodology. The network concluded that the partnership between government, civil society and the UN should remain in place to further refine statistical data collection and shape the results into effective policy efforts.

Technology can help governments and civil society to gather information about people's experiences and perceptions. Because it offers flexibility in terms of how surveys are carried out, technology relieves us from grappling with the space, time and language challenges associated with face-to-face surveys. But those who use social media to gather data need guidelines on how to develop effective surveys that include accurate statistical sampling methods. Only then can results be meaningful, representative and used confidently by governments and others seeking to achieve the 2030 agenda.

Source: UNCT Iraq



Data disaggregation to ensure no one is left behind

Many Goal 16+ targets and indicators call for considering the outcomes of policy efforts in relation to their impact on marginalized social groups such as women, children, the disabled, the elderly, indigenous people and refugees and migrants.

The sweeping look that our report has taken of countries' global and regional trends on Goal 16+ targets reveals that there is a lack of disaggregated data produced by National Statistics Offices and other data-collectors for such groups. Many areas of disaggregation that should be a national priority are not. The needs of marginalized population groups are not captured in censuses and survey reports that furnish national data and statistics.

In addition, there is a lack of evaluation of the data that is collected. A review of the 46 VNRs submitted in 2018 revealed that of the 19 reports that mentioned sex-disaggregated data, none clarified if, and how, they were collecting or using this data. The reports also neglected to mention whether the countries were further disaggregating this data to track equity between women from different groups.³⁰

It is notable that, with few exceptions, the SDG 16+ methodologies and national practices reviewed and explained in this report are State and citizen-centred. They therefore leave out today's 25.9 million refugees, 3.5 million asylum seekers, 41.3 internally displaced people and millions of stateless people around the world.³¹ In particular, there is no systematic data collection and analysis across

SDG 16+ indicators to capture the circumstances of these groups, although SDG 16 openly addresses their needs.

While no SDG is specified for displaced populations, many indicators can be disaggregated by migratory status. This could, in turn, provide a wealth of policy-relevant information for these vulnerable groups. Some important voices are advocating for this approach, including the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)³² and the Expert Group on Improving Migration Data in the Context of the 2030 Agenda.³³ As part of the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), these two groups have identified priority policy areas and associated SDG goals and targets for forcibly displaced persons and international migrants respectively. These goals include targets under SDG 16.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs), in particular, are citizens or habitual residents of the State. As such, they should be more easily included within official statistics through censuses, surveys, national registration and identity systems or other administrative data. However, in most countries at this time, these sources of information do not systematically identify whether populations have been displaced. This makes it difficult to estimate the magnitude of internal displacement and impossible to disaggregate data produced for IDPs.

There are many challenges — operational, technical and political — that contribute to this reality. But the potential policy impact that could result from the inclusion of IDPs in national statistics is huge.³⁴ This is why EGRIS is currently investing in the development of International Recommendations on IDP Statistics (following the success of the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics endorsed in March 2018). These recommendations will include standards and guidance to improve the quality of official statistics on forcibly displaced populations. A key element of this work focuses on the coordination of statistics, to ensure coordination within Government bodies but also with civil society and other actors. Such coordination is critical for accessing more sensitive data linked to SDG 16.

Governments' engagement with international human rights mechanisms correlates positively with existing global indices measuring human development, governance, democracy, civil rights and press freedom. The ability of a government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations is also highly associated with its engagement with the international human rights system. Indicators measuring engagement with IHRM can complement SDG indicators to reinforce the normative underpinnings of the 2030 Agenda.

“The challenge to monitor and report on the effective implementation of SDG 16+ becomes even greater when the whole country falls into the marginalized group due to conflict and fragility.”

(Mrs Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Civil Bureau of Statistics)

Endnotes

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